



# WORKPLACE STRATEGY COACHING

Accessible solutions for the world we live and work in

2024

# COMPANY BACKGROUND

Microlink making the workspace accessible and inclusive



## MICROLINK

Microlink has been providing accessibility solutions to disabled people in work and education since 1992. As such, we are uniquely placed to help your organisation become accessible and inclusive to all disabled people. We are the UK's leading providers of Workplace Adjustment Services to organisations, having delivered on 500,000 cases over more than a decade. In this time, our award-winning service has been used by major organisations throughout the UK in both the public and private sectors. With well-established supply chains, we have access to the most appropriate technologies and services to ensure that your organisation receives the very best solutions available in an efficient and cost-effective manner. By engaging Microlink's WPA services, you can be assured that any potential work barriers faced by your employees will be removed and the maximum potential be harnessed.

Our service partner is the UK's leading psychology-based consultancy for neurodiversity employment, training, coaching and assessments. Established in 2011, we deliver award-winning support across a range of sectors. We advise government bodies and provide consultancy to businesses, driving systemic change that allows all employees to thrive.

Together we provide workplace solutions that build systemic change and offer productivity tools across organisations of all sizes.

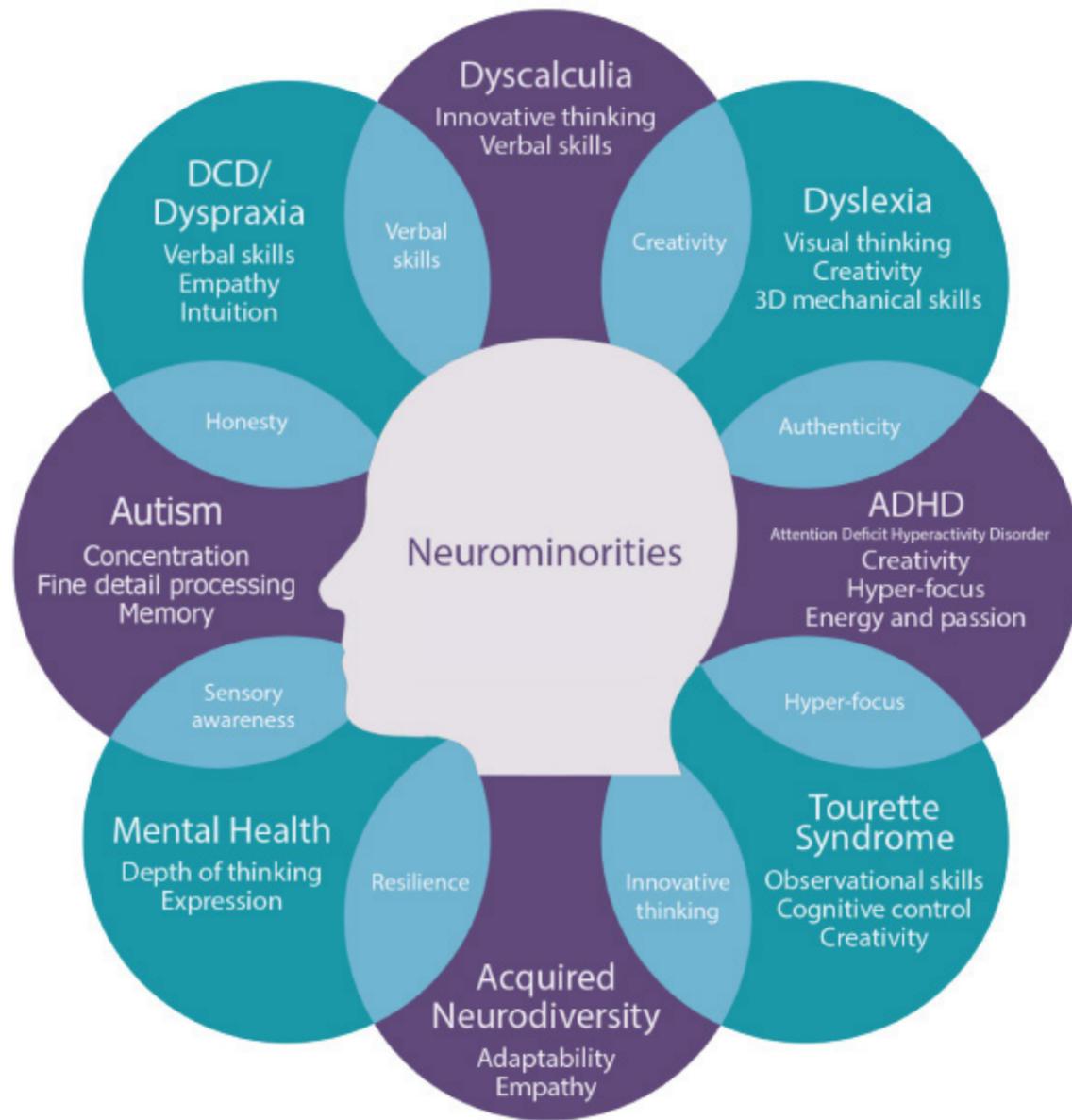
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# WHAT IS NEURODIVERSITY?

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Whole population prevalence is estimated to be around

# 15-20%



## NEURODIVERSITY; APPLIED, CLINICAL AND ACQUIRED

Neurodiversity is the concept that all humans vary in terms of our neurocognitive ability. Everyone has talents and things they struggle with. However, for some people the variation between those strengths and weaknesses is more pronounced, which can bring talent but can also be disabling.

Neurodiverse/neurodivergent people tend to find some things very easy and other things incredibly hard. This can lead to an inconsistent performance at work.

There are four different types of Neurodiversity; including applied Neurodiversity, Clinical Neurodiversity, short term Acquired Neurodiversity and long term Acquired Neurodiversity.

By Acquired Neurodiversity, we mean a cognitive change that has an impact on an individual's ability to process information. Long term Acquired Neurodiversity includes conditions such as strokes, brain injury and cancer.

Short term Acquired Neurodiversity includes cognitive changes caused by longtail covid, poor mental health, periods of anxiety and high stress.

These conditions can manifest in behaviours at work including a loss of interest in tasks, poor concentration at work, inability to prioritise tasks, decreased levels of energy, feelings of low self-esteem or control, and excessive fatigue caused by disturbed sleep.

In order to manage individual performance during periods of Neurodiversity, we recommend establishing workplace strategies via a series of one-to-one or group coaching.



## **WORKPLACE STRATEGY COACHING**

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### **WHAT IS A WORKPLACE STRATEGY COACHING?**

Workplace Strategy Coaching is a way of supporting an individual to work at their best more of the time. It is about finding practical solutions to challenges, whilst recognising and playing to strengths. It is also about working with stress levels, knowing how to change habits to be in the best state possible and identifying longer term goals to help find motivation. Throughout a coaching program, individuals will be expected to develop and try new strategies and practise in between sessions.

Workplace Strategy Coaching works across all job roles from junior to executive positions and supports a range of difficulties or conditions, such as Stress & Anxiety or Depression; neurodiverse conditions including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia (DCD), Autism, ADHD, Tourette Syndrome; and any health condition that can cause a long-term cognitive impact, such as fibromyalgia or MS.

Recommended strategies might include state management at work, structuring work time or tasks to facilitate an individual's working pattern. By chunking up large project into smaller tasks, you can create an environment where it's possible to create small wins that create positive reinforcement and build self-confidence.

Every coaching session is unique and will build a set of strategies relevant to each individual's circumstance.

### **HOW OFTEN DOES COACHING TAKE PLACE?**

We find that sessions that are two to three weeks apart are the most effective. Between the sessions, individuals can try out the strategies that have been discussed and can come to the next session with feedback on which ones embedded themselves naturally into their life and which ones did not work. In this way, each session builds on the previous one until they have a full "toolkit" of strategies to work at their best. In some cases, we can provide hybrid support through formal workbooks or online tools to complement the coaching program.

### **WHO DELIVERS THE COACHING?**

All coaching is delivered by qualified and/or certified business coaches, with a specific specialism in neurodiversity. We're proud to provide services by coaches with an ILM level 5 Coaching & Mentoring certificate, an equivalent or higher.

# IMPROVING LIVES AT WORK

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## MANAGER COACHING

This is a proactive way for managers to support their employees.

Many employees are offered reasonable adjustments in the form of “Workplace Strategy Coaching” where they can develop sustainable strategies for their condition. Managers are often left out of this process and are not advised how best they can support their employees. ILM certification is available after eight hours of coaches and provides approved evidence of CPD.

## CO-COACHING

This explores the difficulties faced by employers and their colleagues. It helps them to find new ways to communicate and work together. It is often used where work performance difficulties have escalated into a performance management process and is usually delivered alongside other adjustments. Many employers are unaware of how neurodiverse conditions affect their colleagues and the difficulties faced at work. Co-Coaching looks at what will be important in the future for a good working relationship. This might entail reasonable adjustments and compromises, such as being allowed to wear earplugs to block background noise. It might also include methods or strategies on how to effectively communicate.

## GROUP COACHING

This brings together participants who benefit from sharing strategies and support, whilst making contacts through peer support.

We recommend a course of at least 10 hours (5 x 2-hour sessions). The sessions will cover concentration, working memory, time management, organisation, communication, wellbeing, and any other topics that the group feels they would benefit from.

Each participant will be provided with a brief individualised report, detailing their personal strategies and strengths that can be shared with any employer or education setting.

## COACHING FOR COGNITIVE CHANGES

It is possible to acquire a spiky profile later in life because of brain injury or an illness. 83% of disabilities and health conditions are acquired during someone’s life, as opposed to being present at birth. As such, there is a growing need to support individuals whose abilities, strengths, and challenges, change over time. These changes occur for a myriad of reasons; they might be because of poor mental health, or because of long term chronic illness such as Covid, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), or Fibromyalgia; or from injury, including or stroke or brain injury.

## INCLUDING EVERYONE

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Changes can occur also for individuals going through the menopause, or for young parents who are sleep deprived. These changes can be short term, or long term, and in some cases, they may represent permanent changes.

Typically, these changes can cause “brain fog”, which affects our concentration, attention, and planning.

To support individuals, who experience these kinds of cognitive changes, we would recommend an initial course of 4 x 2hour coaching sessions which will allow the coach and individual to explore what has changed, understanding what activities they were good at, but now may struggle with, and to develop useful strategies to support those activities. The number of sessions may need to increase according to the individual person’s need and the areas of work where they find most challenges.

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### DOES COACHING WORK?

Our service partners research, published by the British Psychological Society, shows that clients find their productivity improves by 61% after just four sessions! Their managers also report a 45% improvement. The difference between the two is because our clients are rating themselves much lower than their managers to start with – this is usually due to low self-confidence, something that changes during coaching.

Their research also shows that 95% of our coaching clients are still in their job 12 months later and in fact 20-25% have been promoted in that time!

Their coaching can help with career counselling and can take an in depth look at what types of roles suit neurodiverse strengths.

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“ I once used to see dyslexia as something that I suffer with but with the help from (my coach), I can now say that it is part of me. ”

COACHING CLIENT

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