

Transcript | How to Create a Neurodiverse-Friendly Work Environment

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00:00:05.800 --> 00:00:35.330

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Hello and welcome to this masterclass on how to create a neurodiverse friendly work environment. Today we'll be discussing the value of neurodiverse perspectives in the workplace and identifying strategies for making public service, workplace policies and culture truly inclusive. My name is Alana Moncton, and I'm the vice president of community engagement and growth here at Apolitical. It would be great to hear from all of you. So please, as you join, let us know who you are and where you're joining from, and your role by posting in the chat

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00:00:36.680 --> 00:00:48.720

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: for those of you who may be joining us for the 1st time. Welcome, apolitical is the world's largest network for government, and used by over a quarter of a million public servants and policymakers for more than 160 countries.

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00:00:48.760 --> 00:01:06.760

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Our mission is to help build 21st century governments that work for people on the planet. And we do this by putting the best knowledge and skills at the fingertips of public servants around the world before we jump into today's session. I'd like to start off by extending an invitation to all of you to join Apolitical's neurodiversity and public service community.

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00:01:06.920 --> 00:01:26.499

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: If you're not yet in the community, we are thrilled to extend an invitation to join today's speakers and your peers from across the global public service. There are already over 3,000 members discussing everything from how to create supportive structures, fostering an inclusive culture and leveraging the strengths that neurodiversity brings to the public sector.

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00:01:26.500 --> 00:01:37.039

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I'm our neurodiversity community lead. So I'd love to take our conversation from today's event forward. There the link is in the resources tab of this webinar which should be at the bottom of your screen.

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00:01:37.040 --> 00:02:00.219

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I can also see lots of folks introducing themselves in the chat. Welcome to all of you. I see folks from Toronto, I see Erica from Edmonton, lots of folks, Mada from London. Welcome. It's a pleasure to meet all of you, and have you joining us here today? Thank you. Really rolling in Daisy from Liverpool. Welcome, Lucy, from Cardiff.

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00:02:00.320 --> 00:02:02.459

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: so great to see all of your faces.

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00:02:03.590 --> 00:02:24.040

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I'll get a few technical notes out of the way before we get into today's conversation. This event is recorded for on demand. Viewing on the Apolitical website. Please do not record it yourself. Contact details or privacy concerns are in the apolitical homepage footer, and finally, closed captions are available and can be toggled on or off in your screen settings in zoom.

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00:02:26.330 --> 00:02:34.259

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Before we introduce our speakers. We're gonna run a few quick polls to get a sense of what you're hoping to get out of the discussion today.

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00:02:34.530 --> 00:02:39.290

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: You should see a question pop up on your screen now. And the 1st poll is.

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00:02:40.560 --> 00:02:53.289

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: does your workplace currently support. Neurodivergent colleagues strongly agree, somewhat agree, disagree, or are you unsure? Let us know what you think about your workplaces by voting in the poll.

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00:02:53.900 --> 00:03:00.490

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: You can see lots of responses coming in. Already, which is great. We'll just give you a few more moments.

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00:03:04.250 --> 00:03:05.180

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Great.

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00:03:09.050 --> 00:03:32.699

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: So it looks like 63% of you somewhat agree that your workplace currently supports neurodivergent colleagues. So that's great to hear 6% strongly agree, 17% disagree. And 14% of you are unsure. Maybe you'll have some more thoughts on that as we get through today's event. So I'm going to go on to the second question. And the second one is.

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00:03:33.160 --> 00:03:39.489

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: what improvement would you most like to see in your workplace to ensure that becomes more and more diverse? Friendly?

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00:03:39.620 --> 00:03:43.620

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: If you have a different answer to the options listed. Please do share your answer in the chat.

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00:03:44.595 --> 00:03:54.420

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: but let us know. Is it training adjustments, awareness, campaigns, hiring leadership? Or again, something else that you'd like to share in the chat

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00:03:57.590 --> 00:04:02.039

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: again. I'll just give you a few moments to think about that. I can see lots of votes coming in.

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00:04:06.810 --> 00:04:10.250

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: a few people still introducing themselves. Wonderful to see you all.

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00:04:10.840 --> 00:04:11.930

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Okay.

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00:04:12.540 --> 00:04:17.099

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: This says all of the above Chris in the chat, saying conversations.

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00:04:18.019 --> 00:04:41.840

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: okay, and the poll results great lots of folks. thinking about awareness campaigns. as the improvement you would most like to see adjustments 27% training, 21% followed by leadership hiring and a couple of other thoughts in the chat. Great.

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00:04:41.980 --> 00:04:45.390

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts, so

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00:04:46.320 --> 00:04:59.129

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I'll go ahead and tell you a bit more about who you'll be hearing from today. We are very fortunate to have brilliant speakers joining us today. Sancho, Angulo, Alex Bengari and Bethany Garland.

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00:04:59.130 --> 00:05:22.640

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I'm going to start with Sancho. Sancho is an autistic filipino Canadian public servant neurodiversity, advocate and public speaker. He currently works as an advisor on privacy and data governance in the office of the Chief Human Resources Officer at the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. He is also the co-chair and founder of Infinity which I know many of you are familiar with. It's Canada's network for neurodivergent public servants.

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00:05:23.000 --> 00:05:31.619

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Alex is a senior advisor with New Zealand's Ministry of Justice and co-chair of indigo, which stands for including neurodiversity in government organizations.

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00:05:31.810 --> 00:05:43.570

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Alex wasn't diagnosed with Adhd until well into adulthood. But I spent many years before and after that revelation, learning and advocating about mental well-being in many facets of her professional and personal life.

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00:05:43.880 --> 00:05:58.240

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: and Bethany is the other co-chair of indigo. She has been a passionate advocate and learner around neurodiversity since learning about the impacts it can have on people in the workplace when their needs aren't accommodated. She's currently working with the New Zealand Defense Force as a senior advisor.

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00:05:58.580 --> 00:06:05.780

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: You can read the full bios of our great speakers by visiting the resources tab at the bottom of your zoom screen and heading to the speakers section.

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00:06:06.660 --> 00:06:12.230

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: So let's get started with an icebreaker before we get into our masterclass presentations.

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00:06:12.360 --> 00:06:18.079

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: This one is a fill in the blank exercise. So speakers, please finish this sentence

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00:06:18.220 --> 00:06:21.830

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: creating a neurodiverse, friendly workplace is life.

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00:06:22.150 --> 00:06:48.590

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: What's your metaphor? I will give you a moment to think as ever. I'd also invite everyone on this call to have a go at answering this question, if you look in the chat now, my colleague has posted a link to a thread in our neurodiversity community where we'd love for you to share your answers, and if you click on through, I've gotten us started with my own metaphor that you can add your thoughts in the thread there.

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00:06:49.740 --> 00:06:58.819

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Okay, so I'm going to come to Sancho first. Sancho, creating a neurodiverse. Friendly workplace is like, what's your metaphor?

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00:06:59.240 --> 00:07:16.370

Sancho Angulo: You know what I my special interest is planes. I love traveling. I think I've traveled like 140,000 kilometers. Like. That's more than half 2 times around the world last last year, so I'd say it's like a flight itinerary, with no delays where

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00:07:16.820 --> 00:07:27.749

Sancho Angulo: everything where it's just smooth. And I think that's kind of what we want in a workplace is a place where people can be themselves, but also not have to worry about things like.

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00:07:27.880 --> 00:07:28.709

Sancho Angulo: you know.

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00:07:28.870 --> 00:07:32.460

Sancho Angulo: Don't delays someone taking your seat.

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00:07:32.920 --> 00:07:47.690

Sancho Angulo: Air Canada, sending you to Dubai when you were supposed to go somewhere else. You know that that's kind of a joke. But in any case, I think what I am really heartened by is just how

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00:07:48.180 --> 00:07:52.488

Sancho Angulo: we're at the precipice of an important conversation about what it means to

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00:07:53.701 --> 00:08:10.309

Sancho Angulo: be inclusive in the workplace more than just what is visible to us, and I think building an inclusive workplace to me is one where we can create connections around the world. We can explore things that we have never thought of before. And

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00:08:10.310 --> 00:08:24.000

Sancho Angulo: to me that's why I kind of like think about it in terms of my my love of planes and traveling, you know. You know, flights that go a flight that goes smooth. No, no delays, no interruptions. That's kind of how I like to see it.

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00:08:24.330 --> 00:08:31.310

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: I love that that is absolutely wonderful. Thank you so much for sharing Bethany. I'm going to come to you next, for your metaphor.

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00:08:31.600 --> 00:08:42.720

Bethany Garland: That's a hard one to follow, Sancho. I kind of went down the Passion Route as well. So I am a big reader. I absolutely adore books. So for me.

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00:08:42.860 --> 00:08:48.819

Bethany Garland: an inclusive and neurodiverse, friendly workplace is like walking into your ideal library.

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00:08:49.020 --> 00:09:18.500

Bethany Garland: It's having that ability to sit and read in whatever space is comfortable for you, and what suits you at that point in time. It's having all the options of the books, not just giving, having to read the one that's given to you. It's actually what do I want? And I think, yeah, similar

to Sancho. It's no barriers. It's walking in and going. This is where I want to be. I feel safe. I feel comfortable. I feel like I'm getting exactly what I need, but also I can give back.

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00:09:18.520 --> 00:09:31.980

Bethany Garland: You should return your books at a library. But yeah, I think for me it is all of those warm, cozy feelings I get when I'm safe at home reading a book. I think neurodiverse friendly workplaces should feel like that.

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00:09:35.860 --> 00:09:47.680

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you so much, Bethany, that's wonderful. And, Alex, we are sharing our metaphors for creating a neurodiverse, friendly workplace. I'd love to hear from yours. If you have one.

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00:09:49.340 --> 00:09:50.513

Alex Bengree: Kyora. Yeah.

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00:09:52.600 --> 00:09:59.790

Alex Bengree: Walking into a neurodiverse friendly workplace for me is feeling like

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00:10:00.290 --> 00:10:12.910

Alex Bengree: I've walked into a space with my family or with the people closest in the world to me, who don't judge don't feel guilt.

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00:10:13.190 --> 00:10:16.990

Alex Bengree: It's like an unlimited, empowering feeling.

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00:10:19.030 --> 00:10:23.949

Alex Bengree: Sorry I couldn't think of a good metaphor, but I was like I can. I can describe it.

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00:10:26.960 --> 00:10:32.289

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: That's absolutely beautiful. Thank you so much for sharing. Thank you. Bethany, Alex and Sancho.

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00:10:33.820 --> 00:10:35.750

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Okay, so

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00:10:36.150 --> 00:10:53.920

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: we're going to move on. Thanks for these answers, and without further ado, let's hand over to Sancho for today's 1st presentation, Sancho. I'll give you a moment. We will share your slides on this end you should be able to see those momentarily

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00:11:03.160 --> 00:11:04.310

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: okay.

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00:11:04.480 --> 00:11:07.810

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Think everyone can see those Sancho over to you.

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00:11:08.070 --> 00:11:16.219

Sancho Angulo: Wonderful. So I'm really thrilled to be here on behalf of infinity, the network for neurodivergent public servants. But I did wanna walk through.

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00:11:16.400 --> 00:11:32.994

Sancho Angulo: you know, from the perspective of, I guess, the Canadian Federal public service. What are the challenges that neurodivergent employees might face? What are the solutions and how are we supporting a neuro inclusive work environment across Canada's Federal public service?

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00:11:33.880 --> 00:11:35.859

Sancho Angulo: yes. So next slide, please.

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00:11:37.750 --> 00:12:03.259

Sancho Angulo: So when we talk about neurodiversity, I'm reminded of. I'm a huge British literature fan, and there's a quote from Virginia Woolf's *The Waves*. No 2 people see the same reality. This is the secret of life. And I think that's a powerful thing that we might consider here in terms of neurodiversity, and why it matters. We understand that

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00:12:03.260 --> 00:12:28.890

Sancho Angulo: neurodiversity is a relatively novel concept in the field of accessibility as well as in diversity and inclusion, but we see it as an important part of how we strive for excellence across our public sectors, around the world and neurodiversity. We define here as a concept where neurological differences are be recognized and respected as any other human variation.

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00:12:29.140 --> 00:12:35.999

Sancho Angulo: while no 2 people may have the same brain or live the same reality. There are some brains that

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00:12:36.170 --> 00:12:52.150

Sancho Angulo: throughout history, and especially in the past, decades, have been considered so different that their experiences have been pathologized have been put into certain boxes, labels, that they're so different from the normal.

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00:12:52.470 --> 00:12:58.880

Sancho Angulo: And with these boxes and labels can come stigma, discrimination.

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00:12:59.060 --> 00:13:06.300

Sancho Angulo: and isolation. In many cases, when we talk about neurodiversity, it is a question of how we can

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00:13:06.460 --> 00:13:12.416

Sancho Angulo: particular in particular support those whose minds are considered to be neurodivergent

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00:13:13.930 --> 00:13:25.850

Sancho Angulo: like those with autism, Adhd, dyslexia, tourette's syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia and dysgraphia, among others, and neurodiversity is both a way in which we can reframe.

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00:13:26.010 --> 00:13:31.730

Sancho Angulo: how we approach neurodivergent conditions, not as things that need to be

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00:13:32.060 --> 00:13:39.660

Sancho Angulo: cured or fixed in any way, as was the thinking even a few decades ago.

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00:13:39.780 --> 00:13:41.990

Sancho Angulo: But it's also a movement that seeks to

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00:13:42.100 --> 00:13:46.459

Sancho Angulo: secure greater social acceptance for neurodivergent people that

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00:13:47.188 --> 00:13:56.140

Sancho Angulo: beyond anything they are able to be who they are without feeling as though they have to be someone. They're not next slide, please.

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00:13:59.230 --> 00:14:15.099

Sancho Angulo: So over this conversation, we're going to be using some key terms. Neurodivergent is someone with cognitive functions that differ from. As I said, dominant standards of normal like those with autism, Adhd dyslexia, neurotypical is someone with cognitive functions that generally align

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00:14:15.520 --> 00:14:26.289

Sancho Angulo: with what society considers to be normal. And then neurodiverse describes the whole spectrum of cognitive differences out there, including both neurodivergent and neurotypical people.

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00:14:26.640 --> 00:14:28.040

Sancho Angulo: Next slide, please.

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00:14:29.380 --> 00:14:34.769

Sancho Angulo: So I'm going to talk a bit about what neurodivergence looks like here at in Canada's federal public service

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00:14:35.030 --> 00:14:36.269

Sancho Angulo: next slide, please.

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00:14:36.770 --> 00:15:04.229

Sancho Angulo: So, according to the latest numbers, we don't really track neurodivergence. The only country that I know of shout out to Australia, that tracks it is Australia, and but based on the latest public service employee survey. About 3% of the federal workforce identifies as having a cognitive disability, and the examples provided in the prompt are autism. And Adhd, however.

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00:15:04.766 --> 00:15:31.320

Sancho Angulo: this kind of play paints a incomplete picture as to what neurodiversion looks like. As you know there are others who may subscribe to other labels within the Pscs. And those have also changed. But we have also looked at some worrying trends for those with cognitive disabilities, they're less likely to feel valued at work, more likely to report high levels of stress, more likely to

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00:15:31.410 --> 00:15:43.350

Sancho Angulo: experience harassment, discrimination, less likely to feel as though their workplaces are psychologically safe. Next slide, please.

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00:15:44.700 --> 00:16:08.339

Sancho Angulo: So the challenge that we have here at infinity and across the Federal public service is that neurodivergent employees bring these extraordinary talents and skills to the workplace, but they face enormous barriers to entering, staying in and advancing in the workforce compared to neurotypical people. One statistic that remains with me in particular is that 86% of neurodivergent people

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00:16:08.410 --> 00:16:28.379

Sancho Angulo: worldwide. Or this is an estimate from Ey. Canada are either unemployed or underemployed. That's a huge disparity to think about. And even in Canada only about a 3rd of autistic Canadians report being employed compared to 79% of Canadians without a disability.

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00:16:29.420 --> 00:16:30.860

Sancho Angulo: Next slide, please.

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00:16:31.880 --> 00:16:40.153

Sancho Angulo: Some of the challenges that neurodivergent employees might encounter at work might include, might they basically

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00:16:41.388 --> 00:17:04.919

Sancho Angulo: take place throughout every part of the employees life cycle, whether it is hiring, such as job descriptions being not easy to understand. I think every bureaucracy is known for having these very esoteric terms that no one seems to get unless you. You've worked there for a while. Interviews that are meant to measure sociability and and

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00:17:04.920 --> 00:17:12.059

Sancho Angulo: culture fit instead of what skills the that employee brings? Culture fit.

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00:17:12.140 --> 00:17:16.879

Sancho Angulo: you know, is seen so almost as a way in which we're supposed to.

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00:17:17.410 --> 00:17:23.549

Sancho Angulo: you know, have effective and synergistic teams. But what it the

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00:17:24.099 --> 00:17:28.313

Sancho Angulo: counterbalance to that is that it potentially creates

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00:17:29.420 --> 00:17:46.559

Sancho Angulo: and like discrimination in this and for for lack of a better term, it is something that is meant to exclude certain types of people who don't really vibe with the rest of the company and Comp company or organization. And they have a lot to lose. As a result.

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00:17:46.690 --> 00:18:03.009

Sancho Angulo: the focus on years of experience rather than skills. So there's a lot of neurodiverging people who have advanced degrees but encounter significant barriers to getting their foot in the door because they don't have the right type of experience. So some solutions here might be

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00:18:03.010 --> 00:18:19.839

Sancho Angulo: plain language and examples of what job responsibilities are, rather than just laying them out very clearly. I think one of the things that annoys me most is seeing the bullet other duties as required on

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00:18:20.090 --> 00:18:47.130

Sancho Angulo: on a job description, because that doesn't give me a clear map as to what those other duties might be. Providing an interview guide. We. We do this when we hired our intern at infinity supporter operations. We gave them an interview guide, showing them, you know what to expect, whether it is, you know, in terms of the format of the interview the questions, and that helped the candidates really shine in those interviews.

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00:18:47.497 --> 00:18:57.040

Sancho Angulo: Another thing, is not to factor in nonverbal cues or speaking style into how you score an interview. Body language, fidgeting and eye contact.

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00:18:57.429 --> 00:19:07.639

Sancho Angulo: The lack of those does not mean that that person is incapable or can't interact. It may just mean that they communicate very differently. And that's not a bad thing. Next slide.

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00:19:08.850 --> 00:19:27.930

Sancho Angulo: So the next, you know, even if we get past. The hiring stage is the onboarding stage. Neurodivergent candidates may not receive accommodations upon arrival. And in fact, they may have to submit a lot of paperwork and proof, especially if they have a non apparent disability or neurodivergence.

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00:19:28.040 --> 00:19:57.009

Sancho Angulo: One thing I'll note, and this, this is something that is very unique to Canada is that among Anglophone nations is that in order to advance to management and executive positions, and as well as certain operational positions, you need to be proficient in both English and French. And so second language evaluations are the way that the government of Canada evaluates employees ability to read, write, and speak English and French.

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00:19:57.010 --> 00:20:20.850

Sancho Angulo: Now these can be, as some of you may be, guessing, a huge barrier to the advancement of neurodivergent people. And so these evaluations may not always be designed with the needs of neurodivergent employees in mind. And, in fact, we've encountered situations in which people have been marked down in their interviews for stuttering, for

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00:20:21.776 --> 00:20:26.153

Sancho Angulo: having pauses in their speech because the oral examination

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00:20:27.284 --> 00:20:50.220

Sancho Angulo: emphasizes your ability to speak at a consistent rhythm which isn't always possible for someone who's neurodivergent. Similarly, the work culture that someone might experience in the Federal public service might be difficult to adjust to compared to what what they've encountered in the past. And some solutions on this front asking the employee what their accommodation needs are during the

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00:20:50.530 --> 00:20:57.050

Sancho Angulo: an onboarding process. But one thing I say is as a manager. The best thing you can do for your employee

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00:20:57.130 --> 00:20:59.379

Sancho Angulo: is to ask them, what do you need from me

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00:20:59.500 --> 00:21:15.401

Sancho Angulo: rather than trying to second guess or you know. Do your own research about what that employees needs? I think trial having trust in that employee to give you an example of what things they they might benefit from is important.

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00:21:16.940 --> 00:21:23.410

Sancho Angulo: similarly, working with candidates on on the front of French language or English language training

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00:21:23.700 --> 00:21:33.069

Sancho Angulo: is super important in terms of finding learning solutions and teaching methods that meet their needs and also allow them to

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00:21:33.340 --> 00:21:52.030

Sancho Angulo: demonstrate their capacity. It is something that I think is a very important living in a bilingual country. But that should not be at the expense of ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability. Is able to progress and able to learn both official languages,

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00:21:52.560 --> 00:22:07.567

Sancho Angulo: and all. And one thing I found super important is when you're preparing a hiring guide. Don't just talk about, you know. Where's the it desk, or where's where? Where do you find the kitchen in your workplace? Also talk about what? What's the culture like?

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00:22:08.000 --> 00:22:28.150

Sancho Angulo: I made the mistake once of sending my director general, an email directly from my own email as a student, and that got me in trouble. I didn't realize. So perhaps those are things that are important to spell out for new employees next slide, please.

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00:22:28.710 --> 00:22:47.670

Sancho Angulo: So we might also turn to challenges on the job. These could be hostile attitudes from managers and coworkers, lack of access to accommodations, excessive administrative burden to obtain accommodations, especially for non apparent disabilities and

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00:22:48.202 --> 00:23:05.947

Sancho Angulo: in person workplaces can also be quite tough. You know, post Covid, there's been a huge push to return to the to the office, and there's been a lot of turbulence in terms of that journey for many employees with disabilities and many employees who are neurodivergent.

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00:23:06.450 --> 00:23:22.299

Sancho Angulo: you know. And part of this is I. You know, this is a cliché, but culture eats strategy eats everything else in an organization. And it's important that we have neurodiversity training incorporated into organizational learning. I'm of the belief that everyone

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00:23:22.430 --> 00:23:40.459

Sancho Angulo: has a limited, observable universe and we sometimes don't get perspectives that we're not exposed to, and it's important for us to make an effort to expand our horizons and part of that is understanding how to work effectively with our neurodivergent colleagues.

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00:23:41.210 --> 00:23:59.719

Sancho Angulo: This also includes making accommodations easily accessible with clear policies and swift implementation and deployment. There's some solutions I'll talk about in the next slides about what the Government of Canada is doing, reducing administrative hurdles, trusting employees as much as possible, as well as

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00:24:00.181 --> 00:24:12.190

Sancho Angulo: introducing where possible. This is not always feasible for every position in the Federal public service. Flexible work options, including in some cases remote or hybrid.

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00:24:12.702 --> 00:24:14.240

Sancho Angulo: Next slide, please.

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00:24:15.770 --> 00:24:26.419

Sancho Angulo: So one solution that I'd love to talk about is the Gc workplace accessibility passport. It's a very innovative solution that upends the previous

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00:24:27.000 --> 00:24:29.800

Sancho Angulo: practice, so to speak, in which

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00:24:29.840 --> 00:24:58.639

Sancho Angulo: an employee, every time they would move jobs would need to renegotiate their accommodation needs with their new manager instead. What this does is that the Gc. Workplace, accessibility, passport creates a record of the employees, workplace barriers and solutions that travels with that employee across their career from when they're a student to when they retire. And and this support. This is about supporting a conversation between employees and managers, about what optimal workplace condition conditions look like.

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00:24:59.000 --> 00:25:00.180

Sancho Angulo: And of course.

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00:25:00.180 --> 00:25:10.759

Sancho Angulo: when an employee arrives at a new workplace, that manager is given information about how to address those workplace barriers as, and serves as

123

00:25:10.760 --> 00:25:34.559

Sancho Angulo: an evergreen document that ensures the employee. Can be rapidly deployed the supports. They need to succeed and thrive in their new work environment. And so that's 1 thing it's it's certainly. I'll acknowledge that there may be some in the room who do not feel that it is perfect yet, but it is certainly a a step forward in the right direction. Next slide, please.

124

00:25:38.110 --> 00:25:38.730

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Sandra, and just.

125

00:25:38.730 --> 00:25:42.689

Sancho Angulo: Another thing that infinity has done is that we've deployed, and then we.

126

00:25:44.110 --> 00:25:50.040

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Sorry I'm just gonna interrupt you for a second to just give a short time check. If you could just wrap up in about a minute, and then we'll move on.

127

00:25:50.040 --> 00:25:50.600

Sancho Angulo: Okay.

128

00:25:50.720 --> 00:26:10.500

Sancho Angulo: yeah. Another thing that we've done is we have our ability help hub that covers a bunch of topics. We even have a list of workplace strengths, barriers, and solutions for various neurodivergent conditions as well as a data plate, database of workplace barriers and solutions tailored to neurodivergent employees. I'll move on to the last slide just quickly.

129

00:26:12.370 --> 00:26:29.479

Sancho Angulo: yeah. So on. Advancement, I think very quickly. A lot of employees are reporting that their Pmas are being used against them for being neurodivergent. Neurodivergent employees often face challenges in terms of receiving talent management and some of the hiring

130

00:26:29.970 --> 00:26:57.929

Sancho Angulo: frameworks that are used to assess neurodivergent employees for advancement often emphasize neurotypicality. And so there's some solutions here. I think the slides will be shared. But this just gives you an overview of the barriers and solutions that the Government of Canada has in place, as well as the work, that infinity as the network for neurodivergent public servants is doing to support neurodivergent employees across our institution. Thank you.

131

00:26:59.920 --> 00:27:16.379

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you so much, Sancho. That was incredible. We're gonna hand over to Bethany and Alex for their presentation. And after that it's gonna be QA time. So do make sure you're submitting questions in the Q&A tab at the bottom of your screen. But over to Bethany and Alex.

132

00:27:17.810 --> 00:27:19.290

Bethany Garland: Thank you, Alana.

133

00:27:20.360 --> 00:27:21.950

Bethany Garland: Alrighty.

134

00:27:22.350 --> 00:27:46.250

Bethany Garland: Just going to do a sound checks. I know I was a bit quiet earlier, hopefully, everyone can hear me a bit louder now I've really cranked the volume. Yes, some thumbs up fantastic. Thank you. So Kia, Alex and I today are going to be talking about allyship in the public sector. So indigo as Alana introduced is including your diversity and government organizations. It's

135

00:27:46.636 --> 00:28:08.483

Bethany Garland: our newer network over here. So we officially launched August last year or a couple of years work in the background there. But it's meant that we've had this opportunity to really start building foundationally and what we're looking at at the moment is allyship. How we can stem from that, and how we can begin a bit of an advocacy journey.

136

00:28:09.090 --> 00:28:37.189

Bethany Garland: yeah. So we've got a few core topics that we're going to run through today. 1, st one is a people centered approach. So for us, people are at the heart of everything. And what Alex once said to me that I absolutely adored was, if you've met one neurodivergent person, you've met one neurodivergent person, I think that's a really good reminder not to clump the different neurodiversities and the different

137

00:28:37.810 --> 00:28:39.720

Bethany Garland: my gosh! Lost my words.

138

00:28:40.020 --> 00:28:41.270

Alex Bengree: Experiences.

139

00:28:41.270 --> 00:28:55.939

Bethany Garland: Thank you. I was like, oh, the different experiences of people into one lump. I think everyone is an individual, and I love that this gives you that ability to really deep dive and understand each person as they come to you, and

140

00:28:56.060 --> 00:29:18.160

Bethany Garland: that leads into asking to understand their experience. So questions. I think you'll see that a lot throughout our presentation questions are key. I think it's really important to be constantly curious, constantly trying to understand your colleagues. I think that's across everyone in the neurodiverse space with a neurotypical

141

00:29:18.160 --> 00:29:30.920

Bethany Garland: or neurodivergent, the more you can understand about that person and learn from them, the more that you can adapt, if you need to recognize your experience, advocate for them, adjust to their

142

00:29:30.920 --> 00:29:31.870

Bethany Garland: needs.

143

00:29:31.880 --> 00:29:33.340

Bethany Garland: So questions.

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00:29:33.580 --> 00:29:38.869

Bethany Garland: I think that's the one we keep pushing over here. You can never ask too many

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00:29:40.110 --> 00:30:00.679

Bethany Garland: and use the language your colleagues prefer. So Sancho gave some excellent definitions of the difference between neurodivergent, neurotypical and neurodiverse. Personally, I'm quite early on my neurodivergent journey, something that I'm beginning to explore. And I found that language is just really important, and that even within our community

146

00:30:00.680 --> 00:30:20.060

Bethany Garland: different people use different language and are comfortable with different language. And so I think that ties up to those above comments. Not everyone is the same, and everyone comes with different experiences. Some of those are positive, some sadly and negative. So I think that sensitivity around language is really important, and I think it's a great opportunity

147

00:30:20.650 --> 00:30:32.549

Bethany Garland: to start asking people what they prefer, what they respond to, and then using that in your work settings to display it. So it's not just relying on the neurodivergent person to do it themselves.

148

00:30:33.650 --> 00:30:36.330

Bethany Garland: I'll hand to Alex for our next point.

149

00:30:37.490 --> 00:31:03.050

Alex Bengree: So when we talk about building trust and safety, I consider this the most important point that we might cover today, because the more trust and safety that you build builds a stronger relationship, so that people feel safe to talk about the barriers that they're facing be vulnerable about what they're struggling with, so that there is an opportunity there to

150

00:31:03.050 --> 00:31:17.870

Alex Bengree: work together to find solutions. It also means that over time you build a strong enough relationship that makes the neurodivergent employee feel empowered or feel valued

151

00:31:18.210 --> 00:31:26.670

Alex Bengree: because you're building that relationship. And so they are more likely to stay at the company longer term.

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00:31:27.780 --> 00:31:29.930

Alex Bengree: Next point, please.

153

00:31:30.300 --> 00:31:42.320

Alex Bengree: so identify and empower specific skill sets. This again builds on that idea of empowerment. So we know in the community with a neurodivergent community

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00:31:42.540 --> 00:31:48.109

Alex Bengree: that being neurodivergent means that you have a different brain with different ways of thinking. And so

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00:31:48.320 --> 00:32:11.639

Alex Bengree: that means that there are things that we can do that others can't do. And those specific skill sets are not always identified or empowered, but being able to be who you are in a workplace and to build on the skills that you're really good at is another empowering and feel good value, that

156

00:32:12.990 --> 00:32:25.469

Alex Bengree: I think I'm trying to emphasize because they are one of the determining factors of whether people stay in their job and and enjoy their job and thrive in their job because they feel like they're doing great.

157

00:32:26.970 --> 00:32:29.379

Alex Bengree: Lastly, keep an open. Mind.

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00:32:29.870 --> 00:32:30.870

Alex Bengree: This is

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00:32:32.990 --> 00:32:40.450

Alex Bengree: sorry. It's very early morning. I'm losing my train of thought very quickly. Bethany, can you jump in, please?

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00:32:40.450 --> 00:32:56.599

Bethany Garland: Hop in on this one. Yeah, I was just thinking where we've had an early start over here in New Zealand. So keeping an open mind for us is really about considering, just because there's a standard way of doing something doesn't mean it's the only way to do something, and I'm sure a lot of people

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00:32:56.600 --> 00:33:15.000

Bethany Garland: who've joined us today have had that experience where they've said something that's a little bit outside of the box, or they've noticed something that's not really flowing right. And we found that the best thing that people can do when those out of the box ideas come is, listen and embrace them and keep an open mind. And just because it's something that we've always done

162

00:33:15.000 --> 00:33:32.090

Bethany Garland: doesn't mean it's something you should always continue to be doing. So I think, for our neurotypicals keeping an open mind and for our neurodivergence, please keep saying those out of the box ideas because they are the journey for improvement, and they are really, really a strong.

163

00:33:32.110 --> 00:33:49.629

Bethany Garland: I guess. Skill set that we can bring to the table. And for me, that is a really important piece, and something that I've seen when it when it works, and when people have that moment of just listening and asking to understand and keeping an open mind I feel a lot safer, and that I've got some good trust in my team.

164

00:33:52.130 --> 00:33:56.289

Alex Bengree: So in practice. Next slide, please.

165

00:33:57.080 --> 00:33:57.550

Bethany Garland: Oh! This!

166

00:33:57.550 --> 00:34:20.270

Alex Bengree: Actually sorry I can't, because I've joined via my phone. I don't have a good look at the Fakatoki, so a fakatoki is like a proverb or a saying in the Maori culture. This one in particular doesn't actually come from where I have ancestry to, but it's something that is important to think about when we're

167

00:34:21.449 --> 00:34:23.290

Alex Bengree: building allyship.

168

00:34:23.460 --> 00:34:32.680

Alex Bengree: So it says, Kete Kotahi te kakaho ka fati kete kapoya e kore e fati.

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00:34:32.870 --> 00:34:47.279

Alex Bengree: When we stand alone we are vulnerable, but together we are unbreakable. So like what I was saying before building trust, safety, and Kotahi meaning unity, it's important, because when we do that

170

00:34:47.440 --> 00:34:49.210

Alex Bengree: we are unbreakable.

171

00:34:49.409 --> 00:34:51.450

Alex Bengree: Sorry next slide. Now.

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00:34:53.429 --> 00:34:55.880

Alex Bengree: So in practice.

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00:34:56.949 --> 00:35:19.099

Alex Bengree: building a people-centred approach could look like asking a colleague what their preferred way of working is, considering the language you're using when talking about neurodiversity, reducing noise around people who may be sensitive to this building templates for ease of use and simplicity, seeking out information on what your organization already has in

174

00:35:19.250 --> 00:35:27.390

Alex Bengree: in place to support neurodiversity, educating yourself on neurodiversity and advocating for your neurodivergent colleagues.

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00:35:30.300 --> 00:35:58.749

Bethany Garland: Awesome. So yeah, we thought we'd do a range of options from practice for each of our key points, some of them those small adjustments that you can make that really make a difference, and some of them the bigger ones. I'm aware of time, but an example of something that we applied at indigo was in that building templates for ease of use and simplicity. We have working groups over here, and we built a template for the working brief. So that mental load of what we're asking for has gone. We asked for specific key points.

176

00:35:58.750 --> 00:36:10.440

Bethany Garland: timeframes, and we got some really good feedback about those templates, and it just been an easy we can go in, apply a brain, use our skill, sets to fill those out rather than having to do the load.

177

00:36:10.440 --> 00:36:25.640

Bethany Garland: and also the concern of aligning with others that can be sometimes a major factor. And so we kind of set a standard, and everyone could meet that. So we found that was a really good example of being a bit more inclusive across our group.

178

00:36:27.900 --> 00:36:33.609

Bethany Garland: Our next step is communication is key. So, Alex, I'll hand to you for the 1st few.

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00:36:34.980 --> 00:36:51.900

Alex Bengree: So, of course, everyone communicates differently. And that's not just limited to the neurodivergent community. But like with neurodiversity, everyone has a different way of communicating and preferences around how they receive or how they give communication.

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00:36:53.010 --> 00:37:19.779

Alex Bengree: then identify what works well for those around you, because of those differences, have open conversations with your colleagues, with your manager, with your neurodivergent teammates, that to ask them about what those differences might be, what their preferred way of communicating is, and to try to build that into how you work with them, because that will go a long way

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00:37:19.920 --> 00:37:21.330

Alex Bengree: cool. I'll hand to Beth.

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00:37:22.360 --> 00:37:41.230

Bethany Garland: Awesome. Thank you. So when you're communicating, please consider verbal written and physical communication. So really can't stress enough. The impact that the 3 of these done well can do so. We know that different conditions have different barriers, and they also have different opportunities. So I think, considering

183

00:37:41.230 --> 00:38:02.390

Bethany Garland: your body, language, eye, contact, speed of speech, your tone, the volume that you're speaking, at which I have been pulled out on today, the amount of text that you're putting in your written communication and the style of voice that you're using to people all of those really impact people and can be an easy adjustment to make

184

00:38:03.170 --> 00:38:28.660

Bethany Garland: knowing your own style of communication is also massive. You're just as important. Communication is a 2 way street. So, understanding your own preferences and being able to voice those opens the space for other people to say what works for them and what doesn't, and builds that relationship. And as Alex talked about in our previous section. It's building that trust and safety as well, and communication is such an optimal way to do that.

185

00:38:30.660 --> 00:38:49.730

Bethany Garland: We also built a culture of asking questions to clarify. So, as I said, you'll see questions a lot through our presentation. We can't emphasize it enough. Ask away that clarification point is really key. If you don't understand or you need more information, just ask. We've noticed that people can interpret things differently.

186

00:38:49.730 --> 00:39:00.740

Bethany Garland: so easier to get all on the same page at the same time and build again on that safety of someone not feeling targeted, that they're having a lot of questions at them and making it that 2 Way Street.

187

00:39:01.990 --> 00:39:15.030

Bethany Garland: So communication leads to community that is, to understanding intimacy and mutual valuing. This quote really stood out to me, as I think that key bit of leads to community is huge. It's such a stepping stone for us.

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00:39:16.460 --> 00:39:20.559

Bethany Garland: So in practice this could look like using active, listening.

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00:39:20.700 --> 00:39:24.410

Bethany Garland: providing longer silences to accommodate processing time.

190

00:39:24.730 --> 00:39:27.589

Bethany Garland: not relying only on physical cues.

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00:39:27.850 --> 00:39:31.030

Bethany Garland: breaking bread, and ticks down into more digestible chunks.

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00:39:31.410 --> 00:39:50.279

Bethany Garland: identifying communication techniques for a range of mediums such as face to face versus online individual meetings versus group meetings and following up conversations with email notes to confirm and using transcription software for meeting or writing tasks. And I'll hand to Alex for an example of communication and practice.

193

00:39:51.250 --> 00:40:18.540

Alex Bengree: So what we've heard a lot from neurodivergent employees and their experiences is that there is a bit of a gap with reasonable accommodations and what they might need and what might actually be reasonable. So they don't really know where to start. One of the best communication techniques that we can recommend is to have some form of agreement between. If you're the neurodivergent employee and your manager

194

00:40:18.908 --> 00:40:28.151

Alex Bengree: to basically outline like these are the what best ways that I communicate. This is what I need from you. This is what I can give you in in

195

00:40:29.680 --> 00:40:53.710

Alex Bengree: to to help you with your needs as well, and even adding some questions in there that are, go to questions to make sure that you're getting everything that you need out of your conversations. So, having that all written down means that you're both accountable. But also you know what you're entitled to to get what you need and make sure that you're both on the same page about some of those things

196

00:40:54.640 --> 00:40:56.210

Alex Bengree: next slide. Please.

197

00:40:56.220 --> 00:41:07.110

Bethany Garland: So our last point, and we're at time here, but is reasonable accommodations. And so we saw some questions in the signups come through on this. So we wanted to make sure we were addressing it.

198

00:41:07.500 --> 00:41:09.929

Bethany Garland: as you've all probably guessed. Ask

199

00:41:10.264 --> 00:41:24.550

Bethany Garland: so asking what this looks like for the individual is key. It ties back to everything we've been saying. Everyone has their own experiences, their own needs, their own preferred ways of working, their own preferred ways of communicating. So just asking really helps.

200

00:41:24.550 --> 00:41:44.280

Bethany Garland: But it's also important that it's a we conversation. So it's not just what do you need putting all that pressure on the neurodivergent person. But saying, What can we do to make your work experience better? So putting that simple word in really elevates the stress. Sometimes it can take to say what you need and advocate for yourself.

201

00:41:44.280 --> 00:41:53.009

Bethany Garland: And I think it also helps in team conversations. So if you're not a leader, saying, what can we do as a team to make this an environment that works for everyone?

202

00:41:55.220 --> 00:42:09.770

Bethany Garland: It's also important to consider how these accommodations could have a more wider positive impact. So what we've noticed is accommodations don't always just work for neurodivergent people. They work for neurotypical. It's a neurodiverse space.

203

00:42:09.810 --> 00:42:36.799

Bethany Garland: We've seen positive outcomes from people being able to work from home adjust to a 4 day working week or a 9 day fortnight. We've seen people who have quiet zones that works for everyone. I think all of these things are so important to raise because they can impact everyone. And I think sometimes it's having that voice and being able to say it and being able to ask actually, if it works for others. That's really important.

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00:42:38.237 --> 00:42:41.930

Bethany Garland: It's important. Consider the work environment. So

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00:42:42.000 --> 00:42:54.429

Bethany Garland: there is a lot going on on a day to day in a work environment. There can be people who are sat next to a thoroughfare. Lots of people walking past. There can be bright lights. There can be unadjustable discs

206

00:42:54.430 --> 00:43:13.049

Bethany Garland: where they're static. There can be hot desking. There can be fixed desk and a lot of those things really impact someone's productivity and ability to feel like they're getting the best out of their work environment and bringing their best selves to work. So just look around you, sit down at your desk or in your area. Look around you and say.

207

00:43:13.350 --> 00:43:17.630

Bethany Garland: what could be improved here? What's working? What could we look at together.

208

00:43:18.800 --> 00:43:47.570

Bethany Garland: Small adjustments make a massive difference. Accommodations don't always have to be huge. They can have silent time allowing time post meetings for processing and then sending additional thoughts. That's something we apply here at indigo. It can be starting an email with something I've learned at Defense force, which is a bluff, which is bottom line up front. So putting that critical piece of information right in front of the email, and then all the context afterwards, those small things really all help.

209

00:43:48.850 --> 00:44:07.599

Bethany Garland: This one. Alex shared, and I thought was fantastic build in accommodating environments. Naturally, it's not always an adjustment. If you start as you mean to go ahead, and you build those into your everyday that can really help, and makes it feel more natural and a bit more as we've been talking about as a friendly environment.

210

00:44:08.700 --> 00:44:23.429

Bethany Garland: One size doesn't fit all which ties to everything we've talked about. You cannot put a blanket solution in this space. It's important to be, considering all the different options and even the minor adjustments you can make to a solution that adapt for everyone.

211

00:44:24.750 --> 00:44:41.580

Bethany Garland: My favorite. Be curious, not judgmental, Ted Lasso, quoting Walt Whitman, this I have on a post-it note next to my desk, because I think it reminds me every day to be curious, and to save my judgments potentially for inside my head and adjust them to being curious.

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00:44:42.180 --> 00:44:47.250

Bethany Garland: So in practice, reasonable accommodations could look like. And I'll hand this over to Alex.

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00:44:47.920 --> 00:44:48.240

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: And then.

214

00:44:48.537 --> 00:44:52.700

Alex Bengree: I'll just fly through these quickly so that we can get an example going.

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00:44:52.700 --> 00:44:53.050

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thanks.

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00:44:53.050 --> 00:44:56.659

Alex Bengree: Sorry, maybe just 30 seconds. If that's okay.

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00:44:56.660 --> 00:44:59.389

Bethany Garland: Just 5 through this and move to the next slide. Maybe Alex.

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00:44:59.660 --> 00:45:25.460

Alex Bengree: Yeah. So, having low sensory zones like Beth mentioned, providing a meeting agenda in advance, then following it, sending key questions to candidates before an interview, allowing fidget toys in longer meetings and workshops, considering where someone is sitting in their work. Context because of smells, noises, brightness, and hot desking or not, can affect, how people are productive and thriving.

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00:45:27.000 --> 00:45:51.899

Bethany Garland: And the final thing we really wanted to leave you with today is talking about neurodiversity helps. So building awareness is essential sharing your experiences, asking for other people's experiences, opens eyes and conversations. We all know knowledge is power.

You never know who's listening. You never know who's impacted by what you're saying. And eventually we're hoping that that conversation influences all our workspaces.

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00:45:52.650 --> 00:46:06.449

Alex Bengree: But also it builds that that level of safety by talking about it, more normalises it more, and then people feel more safe to actually disclose that they have some kind of neurodivergence, and can feel comfortable in doing so.

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00:46:07.540 --> 00:46:14.930

Bethany Garland: And we have a few resources that we wanted to share. But I'm sure we can share this pack afterwards, so you can have a look at these in more detail. Thank you very much.

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00:46:16.010 --> 00:46:17.410

Alex Bengree: Thank you.

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00:46:18.250 --> 00:46:43.160

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: That was so great. Thank you so much, Bethany and Alex and Sancho, too. I can see we already have a lot of really brilliant questions that are coming through, we will almost certainly not get around to asking each one. So if there are questions or reflections that you have posed at the end of this event, and we haven't gotten a chance to discuss them. Please do go ahead and put them in the community

224

00:46:43.160 --> 00:47:07.879

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: where we will keep the conversation going with all of our brilliant speakers. And again, you can find a link to the community in the resources tab at the bottom of your screen. I'm going to start with one question that's been submitted in the Q. And a. And Sancho. This is for you. And that question is, what would someone who is working for the Canadian Federal Government and is experiencing significant barriers with no support, do as a next

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00:47:07.880 --> 00:47:08.410

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: step.

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00:47:09.100 --> 00:47:35.219

Sancho Angulo: Yeah. And and you know, I wanna 1st address that by saying you're not alone. You're not the only person who has encountered significant challenges in terms of accessing

accommodation measures, and it has. It is something that the institution by and by is looking to address. But I know that what you're looking for? Whoever answer posed that question is support. Right now, I think

227

00:47:35.650 --> 00:47:52.914

Sancho Angulo: you know, regardless what is whatever is happening in the world. And you certainly with, if anyone's watching the news today, it's very tough tough news that we received this morning around the economy. But all this to say, I think that

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00:47:53.380 --> 00:48:17.520

Sancho Angulo: what we have is community, and I think connecting with your other. You know, fellow neurodivergent public servants is so important because in understanding their experiences what they've been going through. You could get a sense of how to approach tough conversations with your management with your institution in terms of getting the resources you need, because, that, I think, is

229

00:48:17.520 --> 00:48:30.759

Sancho Angulo: been a huge boon to so many people in the Federal public service to have a network like infinity where you can connect with others. So that's 1 thing I would say. The other thing is to.

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00:48:31.400 --> 00:48:45.629

Sancho Angulo: you know. Sometimes I've had to encounter this in my own career, being there to teach. Sometimes you have to teach your management about how to manage you, and that that might seem a bit counterintuitive.

231

00:48:45.870 --> 00:48:50.300

Sancho Angulo: But we we cannot forget that a lot of managers, you know.

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00:48:50.430 --> 00:49:01.560

Sancho Angulo: they, the last time they they had any formal education was maybe a decade, if not more ago. And so it's important, and it's important to.

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00:49:01.740 --> 00:49:25.710

Sancho Angulo: I guess, work with them in a way that they can better understand your perspectives and the the increasing importance of neurodiversity in the workplace. Not it's not just something that is meant to be an excuse. It is not an excuse at in any way. It's just that

people are realizing that they they have these cognitive differences, and the they deserve accommodation

234

00:49:25.820 --> 00:49:48.330

Sancho Angulo: like any other disability or or difference. And you know, to return to what Alex was sharing earlier, and Bethany was sharing earlier. Be curious, not judgmental. And sometimes it takes one person to really let light that spark in terms of changing the culture.

235

00:49:48.712 --> 00:49:56.369

Sancho Angulo: It's not gonna be easy. It's a marathon, but it is something that we have the power to do. So.

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00:49:58.980 --> 00:50:21.719

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you, Sancho. I'm going to go to a question next that came in in the neurodiversity and public service community. And Lynn asked neurodiversity. Considerations can often feel like an afterthought. How can we encourage organizations to foster integrative and inclusive training and solutions from the outset? And I'd love to ask Alex or Bethany to answer that question. If you can.

237

00:50:25.450 --> 00:50:27.720

Alex Bengree: I can take it.

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00:50:27.960 --> 00:50:34.660

Alex Bengree: So when it comes to influence one of the most important things is, is knowing your audience. So.

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00:50:34.780 --> 00:50:44.440

Alex Bengree: understanding what it is, they're important to them what language they speak, and not being afraid to just ask, I think one of the

240

00:50:45.000 --> 00:51:01.769

Alex Bengree: serious like cultures that I've seen in different places that I've worked is, there's a lot of hierarchy, and there's a lot of fear about asking certain people about certain things. But if you know the people that you're talking to the audience that you're trying to cater to.

241

00:51:01.770 --> 00:51:18.069

Alex Bengree: You can frame an argument and create a story or narrative that is going to not only get you what you want, but also help them achieve some win-win situations like I was saying before, an example we often refer to is that

242

00:51:18.720 --> 00:51:26.039

Alex Bengree: neurodivergent brains have a very unique way that is valuable of thinking and solving problems that

243

00:51:26.150 --> 00:51:31.359

Alex Bengree: neurotypical counterparts probably wouldn't even be able to think of. So

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00:51:31.650 --> 00:51:41.730

Alex Bengree: that value add is often where some of the the leadership or the people with decision-making power want to hear more about.

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00:51:42.060 --> 00:51:43.030

Alex Bengree: So

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00:51:43.310 --> 00:52:13.259

Alex Bengree: that's just one example of an argument you can make. But a lot of leaders actually do care about how their employees are doing, and they want to know that they're doing well, so don't be afraid to go and ask the people who have that decision, making power just to have a conversation and say, Hey, one of my colleagues or myself, or whoever is experiencing this, I think that we could provide a solution to that, and definitely come with solutions if you have them.

247

00:52:16.410 --> 00:52:42.480

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Fantastic. I'm going to go to one final question, and it's again on the topic of accommodations. Tom asked, what resources are available to help neurodivergent employees determine what their needs are. Tom says I was diagnosed a decade ago and given a prescription. I kept it secret for fear of bias. I asked what I need, but I don't really know. What would you advise someone looking for resources to help them determine what their needs are.

248

00:52:46.050 --> 00:53:02.599

Bethany Garland: That's a really good question. I was gonna just say I am really early on my journey. And so I've also been looking for similar resources. And as such, and I know that I talked to both Sancho and Alex about this, so I was wondering if if they wanted to to share.

249

00:53:04.590 --> 00:53:16.979

Alex Bengree: I can jump in again. This is one of my favorite things to look into, because I have this belief that the more tools that you have in your kit, the more that you can pull from and draw on when

250

00:53:16.980 --> 00:53:35.149

Alex Bengree: from like. For my own experience, things work for a certain period of time, but they're not always going to work. And so I can chop and change between things and find things that actually work for me. I don't have like a link or anything apart from the ones that we've got on our slides to refer to specifically.

251

00:53:35.150 --> 00:53:56.499

Alex Bengree: But for someone who is neurodivergent looking. Just go on a Google deep dive. I think that's 1 of our superpowers. Gosh, I hate that term. Sorry that we can focus in on a topic and learn so much about it. But if you're a colleague and you want to support some of your neurodivergent teammates.

252

00:53:56.850 --> 00:54:23.909

Alex Bengree: even you, coming up with solutions is super helpful, because it means that it's less mental load on them. Having to go and find those things. Some of the things that I suggest is on my desk. I have a little turn dial on top of my monitor that says I'm available. I'm in a meeting. Do not disturb all those kinds of things, and I've said to people that, regardless of whether I have my headphones on or not,

253

00:54:24.660 --> 00:54:37.025

Alex Bengree: having that dial as available is when you can interrupt me. But any other time don't interrupt me. Just send me a message first, and I'll come to you once. I can actually switch my brain from one task to the other.

254

00:54:37.560 --> 00:54:55.670

Alex Bengree: I guess if you ask that question in the apolitical community for neurodiversity, then I can try to answer that and any other questions that come on onto that community page to try and think of some more accommodations.

255

00:54:56.240 --> 00:55:21.220

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Perfect. Thank you so much, Alex. Okay, we are coming towards the end of today's event. Now, some of you might know that we have a tradition of asking our speakers for a 1 word, takeaway that sums up your thoughts, and the guidance that you've shared over the past hour. I'll ask you for those words in a second. First, st I just want to share that as a special thank you. To everyone who attended today, we're giving you all access to the apolitical

256

00:55:21.220 --> 00:55:26.590

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: user manual. If you've not come across this before, the user manual is one of our most popular resources.

257

00:55:26.590 --> 00:55:50.800

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: you can use it to articulate your work style what you need to feel supported in the workplace and beyond empowering your team, you can also use it to get to know yourself a little bit better. In fact, Centro shared earlier that one of the best questions you can ask an employee is, what do you need from me? And the user manual is a really great way to have that conversation. So to claim your download, all you need to do is just go to the neurodiversity community and leave a comment on the post that I have pinned at the top of the community.

258

00:55:50.800 --> 00:56:03.189

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: And we will email you a link right after the event, and the link to that post is just in the chat there for my colleagues. Okay, Sancho, Bethany and Alex. Time for your one word. Takeaways, please. I'll go to Sancho first.st

259

00:56:04.180 --> 00:56:06.460

Sancho Angulo: I would say, you know

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00:56:06.620 --> 00:56:36.489

Sancho Angulo: what comes to mind. I mean, you know, off the top of my head is this, you know it's the word ubuntu. And if you're familiar with that word, it's you know it's I think it's a Zulu word meaning I am, because we are. I am because we are. And I think that speaks to the experience that all of us feel in terms of finding solidarity. Building a neurodivergent neurodivergent, friendly workplace isn't just a pursuit meant for Canada or the UK

261

00:56:36.490 --> 00:56:45.819

Sancho Angulo: or New Zealand, it or Australia. It is something that pervades all of our public institutions, because neurodiversity is everywhere. And it's

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00:56:45.820 --> 00:56:57.070

Sancho Angulo: really heartening to see just how there's so many great ideas from around the world that we're hearing. One thing I'm I'm really looking forward to is.

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00:56:58.000 --> 00:57:24.579

Sancho Angulo: you know, collaborating more with New Zealand. I'll be actually visiting Wellington in a couple of months just for vacation, and making time to go see both Bethany and Alex as part of that. And so it is. I think it's just beautiful to see so so much energy and so much momentum on neurodiversity in the workplace taking shape across the world.

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00:57:26.410 --> 00:57:30.769

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you so much. Okay, Bethany. And then Alex.

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00:57:31.690 --> 00:57:56.310

Bethany Garland: The word for me would be Aroha. So love like I'm feeling all the adoha today in the chat and from the reactions. And I'm just feeling so blessed to be part of this community, and so privileged to be asked to speak as well. So it's just been adoha from the get go from apolitical and from everyone here so much love out to you all and back, and thank you for making this such a wonderful experience.

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00:57:58.200 --> 00:58:00.029

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you so much, Alex.

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00:58:01.120 --> 00:58:04.969

Alex Bengree: I'm going to run with that theme of today, or words.

268

00:58:05.240 --> 00:58:29.709

Alex Bengree: My word would be Fano natanga. So Fano is the word for family. So, Fano Natanga means that that building of a very close relationship that we would consider like family. And not only does that harp on about the trust and safety of building relationships that we've been going on about, but also the community that we've built all of these relationships and how important they are to the movement.

269

00:58:29.710 --> 00:58:36.289

Alex Bengree: and having the support of your family, or wha when you're walking this journey.

270

00:58:36.950 --> 00:58:47.765

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: Thank you so much, Alex. Okay, one final request before we let you all get on with your days. The team is just gonna pull up a quick poll to find out how you felt about this event.

271

00:58:48.210 --> 00:59:12.299

Ilana Munckton, Apolitical: on your screen, on a scale of one to 10. Rank your agreement with this statement. This event was a valuable use of your time, and thank you so much. That is all we have time for today. We hope you found the conversation helpful. We want to say a huge thank you once again to everyone today who's made this happen, and thank you to take for taking your time out of your busy schedule. Thank you, and goodbye.