

# Leveraging Neurodivergent Talent

At this point, you are probably wondering what, if anything, can be done that addresses the problems outlined in articles 2 and 3 while still capturing the benefits described in Article 1. The truth is, there is no perfect solution. However, there does exist a category of solutions that has already emerged naturally from trial and error.

Arguably one of the most successful neurodivergent hiring programs to date has been Microsoft's Neurodiversity @ Work program. From the ground up, Microsoft built a program centered around the neurodivergent candidate, including an adjusted hiring process, facilities, and job training, as well as dedicated mentors and coaches.

While many companies have tried to implement neurodiversity programs, Microsoft is one of only a few that have actually succeeded. And it was in programs like Microsoft's where the phenomenal results of neurodivergent workers were observed, including 140% increases in productivity and 90%+ retention rates.

## The Solution?

However, in spite of how much Microsoft is doing right, they have still yet to fully leverage the true power of a neurodivergent workforce. The truth is, a company like Microsoft is not positioned to implement the best solution. This is because the most optimal solution is a company built from the ground up around the abilities of the neurodivergent individual. Companies like Manny's (from Article 3) will always be better at leveraging neurodivergent talent than a company like Microsoft.

Neurability Technologies is one company of many attempting to leverage neurodivergent talent. The critical difference between a purpose-built company like

Neurability and Microsoft's Neurodiversity program is their mission statements. While Microsoft seeks to be successful in hiring and retaining neurodivergent individuals, Neurability seeks to unleash the full potential of neurodivergent individuals.

While Microsoft strives only for Minimum Viable Metrics (aka results where the benefits only outweigh the costs), Neurability Technology seeks to do all that it can to maximize the outcomes of a neurodivergent workforce. The reality is that at a large company like Microsoft, the people making final decisions stand to gain very little from reworking their entire company to optimize a 200-engineer-large program that has already proven "successful". Because of this reality, companies like Neurability are primed to see results that exceed those of Microsoft.

## **Why Neurability?**

### **Double Empathy Problem**

With that in mind, the most glaring shortcoming of Microsoft's Neurodiversity program is how it attempts to integrate neurodivergent workers into neurotypical teams. The reality is most neurodivergents work better with other neurodivergents, and most neurotypicals work better with other neurotypicals. The same is true for neurotypical individuals. This is called the double empathy problem. This so-called 'problem' stems from the fact that people with widely different life experiences will struggle to empathize with each other.

The Double Empathy problem is also to blame for one of the biggest misconceptions about neurodivergents: they are poor communicators. For the most part, this is blatantly false. The truth is neurodivergent people are bad at communicating with neurotypical people, and neurotypical people are equally bad at communicating

with neurodivergent people. Part of the underlying reality is that the neurodivergent brain processes information differently, so conversation flows easily between neurodivergents, but much is “lost in translation” with a neurotypical. Many neurotypicals form this misconception from their own personal experiences of conversations with neurodivergents without realizing that the problem lies not in the individuals but in the fundamentally incompatible pairing of people.

Because of the Double Empathy Problem, there will always be a communication barrier between neurodivergents and neurotypicals, which will slow down progress and create confusion. For this reason, a team composed of only neurodivergent individuals will perform better than a team of both neurotypicals and neurodivergents.

## **Stigma And Bias**

Furthermore, the problem of stigma and subconscious bias will always plague mixed workforces no matter how much sensitivity training they receive. The permeation of bias around the neurodivergent individual is an endemic challenge no one company can solve or avoid.

This is not to say that we should accept this reality, but rather that integrating neurodivergents and neurotypicals will inevitably result in challenges due to unavoidable bias and stigma. Therefore, a company like Neurability, which seeks to optimize for neurodivergent performance, can construct teams to completely avoid any problems arising from potential bias or stigma.

## **Building From the Ground Up**

The final reason Microsoft can never achieve results even close to that of Neurability Technologies is because Microsoft already has a successful neurodivergent hiring program. Although no large company will be able to fully duplicate the results of Neurability Technologies, they would come a lot closer if they built their program from the ground up, completely separated from other operations. However, the reality is that a large company can never truly design from the ground up around the abilities of the neurodivergent; they have too much internal inertia and reliance on systems built for the neurotypical.

However small, there will always be friction between the ingrained and rigid systems designed for the neurotypical and the abilities of the neurodivergent. Because of this, a purpose-built company like Neurability will always be more efficient and less complex than a large company that attempts to implement various accommodations and assorted efforts to integrate discordant systems.

## **Wait A Second, What Even Is Neurability? (And Why That Matters)**

At this point, you may be asking yourself, “Microsoft makes software (and a whole lot else), but what does Neurability Technologies even do?” Here lies the final advantage of Neurability Technologies over any established company. Other established companies already have a dedicated purpose, whether that be designing computers, managing wealth, or building skyscrapers. But Neurability Technologies doesn't do any of these things (yet). Neurability Technologies, in spirit with its mission statement, *to maximize the benefits of a neurodivergent workforce*, operates as a consulting service.

Neurability Technologies' role as a “consulting” type business enables companies to obtain all the benefits of a neurodivergent workforce without the challenge of developing an in-house program. Neurability sees a future where instead of many companies all having small and semi-successful neurodiversity programs, Neurability runs one large, very successful program, contracting out its services in a large number of industries. Because of the high fixed costs of reinventing the systems of modern work for the neurodivergent, specialization makes economic sense.

Because Neurability has no central mission to build software or whatnot, when it hires neurodivergent employees, Neurability can dedicate those employees to what they do best, cutting out or outsourcing all the parts of the job that they would normally struggle with. So while all Microsoft software engineers might have to explain technical issues to non-technical stakeholders or break down more complex problems into smaller components, Neurability Technologies free-flowing nature allows it to build around the abilities of individual employees, further optimizing results.

## **Neurability Now And Into The Future**

Currently, Neurability Technologies believes software and IT services to be the most promising space for neurodivergent talent. However, they also believe it to be a launching point and hope to eventually excel in every space where there is neurodivergent talent.