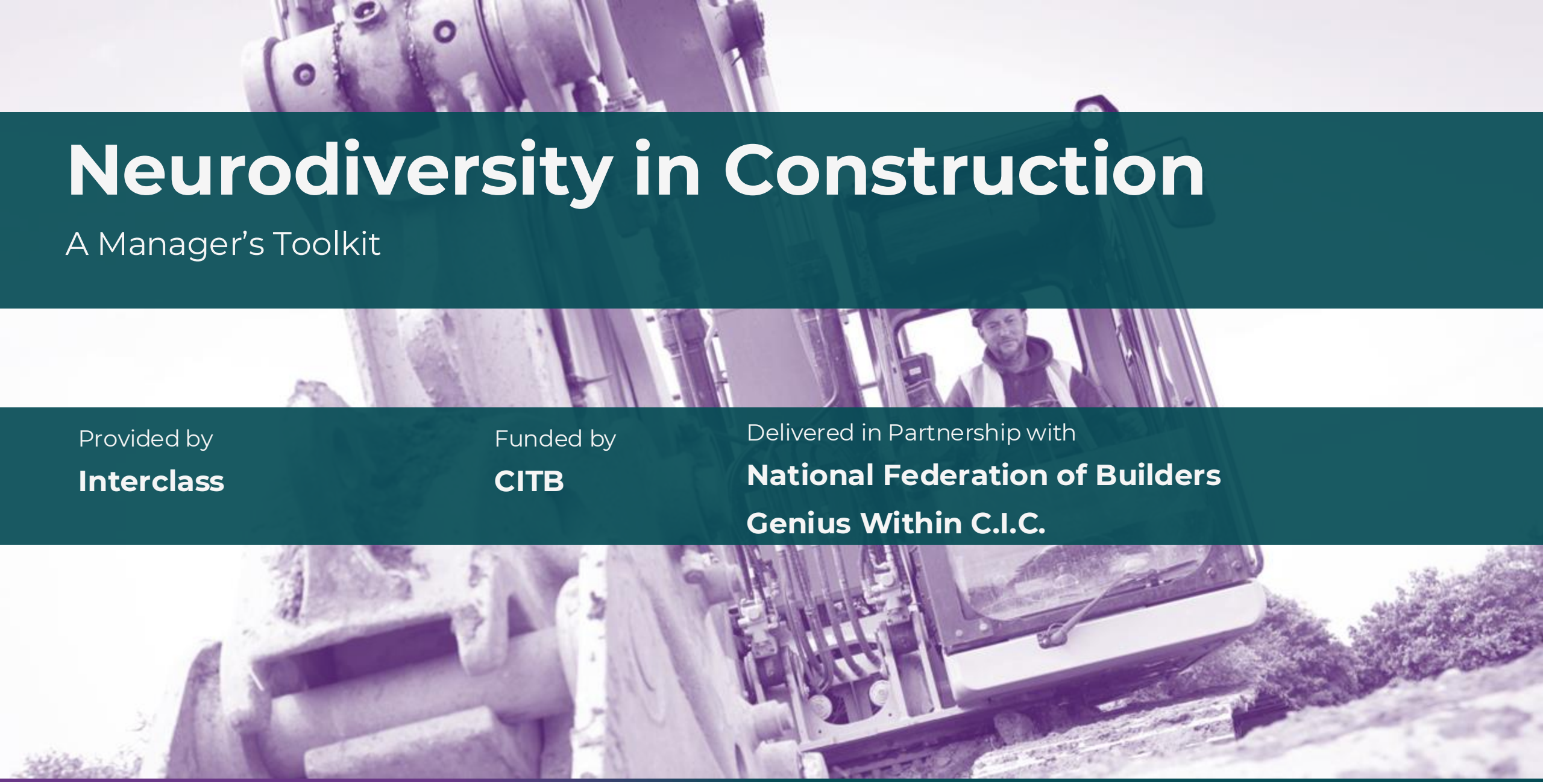


Neurodiversity in Construction

A Manager's Toolkit

Provided by
Interclass

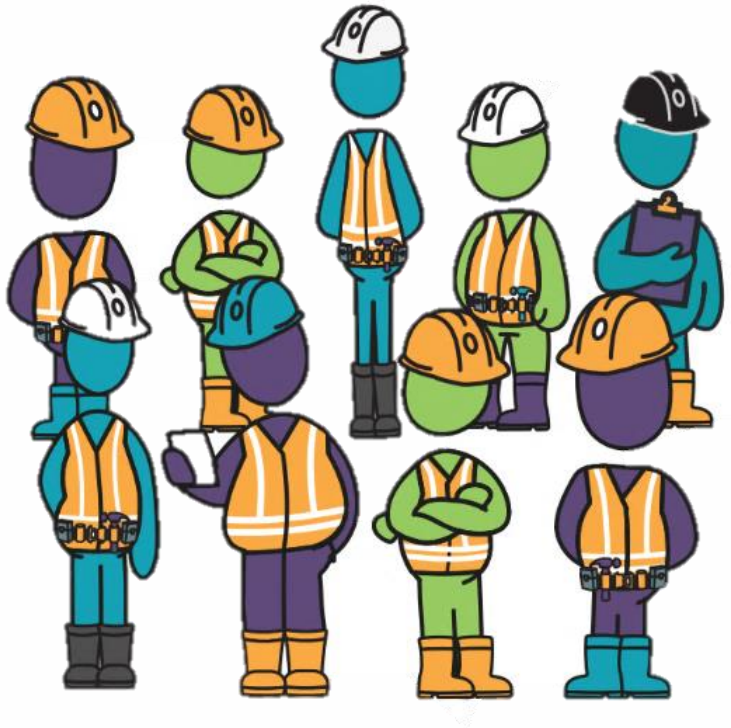
Funded by
CITB

Delivered in Partnership with
National Federation of Builders
Genius Within C.I.C.

Toolkit Contents

Each of these chapters can be accessed by clicking the titles below.

1. Introduction to the toolkit
2. Neurodiversity in the construction industry
3. Introduction to neurodiversity
4. Creating a neuroinclusive team
5. Adjustments, development and performance
6. Reference resources including Access to Work





1. Introduction to the Toolkit

Introduction to the toolkit

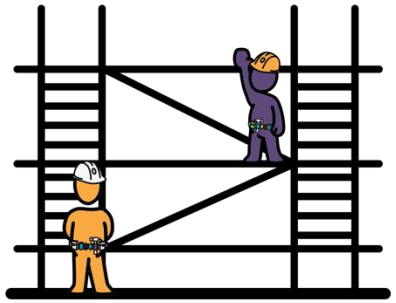
This toolkit aims to empower managers in the construction industry with knowledge and practical tools to support the performance and wellbeing of neurodivergent employees.

The toolkit uses straightforward language, graphics and industry case studies to help you understand:

- The basics of neurodiversity
- How to create a neuroinclusive team in practice
- How to identify and implement appropriate adjustments, support development and optimise performance of neurodivergent team members.

You can also access e-learning on neurodiversity, tailored to the construction industry.





Your role as a manager

As a manager you play a **crucial role as 'first responder' for neurodivergent team members**, providing an important source of practical support and psychological safety. However, managing relationships and performance in teams can be complex.

Only 46% of neurodivergent employees surveyed in **research** by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) feel their managers are capable and confident supporting neurodivergent individuals.

Sometimes managers worry that they do not know enough about specific conditions, but you don't need to be an expert. Instead, it is important you get to know the individual – what makes them tick, shine, switch off or panic - and that you can communicate effectively, be flexible and provide good feedback.

This toolkit, alongside the e-learning, will help you do this.



2. Neurodiversity in the Construction Industry

Neurodiversity in the construction industry

Research commissioned by the National Federation of Builders (NFB) involving over 1000 construction workers found that **1 in 4 construction** workers identify as neurodivergent, but only 17% have a formal diagnosis. The report identified a range of barriers to disclosing neurodivergence.

Barriers to disclosing neurodivergence at work

38%

Lack of empathy for neurodivergent workers in the industry

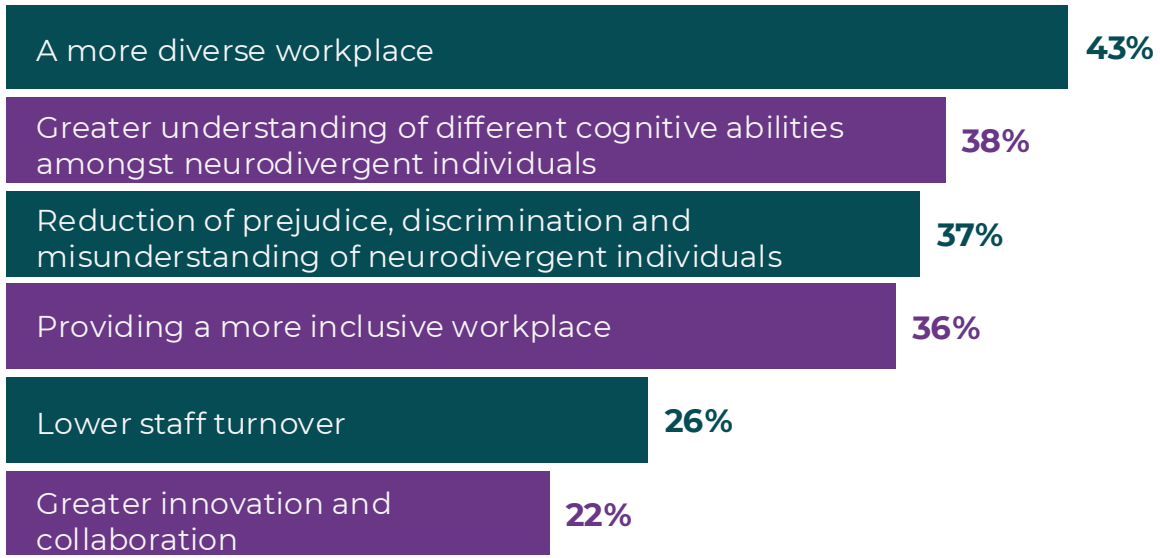
31%

Perceived **negative stigma**

26%

Worry about **being viewed differently**

The research also emphasised perceived benefits of neurodiversity awareness



CIPD research has also identified a range of **organisational benefits from providing effective support for neurodivergent individuals:**



Quality of people management



Employee engagement, wellbeing and retention



Employee performance



Creativity and innovation



Organisational culture



Customer service



3. Introduction to Neurodiversity

What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity means that everyone has their own neuro-cognitive profile of **strengths**, **skills**, **personality** and **values**. This variety is valuable to society. Research suggests that **15-20% of the population are neurodivergent.** This means their cognitive profile differs significantly from the 'neurotypical' majority.

Specific neurotypes, along with their prevalence in the population, are shown below. It is common for individuals to have traits of **more than one neurotype.** E.g. 50-70% of autistic people will also be ADHD.

Dyslexia (10%)
Challenges with reading, writing, spelling, short term memory.

Dyspraxia (5%)
Affects planning and physical coordination / motor skills.

Dyscalculia (5%)
Challenges in acquiring and using mathematical skills.

Dysgraphia (5%)
Challenges with writing.

Mental health / chronic illness / acquired neurodivergence
Can impact cognitive functioning.

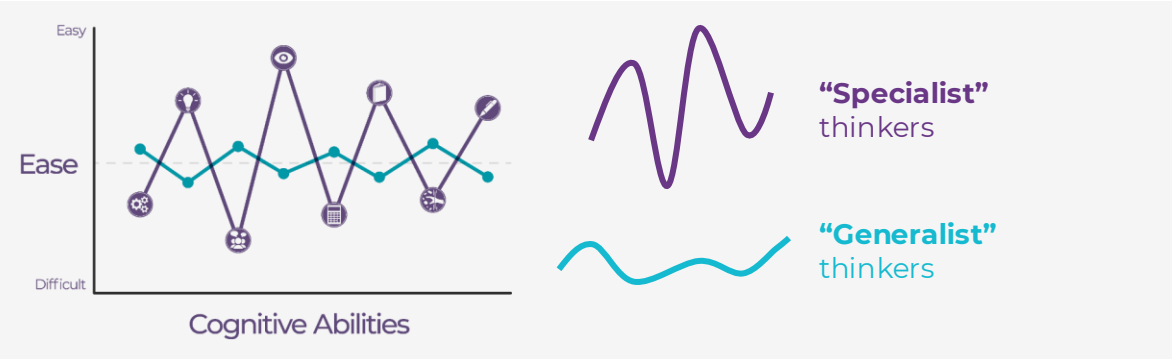
Autism (1-2%)
Can affect social communication, language, restricted/repetitive behaviour, sensory perception.

ADHD (5%)
Challenges regulating attention and/or hyperactivity and impulsivity; emotional regulation.

Tourette Syndrome (1%)
Repetitive, involuntary movements and vocalizations called tics.

Spiky profiles

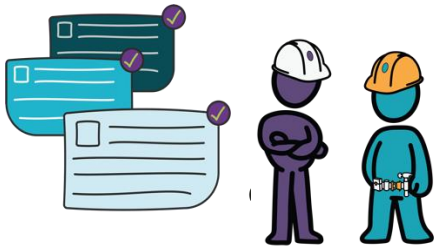
Neurotypical people generally have a similar level of ability across different cognitive skills, including visual reasoning, verbal reasoning, memory and processing speed. By contrast, neurodivergent people often demonstrate a greater difference between their cognitive strengths and cognitive challenges. This is known as a "spiky profile".



Examples of common neurodivergent strengths and challenges relevant to the construction industry are outlined on the next page. Finding some tasks quite easy and others hard can lead to inconsistent performance in work environments. Someone's profile can also be context dependent e.g. an apprentice's sensory challenges may increase if they move to a noisier site. Neurodivergent employees may encounter difficulty when their way of thinking conflicts with the environment or expected ways of working in their organisation. **The goal is to provide the support that people need to reach their potential.**

Language

People have different preferences around the language they use to describe themselves.



In this toolkit we use the term '**neurodivergent**', but some people might prefer '**neurodistinct**' or '**neurodiverse**'.

Some people prefer **person first language** e.g. person with autism. Others prefer **identity first language** e.g. autistic person. To use neuroinclusive language is to understand and adopt the language someone identifies with. If you're unsure, it's ok to ask them.

Neurodivergent strengths and challenges

Examples from the construction industry

In this section we explore some of the **strengths** and **challenges** often associated with neurodivergence that may be particularly relevant in the construction industry.

However, it is important to remember that **everyone is different**. What may be a challenge for one neurodivergent person maybe a strength for another, and vice versa. **It depends on their neurotype and specific traits**. It is not a case of one-size-fits-all!



Common neurodivergent strengths in construction

Problem solving
E.g. Driving resourcefulness and adaptability in tackling challenges such as adapting construction methods to site-specific constraints and responding to unexpected changes

Strategic thinking
E.g. Aligning immediate tasks with broader objectives, optimising budgets, schedules, and team roles to maximise success.

Insightfulness
E.g. Picking up on subtle details or dynamics that others may miss and potentially identifying challenges and risks early.

Creative thinking
E.g. Approaching problems with fresh ideas and unconventional solutions such as designing alternative construction methods, optimising workflows, or handling unique site conditions.



Multitasking
E.g. Juggling multiple tasks and priorities which can be useful for roles requiring oversight of diverse activities, such as project management or site coordination.

Inferential reasoning
E.g. Drawing logical conclusions from incomplete data can aid in troubleshooting, making decisions and anticipating challenges.

Big-picture thinking
E.g. Seeing overarching connections when coordinating large projects and managing multidisciplinary teams.

Pattern spotting
E.g. Identifying recurring issues in project workflows, recognising design inconsistencies in blueprints, or anticipating structural challenges based on past projects.

Common neurodivergent challenges in construction

Memory
E.g. Difficulty retaining or recalling instructions, safety procedures, or sequences of tasks

Processing speed
E.g. Taking longer to understand instructions or respond to changes in plans

Sensory sensitivity
E.g. Overwhelm from loud noises, bright lights, strong smells or tactile discomfort from uniforms and protective gear

Concentration
E.g. Difficulty maintaining attention on tasks, especially in busy or noisy environments



Time management
E.g. Struggling to estimate how long tasks will take or to prioritise effectively which may result in missed project deadlines

Communication
E.g. Difficulty understanding or expressing information clearly, especially under pressure

Emotional overload
E.g. Potentially heighted response to perceived threats or changes leading to anxiety or irritability

Organisation
E.g. Difficulty keeping tools, materials or tasks in order which may impact the flow of work for the individual and others

Barriers neurodivergent employees might experience in the workplace



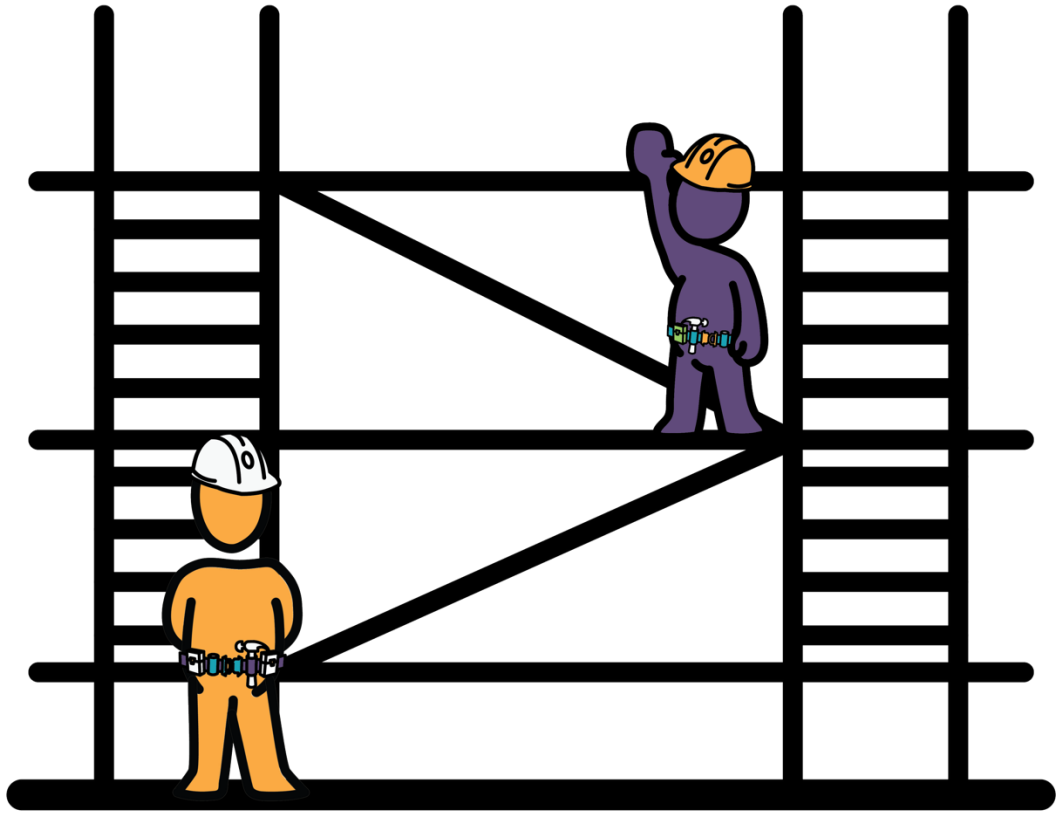
The introduction to this toolkit highlighted concerns that neurodivergent construction workers have around disclosure, stigma and discrimination.

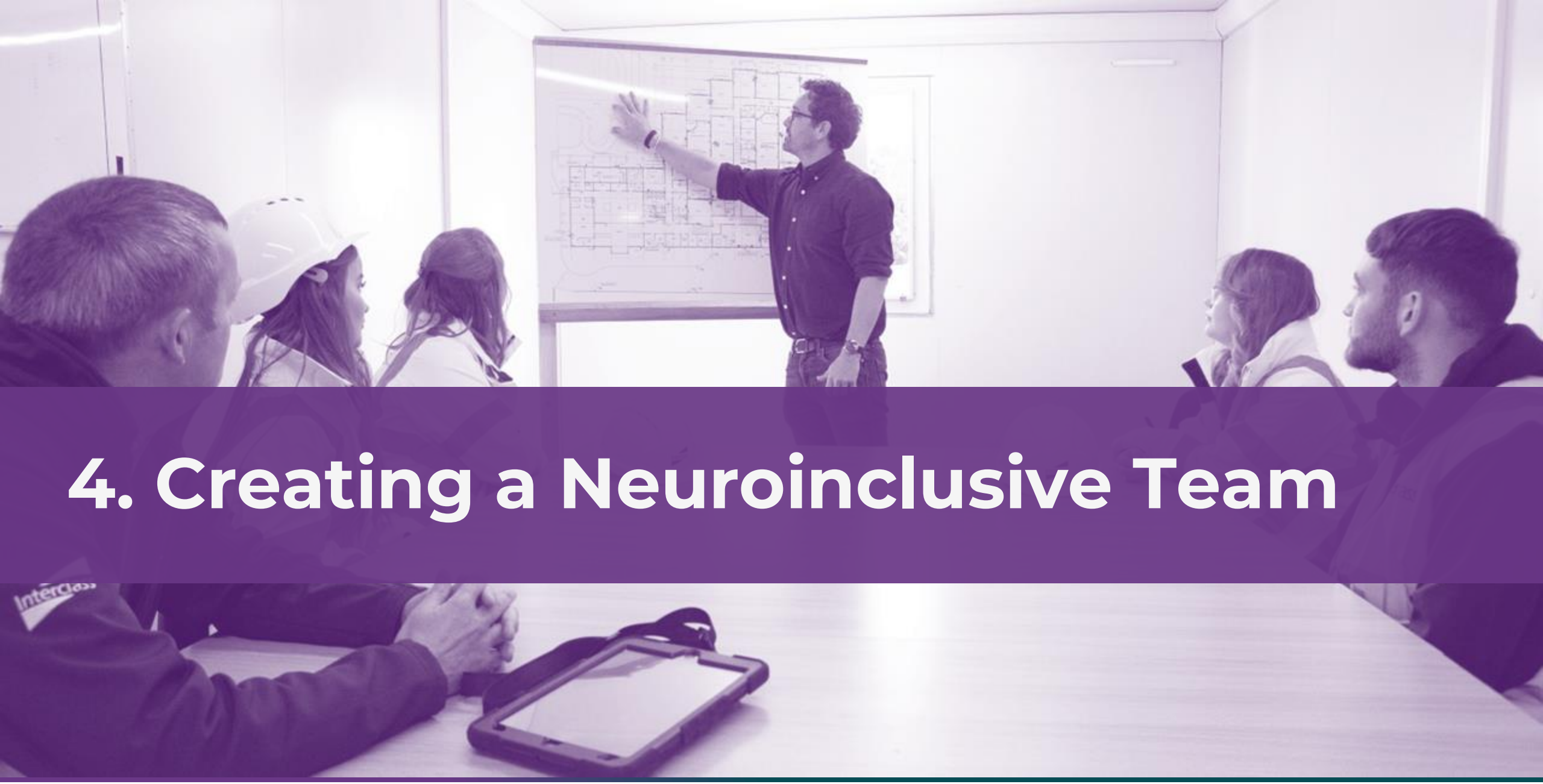
It also highlighted a **lack of manager confidence** in supporting neurodivergent employees.

If individuals don't feel safe to be themselves at work, they may **mask** neurodivergent traits or develop unhealthy coping mechanisms and miss out on the support they need to thrive. This can contribute to **challenges around performance, engagement and wellbeing.**

In general, **neurodivergent employees are less satisfied with their careers** than neurotypical employees, with the biggest driver being psychological safety, followed by support from staff and managers, knowledge of neurodiversity in the organisation and tailored adjustments.

Psychological safety and **career satisfaction** are also significant predictors of neurodivergent staff turnover.





4. Creating a Neuroinclusive Team

Creating a neuroinclusive team

Although barriers remain, the construction industry has made some **positive progress in supporting neurodivergent employees** in practice. The NFB research found that:

Progress in the construction industry

80%

Of construction workers that had **told their managers** they were neurodivergent reported received reasonable adjustments and support

76%

described **positive interactions** with their colleagues

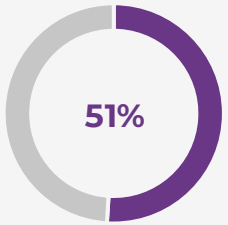
67%

of construction workers **believe** the industry **can support** neurodivergent people

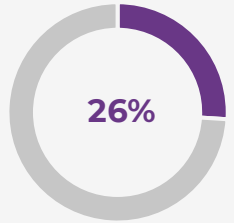
Creating psychological safety and a neuroinclusive culture

When asked **"how well do the people you work with support you with issues caused by your neurodiversity?"**

Half said **"fairly well"**



A quarter said **"very well"**



Checklist: creating psychological safety and a neuroinclusive culture

How you can support people to feel safe, and access support within your team.

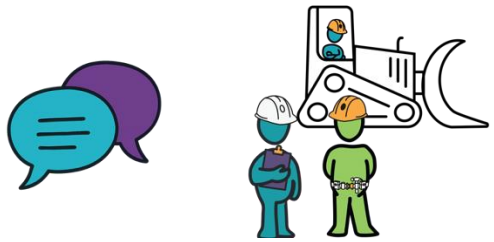
- **Be curious**
  Being wrong is ok. Ask, listen and follow neurodiversity leaders and research.
- **Be flexible**
  About ways of working in your team and avoid having 'unwritten rules'.
- **Engage respectfully**
  It takes a lot of energy to keep explaining. Respect if an individual cannot answer your questions.
- **Awareness**
  Neurodivergence can be an identity. Avoid assumptions and biases.
- **Challenge**
  Challenge misconceptions or bias that you witness.
- **Listen**
  Disclosure is personal and challenging due to stigma. Listen with intent to build understanding.
- **Normalise neurodiversity**
  Being neurodivergent affects every aspect of life. It is ok to talk about it and the challenges it brings.
- **Talk**
  Talk about your own ways of working and communication preferences. Encourage others to do the same.
- **Engage**
  Engage with the neurodivergent community throughout the year. Not just in awareness months.



Neuroinclusive communications

You can help create a neuroinclusive culture by considering team communications. Diverse teams have many benefits but may be more likely to experience miscommunication and misunderstandings.

These can contribute to negative thoughts, anxiety, defensive behaviour and even conflict (see also Chapter 5 for more information on clean feedback).



On the next page you will find some 'top tips' for neuroinclusive communications that you can use.



Checklist: top tips for neuroinclusive communications

- **Give advance notice of tasks** and materials to prep whenever possible such as new safety procedure documents prior to training or Toolbox Talk.
- **Provide multiple formats**, such as written summaries, visual aids, and audio recordings to support preferred learning styles or needs.
- **Avoid ambiguity with instructions** by explaining your request or change and the reason for it.
- **Avoid ambiguous language** which may be interpreted differently, such as "be proactive", "you need to get your head in the game", and "bring your whole self to work".
- **Try not to overburden with verbal instructions** by sending a summary email.
- **Use Arial or Tahoma font of at least size 12.** Their straight letters make it easier for people to read.
- **Prioritise important points** using bullet pointing, spacing and highlighting important text to help reading and organisation.
- **Offer accessibility functions within your technology packages** e.g. read aloud & dictate functions. Also consider specialist assistive tech to support communication and planning.
- **Use dark text on a pale coloured background**, rather than black on white in digital and printed documents.
- **Implement anonymous feedback systems.**

Checklist: top tips for neuroinclusive meetings

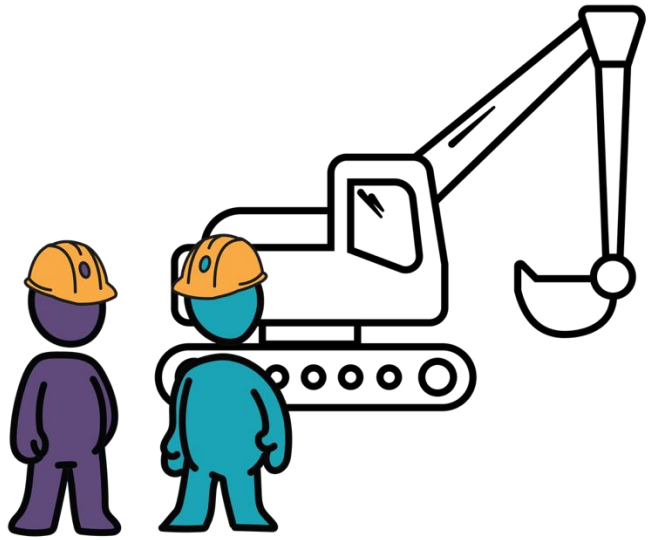
- **Provide agendas and reports in advance** to allow time to plan contributions.
- **Build breaks into long meetings,** and enable people to use fidget tools, move around, or turn off cameras (if relevant) to aid concentration.
- **Record meetings** if other participants are willing to listen back later.
- **Offer different ways to contribute ideas and accept contributions after the meeting**, once someone has had more time to process the discussion.
- **Follow up meetings with written action points.**



Checklist: The working environment

You can also contribute to a neuroinclusive culture by considering how your **working environment can be made more neurodiversity friendly**. Top tips include:

- **Be aware** of the potential for noise, light, smell, colour to create sensory overwhelm.
- **Designate quiet spaces** or noise exclusion zones where people can decompress during breaks, to reduce sensory overload.
- **Conduct noise surveys** and communicate planned noisy activities well in advance.
- **Use shaded areas or portable shelters** to create calm environments for focus-intensive tasks e.g. reviewing technical blueprints.
- **Ensure workers wearing ear defenders** have access to non-verbal or radio communication to maintain safety.
- **Provide clear signage on sites.**



Conversations with team members

How to have good conversations with team members about their strengths, challenges and support needs.

Everyone will have their own ways of working preferences and support needs, whether neurodivergent or not.

In addition, not all neurodivergent individuals will know about, or feel comfortable sharing, their neurotype and it isn't something you should ask them about directly. Given this, consider discussing the following questions with ALL your team members:



Doing this provides an opportunity to discuss specific support needs and tailor your management style to meet individual needs, without pressure to disclose.

Make sure these conversations take place **somewhere private** where the individual feels comfortable. This may be virtual or face to face, depending on preferences.

Strengths-led support can be an effective conversation aid.

If someone doesn't have a clear idea of their **strengths and challenges at work**, it can be useful to use a strengths-led tool like **Genius Finder™.**

Genius Finder Pro assesses a person's **confidence** across a comprehensive range of workplace skills, and provides tailored strategies to address development areas, which are free and easy to implement.



To try out the strengths-led profiler Genius Finder™ via this link

www.geniusfinder.com

How to respond if a team member discloses their neurodivergence

1

Respond / reply clearly and positively.

"Thank you for trusting me to share this information."

"I'm here to listen and support you."

2

Give them space to share information as they wish.

Actively listen, avoid making assumptions.

3

Involve them in solutions to any challenges, ask:

"What would you like to happen next?"

"What has worked well in the past?"

"What would I see/hear if things are (or aren't) working well for you? "

4

Share information.

About all the support options available in your organisation.

5

Agree practical next steps.

Follow up with an email / written message.



5. Adjustments, Development and Performance

Adjustments, development and performance

Get more helpful information on adjustments and tools in the Appendix

Workplace adjustments: law, principles and relevant examples

Neurodivergent individuals may benefit from tailored workplace adjustments. Workplace adjustments (or accommodations) are changes made by an employer to remove or reduce the disadvantage that an individual faces at work connected with their disability.

Under the Equality Act (2010) employers are required to make 'reasonable' adjustments for disabled employees and recruitment candidates. While neurodivergent individuals may not identify as disabled, they will often meet legal definitions of disability.

Workplace adjustments can include changes to the **physical environment**, **working arrangements**, **policies**, **equipment**, or **support**. They can lead to significant benefits, including enhanced learning, performance, wellbeing and retention. Whether an adjustment is considered reasonable can depend on whether it:

Workplace adjustments can include changes to the **physical environment**, **working arrangements**, **policies**, **equipment**, or **support**. They can lead to significant benefits, including enhanced learning, performance, wellbeing and retention. Whether an adjustment is considered reasonable can depend on whether it:

- Will remove or reduce the disadvantage
- Is practical to put in place
- Is affordable
- Could harm health and safety of others

Adjustments, development and performance

Get more helpful information on adjustments and tools in the Appendix

Principles of effective adjustments



Tailored to individual needs and role
Adjustments should be tailored to the specific challenges that an individual experiences in their specific role. The adjustment also needs to be feasible, e.g. it isn't practical for a bricklayer to work from home. It is important not to make assumptions about what someone will need, based on what has worked for others.



Agreed in collaboration, proactive and prompt
Adjustments should be agreed in collaboration between the individual and manager, with advice from HR or specialists if needed. They should be put in place proactively, rather than waiting until performance concerns have arisen.



Don't require a diagnosis
Case law shows that individuals don't need a diagnosis to be entitled to reasonable adjustments.



Recorded and regularly reviewed
Adjustments should be recorded and kept under regular review to assess impact and amend if needed.

Checklist: examples of adjustments in construction

Whilst adjustments must always be tailored to the individual, here are some examples that might be useful and practical in the construction industry, including for those in operational construction roles

- **A consistent routine for daily activities**, including set breaks and scheduled toolbox talks, to help reduce anxiety and support planning.
- **Flexible training options,** such as setting up laptops or tablets that workers can use for training at any time, allow them to complete necessary courses at their own pace.
- **Mobile accessibility solutions** like portable ramps and handrails which can be easily moved as the site progresses.
- **Minimising bright lights or providing noise-cancelling headphones**, can make temporary workspaces more comfortable for those with sensory issues.
- **Staggered start times** to manage workload and reduce stress during high-demand periods.
- **Voice-to-text apps** for site managers to log daily diaries or incident reports while moving on site.
- **Tablets with interactive visual plans.**
- **Provide schedules of work in advance** with deadlines highlighted.
- **Advance notice of changes,** explaining the rationale, inviting questions and involving the individual in decision making if possible.

Checklist: examples of adjustments in construction for office-based roles

Here are some additional adjustment examples that might be suitable for people in office-based construction roles

- **An adjustable or standing desk** to reduce distractibility.
- **An allocated desk** so the individual can set up / control their desk space to work for them and reduce anxiety.
- **Dual screens to encourage concentration** and avoid distraction in the form of flitting between tabs.
- **Flexible or part time hours,** so the individual can work or travel at quieter times, or when they are most productive.
- **Work from home,** at least some of the time (if feasible) to control the environment and reduce distractions.
- **Noise cancelling headphones** to block out noise distractions.
- **Task management software** (e.g. Trello, Asana) for planners and project managers.
- **Text-to-speech or dictation software.**



Adjustments, development and performance

Workplace Adjustment Passport

Workplace Adjustment Passports can support employees by documenting necessary adjustments and facilitating communication with employers. The employee can decide whether to share their passport with colleagues, new managers etc.

The document also serves as a record of what you have agreed, ensuring you are on the same page. If you don't already have a workplace passport in your organisation, you can easily create one. A suggested template is in Part 5

It is important that the workplace adjustment passport is a living document, kept under regular review.



Supporting neurodivergent individuals to learn and develop

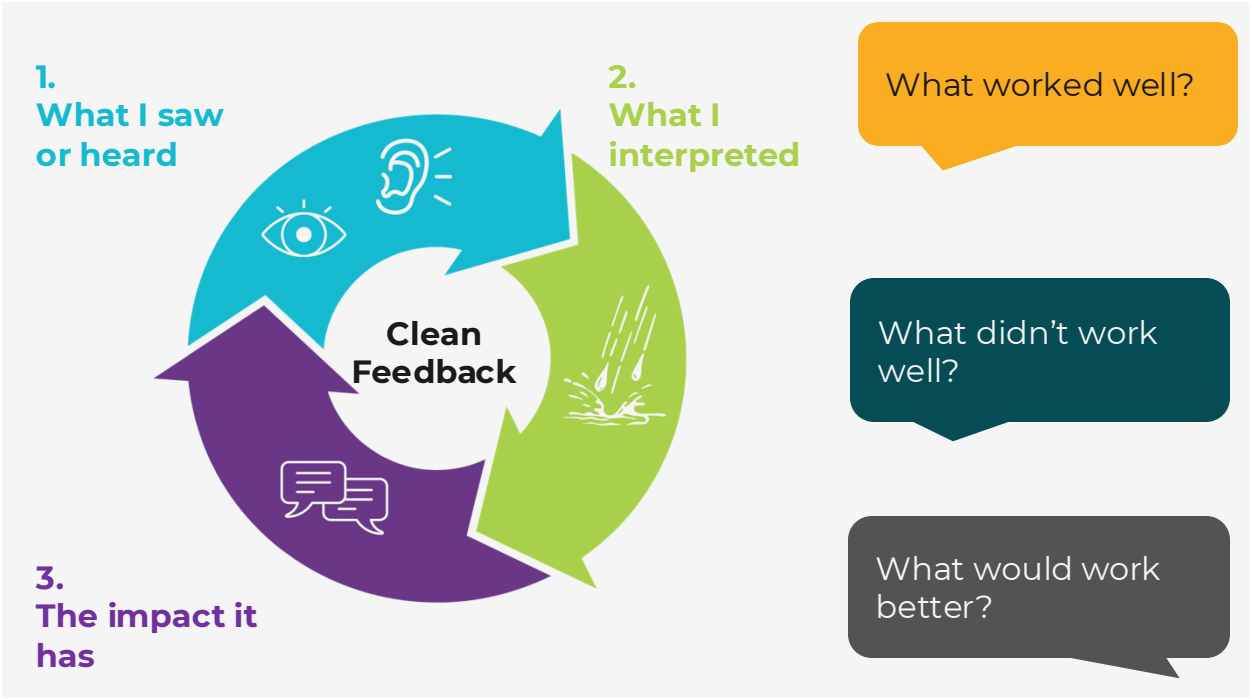
As a manager, you have a vital role in supporting a neurodivergent employee's career development**. Top tips on personal development include:**

- **Focus on how an individual's strengths can be maximised** in their role, and if necessary/feasible, adjust their role so it plays to their strengths.
- **Regular personal development conversations** identifying development and career goals and any additional support required to meet them.
- **Encourage a growth mindset** where challenges and mistakes are viewed as an opportunity to learn and grow, and blame is avoided.
- **Provide regular feedback.** Positive feedback can be particularly beneficial given neurodivergent individuals often have low confidence, but developmental feedback is important too. Some neurodivergent individuals may be sensitive to criticism, so sensitivity is important.
- **Use clean feedback.** Separate evidence of what you've seen & heard, from the inference you make about the intention behind the behaviour.

Adjustments, development and performance

Clean feedback

Clean feedback means separating out evidence of what you have seen and heard, from the inference you make about the intention behind the behaviour, and its impact.



Workplace strategy coaching

Workplace strategy coaching can **help individuals develop a toolbox of strategies relevant to them,** e.g. organisation, time management, concentration, stress and state management, literacy.

Evaluation of coaching at Genius Within has identified the following outcomes of coaching:

75%

Improvement in performance
(self-rated)

47%

Improvement in productivity
(manager-rated)

Adjustments, development and performance

Evaluating performance

Whilst neurodivergent employees may require additional support in their role, **they should meet reasonable performance expectations**.
Top tips for providing a fair and sensitive assessment of performance include:



Focus on outcomes and if possible, be flexible about how they are delivered.



Handle the situation sensitively if someone's approach has caused genuine challenges for others, e.g. where colleagues have very different communication styles.



Be mindful of unconscious bias when evaluating performance, for example interpreting an individual's fidgeting or direct communication as rude; making assumptions about wider capability due to spelling mistakes; or assuming an individual isn't a committed team member because they don't engage in social activities.



Remember some individuals may find it difficult to discuss aspirations because of challenges with social imagination or low confidence. Provide stretch opportunities which demonstrate potential in practice and give examples of future opportunities that might suit them given their strengths.



Keep good records to ensure transparency and show you have taken an appropriate approach to evaluating performance.

Adjustments, development and performance

Supporting performance improvement

If performance concerns arise, it is important the appropriate adjustments and support are implemented **before** any formal action is begun. Top tips on how to approach performance improvements with the individual include:

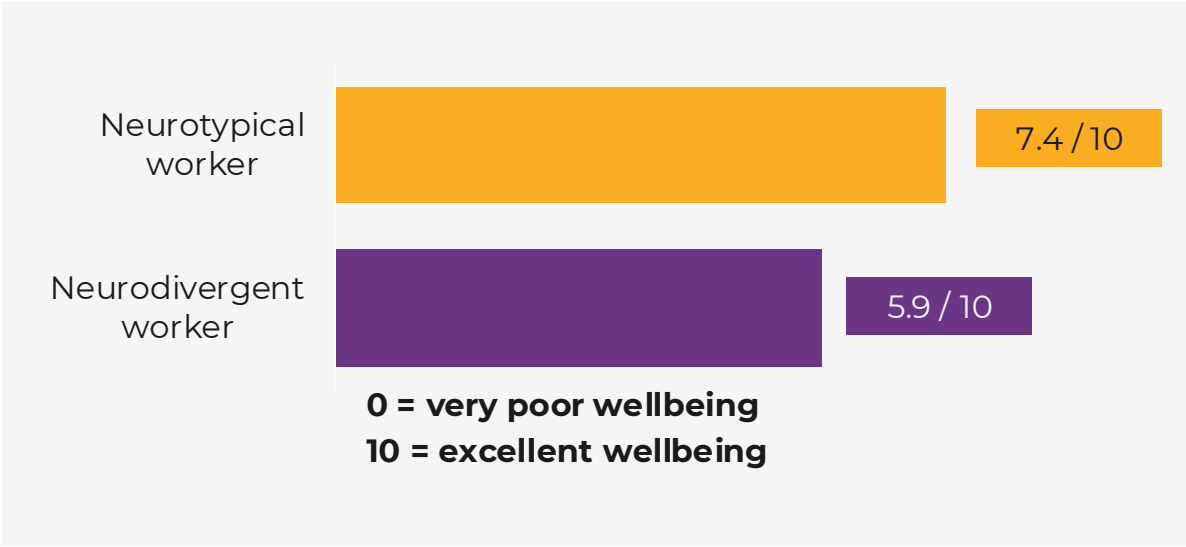
- **Listen to their perspective** and any underlying reasons for the behaviour.
- **Recognise that they may catastrophise, be defensive or be very self-critical.**
- **Help them maintain perspective by focusing on the specific issue,** behaviour and impact rather than overall character.
- **Provide reassurance about the value they bring to the team.**
- **Seek their ideas for how to resolve the situation** and co-create a solution, agreeing clear expectations for the future.
- **Agree any additional adjustments** and review points for assessing their impact.
- **Seek help from a specialist neurodiversity coach -** coaching for the individual, or co-coaching for you both, can help get the right strategies in place to improve performance.

Adjustments, development and performance

Wellbeing and Health

Neurodivergent individuals often have lower levels of wellbeing and are at higher risk of mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression than the general population.

Wellbeing levels of neurodivergent workers, compared to neurotypical workers.



Mental health challenges may be intensified by the stress of masking, stigma and discrimination.

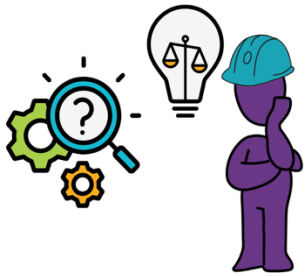
Neurodivergent traits are sometimes **misdiagnosed** as **symptoms of a mental health condition**, particularly in women and girls, due to limited awareness amongst medical professionals. Neurodivergent traits may also be intensified by hormonal changes in women, such as menopause.

Neurodivergent individuals are also **more likely than neurotypical individuals** to experience some physical health conditions, such as joint hypermobility and chronic pain, which can exacerbate the challenges they experience.



Top Tips: for supporting wellbeing

- Check the individual is **not working excessively.**
- Encourage individuals to practice **self-care** in the way that works for them. e.g. sleep, exercise.
- Invest time to **build trust and acknowledging individual emotions** and experiences.
- Let them know **their feelings are valid and understood**, avoid judgement and keep talking.
- Work with them to **understand situations or events that tend to trigger** strong emotional responses and support to develop coping strategies.
- **Identify a buddy or mentor** outside the immediate team who the individual feels comfortable to talk to when they feel anxious, overwhelmed or angry.
- **Signpost to Mental Health support** if needed, such as your Employee Assistance Programme if you have one.
- **Create a Wellness Action Plan together**: a personalised, practical tool recommended by Mind to help identify what keeps us well at work, what causes us to become unwell and how to address a mental health problem.



Template: Workplace Adjustments Passport



Name	
Role	
About Me	
My strengths	
My challenges	
How I prefer to communicate and work	
My environment	
Support I need from you	
My adjustments	
My strategies	

Case Study: Thriving with ADHD in Construction and Design



Written by **April Comerford**; **Considerate Constructors Scheme**

Throughout my career in construction and design, I've often felt like my brain was wired a little differently. I found it hard to sit still in long meetings, struggled to concentrate on one task at a time, and constantly battled an internal sense of restlessness. For years, I thought I just needed to try harder, be more disciplined, or mask my natural instincts to stay "professional."

It wasn't until I was 30 to **recognise the the patterns** I'd been navigating all along and seek diagnosis for ADHD. That diagnosis didn't limit me – it liberated me. It **gave language to my lived experience** and helped me stop viewing myself through a lens of deficiency. My internal narrative changed from 'I can't focus on the highly detailed' to 'My blue sky thinking allows me to problem solve in unique ways'.

In truth, **ADHD has given me strengths that have powered my career**. I'm incredibly creative under pressure, full of energy, and naturally inclined towards solving problems in unconventional ways. I **thrive in fast-paced environments** and can juggle multiple priorities when others might stall. And most of all, I love **building new relationships** and delivering a high quality of service to project stakeholders.

But I've also **had to work hard to build strategies that support my focus, manage sensory overwhelm, and prevent burnout.**

Construction is an industry that prizes resilience, adaptability, and innovation – all things that ADHD can bring in abundance when supported correctly. But too often, neurodivergent professionals are expected to fit into rigid systems that don't reflect how we work best.

Now, in leadership roles, I advocate **for inclusive working environments with flexible structures, clear communication, and cultures that celebrate difference rather than suppress it.** When we make space for diverse minds, we unlock new ideas, stronger teams, and better outcomes for everyone. Working at Considerate Constructor Scheme has allowed me to support the championing of Neurodivergence in Construction and help provide and environment for more people to thrive.

ADHD isn't something I've had to overcome – it's something I've learned to harness. And I believe the construction industry is stronger when it welcomes people who think, feel, and work differently.

Case Study: CITB Health Safety & Environment (HS&E) Test Review

Effective digital design for neuroinclusive comms, accessibility and support

Background

Working closely with a neurodiversity consultancy in early 2025, CITB carried out a **review of the customer experience** when booking and sitting the Health Safety and Environment (HS&E) Test.

Objectives

The review aimed to **identify opportunities for improvement** and to ensure that the process of **booking and sitting the HS&E test** included **neuroinclusive communications, accessibility, and support** throughout.

The Three-Step Solution Approach

The review detailed current strengths and recommendations for improvements to the website and booking journey. These included:

1) CITB Website

- Enable individuals to navigate to information more easily
- Simple wording to support individuals with processing challenges
- Create a dedicated Reasonable Adjustments area

2) Revision

Review the revision materials to ensure all learning styles are considered

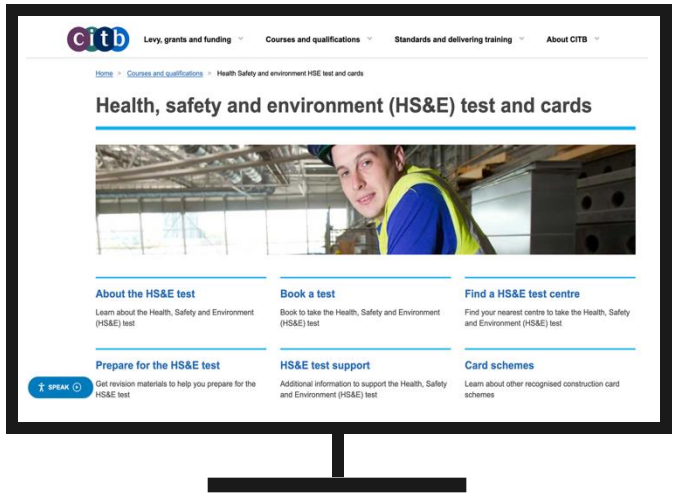
3) Test

Extend the list of adjustments currently on offer to provide wider support when sitting the test.

What Next?

A number of changes are already planned and CITB are exploring ways to implement these recommendations fully, to improve accessibility and inclusion for all.

For further information contact CITB at:
testingservicesfeedback@citb.co.uk





6. Reference Resources

The ‘Access to Work’ Scheme (1)

Access to Work is a grant scheme provided by the UK Government’s Department for Work & Pensions

What is the scheme for?

The scheme is there to help find or stay in work if individuals have challenges that may be related to any disability, physical health or mental health conditions. As soon as someone has difficulties (or think that they are going to have difficulties) at work, they can refer themselves to this service and gain the support that they need to be at their best.

However, it is often misunderstood so it can appear hard to get the support needed.

Here is some guidance on to how to access the support needed with an Access to Work grant.

It should be noted that the process can take up to six months from application to receiving the grant. Whilst waiting for the grant to be approved we would recommend using the My Genius Finder™ tool – this will provide individuals some useful strategies to work on whilst the application is being processed.

To suggest this as a support for your teams, individuals do NOT need to have a formal diagnosis to apply for an Access to Work grant. The support someone receives will depend on individual needs.

What will Access to Work pay for?

Access to Work could give a grant to help pay for things like:

- Specialist equipment and assistive software.
- Support workers, such as a BSL interpreter, a workplace coach.
- Mental health or communications support.
- Costs of travelling to work if the individual cannot use public transport.
- Adaptations to a vehicle so you can get to work.
- Physical changes to the workplace.

If the person works from home, even just some of the time, the home can count as part of the workplace, it is helpful to suggest the people you are supporting mention and discuss this with the assessor.

The ‘Access to Work’ Scheme (2)

Access to Work is a grant scheme provided by the UK Government’s Department for Work & Pensions

The Process of Applying Explained

It is a 4-step process

Step 1: Apply Apply online at the Government website

https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work

The person can also contact the Access to Work helpline Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm via telephone (0800 121 7479) or textphone (0800 121 7579).

To apply the individual will need:

1 National Insurance Number

2 Details of their job or upcoming job

3 Information on their disability, condition or challenges

If starting a new job, it's best to apply before the individual starts or within the first 6 weeks to avoid delays in support.

Step 2: Assessment

Once the application is made, the individual will receive a call from an assessor at the DWP, Maximus or Reed, who will arrange an assessment.

Following the assessment, they will write a report **recommending the support the individual needs** to perform effectively in their job.

Access to Work can even provide training for colleagues in how to best support and understand their condition or disability. This can be crucial for supporting non-apparent disabilities including neurodivergence, mental health, and where physical conditions affect thinking, as these are often harder for others to know about and understand what is going on for you.

Step 3: Put Adjustments in Place

If the person work for a small employer (under 50 employees) the support is free of charge. If self-employed, the Access to Work scheme will refund the cost of any support ordered.

However, if working for a larger employer, they may need to contribute some or all the costs of equipment

The costs of any coaching or training are currently covered in full by the grant, regardless the size of business.

The ‘Access to Work’ Scheme (3)

Access to Work is a grant scheme provided by the UK Government’s Department for Work & Pensions

Step 4: Learn – develop – adapt

Once adjustments are received, there’s usually a period of training, such as how to use new technology, co-coaching with the manager to navigate communication

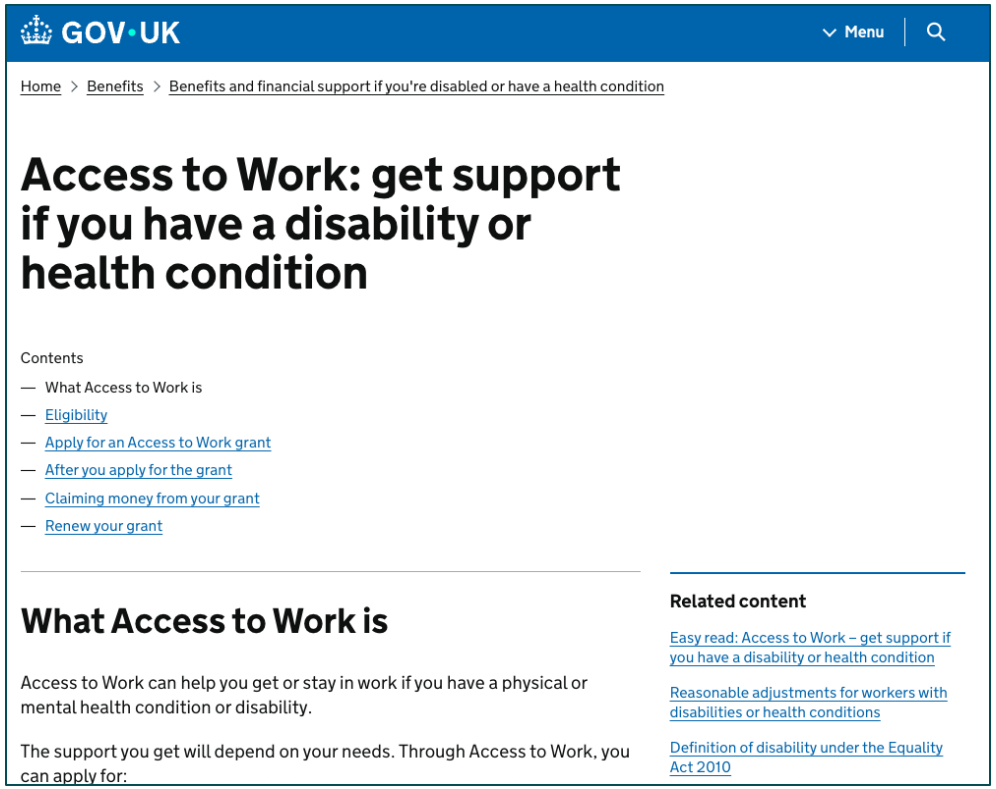
Finally, take the time to review the impact

Here’s an example of the impact from one individual:

“I’m **more productive** in my meetings, and my to-do list is more manageable. I’m no longer procrastinating about writing long reports.

Even my line manager has **noticed the difference**.

Having come out the other side, if I’d done this years ago who knows how far I would have gotten in my career now as **everything is easier, quicker and a lot less stressful**.”



Apply Apply online at the Government website
https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Top apps for construction workers with reading / writing challenges (1)

Challenge	Free app	How to use	How to access
Reading: Key Functions: • Read for students with literacy and reading difficulties. • English not first language. • Visual stress (provide colour backgrounds, different fonts and sizes) • Visual dictionary of words to assist comprehension	**Microsoft 365 – Immersive Reader** Microsoft Education is free: Free Office 365 for Students and Educators | Microsoft Education	How to use the Immersive Reader - making reading more accessible	**Phone** Go to the App Store and download the Office mobile apps you want (Microsoft Word) The first time you open an app, sign in with the account you use to sign into Microsoft 365 Account (college account)
Reading: Key Functions: • Take pictures of whiteboard documents and then reads aloud	**Microsoft 365 Lens**	How to Use Microsoft Lens https://youtu.be/A2DoALHoxTc?si=DuhlXyUAKGPdt5cl	**Phone** Microsoft Lens: PDF Scanner on the App Store **Android** Microsoft Lens - PDF Scanner - Apps on Google Play

Top apps for construction workers with reading / writing challenges (2)

Challenge	Free app	How to use	How to access
Reading: Key Functions ChatGPT is a natural-language tool. It allows users to have a human-like conversation. It can provide support with a range of tasks. • Correcting spelling, grammar and punctuation • Shortening notes (summarising) • Ask instant questions • Read Aloud Overcoming Dyslexia in Higher Education: How ChatGPT is Changing the Game | Dyslexia UK	**Chat GPT**	Beginner Chat GPT Guide: https://youtu.be/JzkZGGX3MxY?si=50SOVzBCAdUVI2g9 Copy and paste into Natural Reader: How to Have Chat GPT Read Aloud	NaturalReader - Text To Speech on the App Store
Reading: Notebook LM from Google. This helps you understand complex topics by converting into a conversation (audio file / podcast type format).	**Notebook LM**	Getting started with NotebookLM https://support.google.com/notebooklm#topic=16164070	Access online from computer or smartphone / mobile https://notebooklm.google/

Source: Yvonne McAnulty Additional Support for Learning Officer, CITB

Top apps for construction workers with reading / writing challenges (3)

Challenge	Free app	How to use	How to access
Reading: Key Functions: • Read for students with literacy and reading difficulties. • English not first language. • Visual stress (provide colour backgrounds, different fonts and sizes) • Visual dictionary of words to assist comprehension	**Microsoft 365 – Immersive Reader** Microsoft Education is free: Free Office 365 for Students and Educators | Microsoft Education	How to use the Immersive Reader - making reading more accessible	**Phone** Go to the App Store and download the Office mobile apps you want (Microsoft Word) The first time you open an app, sign in with the account you use to sign into Microsoft 365 Account (college account)
Reading: Key Functions: • Take pictures of whiteboard documents and then reads aloud	**Microsoft 365 Lens**	How to Use Microsoft Lens https://youtu.be/A2DoALHoxTc?si=DuhlXyUAKGPdt5cl	**Phone** Microsoft Lens: PDF Scanner on the App Store **Android** Microsoft Lens - PDF Scanner - Apps on Google Play

Top apps for construction workers with reading / writing challenges (4)

Challenge	Free app	How to use	How to access
Writing: Microsoft 365 – Dictate/ Transcribe • Writing. • Finds typing difficult. • Spelling and spell checking. • Recording and transcribing conversations into text format (memory) • change language for ESOL (Polish, Romanian etc)	**Talk to type Software Name: Microsoft 365 – Dictate / Transcribe** Easy to use free with Microsoft packages can be used with phone.	**Training** How to use **Transcribe** voice recording notes/lecturers https://youtu.be/FxQvsCBpNAw Difference between dictate and transcribe (dictate takes speech in real time and types up) Transcribe is for notes later **Dictate** Talk to type https://youtu.be/2zfnWTSObfc	Phone - Go to the App Store and download the Office mobile apps you want (Microsoft Word) The first time you open an app, sign in with the account you use to sign into Microsoft 365 Account (college account)

Source: Yvonne McAnulty Additional Support for Learning Officer, CITB

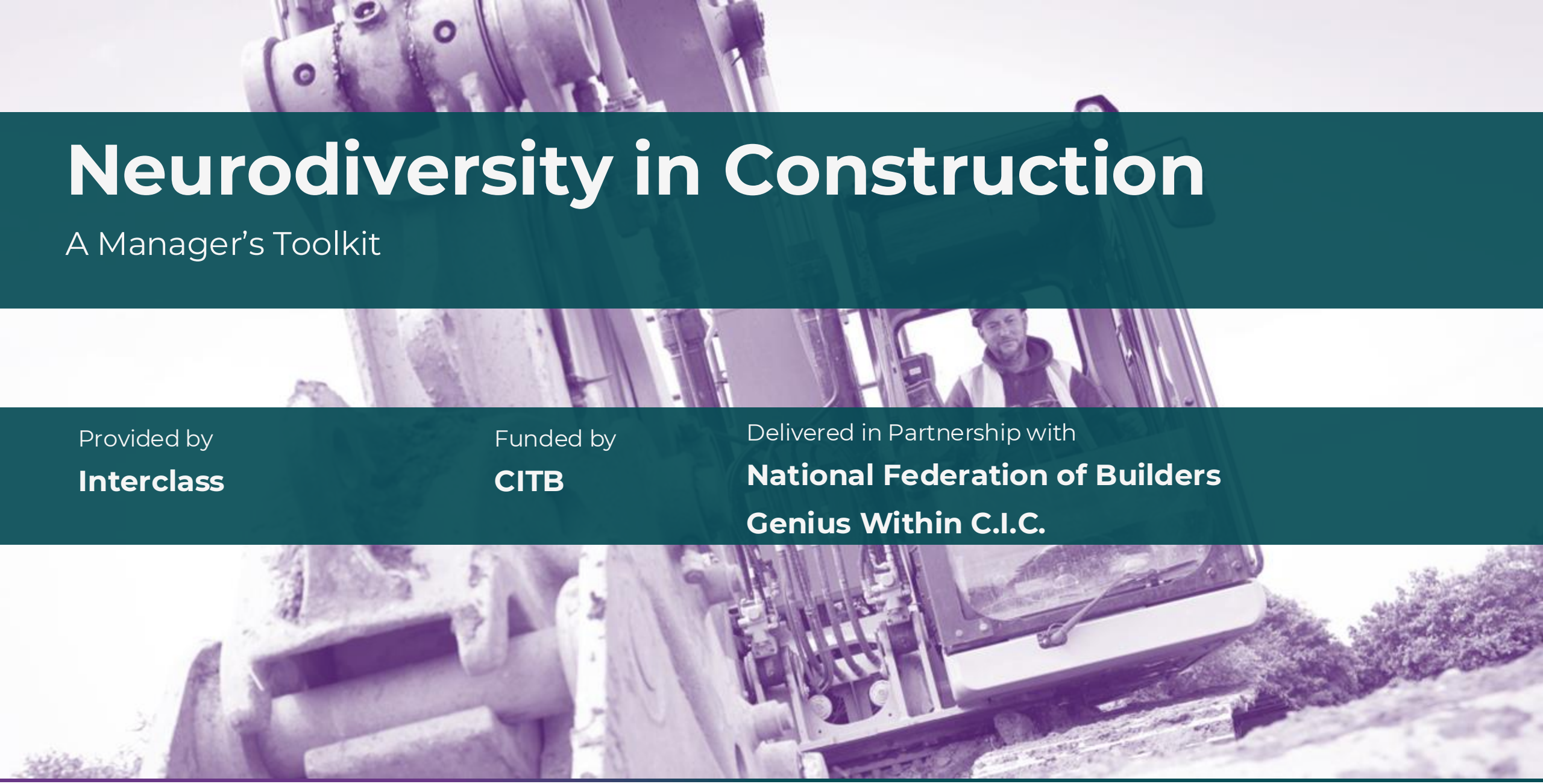
Top apps for construction workers with reading / writing challenges (5)

Challenge	Free app	How to use	How to access
Organisation Support **Goblin Tools** • Magic to do list- Generates To do List for (you can opt to break task down more) • Formaliser- Helps with writing formal letters or emails • You can talk into it (talk to type)	**Name: Goblin Tools**	Goblin.tools is a free website features a variety of different ways it can assist you as you navigate your day. Goblin.tools features a "collection of small, simple, single-task tools, mostly designed to help neurodivergent people with tasks that they find overwhelming or difficult. Youtube how to use guide: https://youtu.be/zx1wseZTMH0	Free website Access Magic ToDo - Goblin Tools

Top apps for construction workers with reading / writing challenges (6)

Challenge	Free app	How to use	How to access
Organisational-Project support	**todoist**	Can write daily task with notifications can sync to email and calendar Basic Guide on how to use- https://youtu.be/Xz_zrt_zENA Sync your to do list to calendar or email alert- https://youtu.be/HWVogFLyJbE?si=sVOKpqhQKCjIzzRQ	Free download app on phone

Source: Yvonne McAnulty Additional Support for Learning Officer, CITB



Neurodiversity in Construction

A Manager's Toolkit

Provided by
Interclass

Funded by
CITB

Delivered in Partnership with
National Federation of Builders
Genius Within C.I.C.