

# Inclusive Workplaces Can Unlock Project Success, Report Finds

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**A new report from the [Association for Project Management \(APM\)](#) has found that making workplaces more inclusive for neurodivergent staff could significantly boost business success. The ‘Promoting Neurodiversity Report’ was commissioned by APM to assess how well the project profession is integrating neurodivergent people and what steps need to be taken to improve.**

The report highlights that individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions, such as ADHD, dyslexia, and autism, often possess unique strengths that can be a major asset to projects. These include improved pattern recognition, risk management, and adaptability. However, the report also found that these individuals face significant barriers to employment, such as difficulties with traditional interview processes and sensory overload in busy office environments.

To address these challenges, APM has put forward seven key recommendations for companies, including promoting neurodiversity awareness, enhancing disclosure processes, implementing reasonable adjustments, and reassessing recruitment practices. The report also calls for fostering supportive networks, redesigning workspaces, and focusing on assigning tasks based on an individual’s strengths.

**Carrick Brown**, a neurodivergent project management professional who works for Citizens Advice, has welcomed the report. He was diagnosed with autism after noticing similarities between his own experiences and those of his son, who has dyslexia, ADHD, and autism. He believes his diagnosis has helped him understand his own experiences in the workplace.

**Carrick said:** “I would struggle to get constructive feedback and deal with real and perceived rejection at work. In addition, assumptions and vague instructions would lead to miscommunication, misunderstandings and feeling isolated and different. However, I also now recognise that my professional curiosity, cultural and emotional intelligence, and ability to hyperfocus on tasks which actually stem from my neurodivergence are hugely impactful within both project and service management. My diagnosis allowed me to understand that our behaviours are a form of communication. When organisations expect everyone to act and work the same way, they instantly limit the extent to which people feel valued and create barriers to achieving project outcomes.”

He warns against companies that engage in “performative inclusion,” where they claim to be inclusive but fail to make genuine adjustments for staff.

**Carrick added:** “I think the majority of project sponsors and funders want to support neurodivergent staff, but there are still plenty of companies that only have performative inclusion – where they claim to welcome people of all backgrounds but do not actually make reasonable adjustments for them. If companies can adopt compassionate leadership, neuroinclusive policies, and person-centred practices that value diversity of thought, it will not only make a difference to those people, but the success of the company as well. APM’s report clearly outlines the value of inclusion, and I hope the project management profession takes its recommendations on board.”

**Professor Adam Boddison OBE, Chief Executive of APM, said:** “Our report shows the strengths neurodivergent people bring to the project management profession and the positive progress organisations have made, but significant barriers still remain. The seven recommendations in the report around recruitment, training, implementing reasonable adjustments, establishing peer support networks, and creating a genuinely inclusive culture should help the profession improve significantly. Neurodivergent individuals are capable of thriving as project managers, but without the right systems in place, many will go unnoticed or will struggle at work. We are hopeful this report will help decision-makers to make any necessary changes and enable neurodivergent people to embrace project management as a viable career path.”