

TOOLKIT · VERSION 1

Workplace Accommodation Guide

A practical playbook for employees, managers, and HR partners.

How to use this toolkit

Skim once, then choose one practice to try this week. Toolkits are living documents — mark them up, share them with your team, and revisit as your needs evolve.

Overview

Workplace accommodations are adjustments to how, when, or where work is done so that capable people can do their best work. Most cost little or nothing and benefit the whole team.

Why it matters

Inclusive workplaces outperform on retention, engagement, and innovation. Yet many neurodivergent employees mask, leave, or burn out because they don't know what to ask for — and their managers don't know what to offer.

Research summary

Job Accommodation Network data show the median cost of a workplace accommodation is \$0; 56% cost nothing at all (JAN, 2023). Inclusive leadership and psychological safety predict team performance independent of individual ability (Edmondson, 2018; HBR, 2020–2024).

Practical strategies

Environment

- Quiet zones, noise-cancelling headphones, lighting choice.
- Remote or hybrid options for deep work and recovery.
- Predictable seating; minimize hot-desking when possible.

Communication

- Agendas in advance; decisions in writing after meetings.
- Multiple channels (written + verbal) for major instructions.
- Explicit norms: response time expectations, camera-optional.

Workflow

- Chunked deadlines instead of one large due date.

- Async-first defaults; meetings only when async won't work.
- Defined ramp-up time after PTO, illness, or sensory events.

Ready-to-use scripts & worksheets

Disclosure script (employee → manager)

"I work best when I can [specific need]. I'm sharing this so we can plan together — I'm not asking for anything that affects deliverables."

Accommodation request (employee → HR)

"I'd like to request [accommodation] to support [function]. Here's how it would work in practice and what success would look like."

Manager check-in (every 1:1)

"What's working? What's creating friction? What's one thing I can change this week to make your work easier?"

Recommended lessons & next steps

- Workplace Toolkit — /workplace
- Training: Inclusive Workplaces 101 — /training
- Research: workplace inclusion — /insights

Selected references & further reading

- Job Accommodation Network. *Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact*. 2023.
- Edmondson AC. *The Fearless Organization*. Wiley, 2018.
- Austin RD, Pisano GP. *Neurodiversity as a Competitive Advantage*. *Harvard Business Review*, 2017.

Ask the AI Companion

Visit understandingneurodiversity.org/companion to ask follow-up questions about **Workplace Accommodation Guide**. The Companion will recommend lessons, conditions, and research tailored to your role.