

Neurodivergence at work – Team Prompts

We’re all neurodiverse.

This just means we’re all naturally different. **We** think, process, remember and retrieve information, interpret the world, learn, feel, relate to others and communicate, function **in different ways. Every single one of us.**

What this means at work

We each bring our own lenses, views, expectations and stories.

Check out the [ICES Team Activity](#) to reflect on the lenses you bring in.



20% of the population is also neurodivergent.

This just means their brains think *differently* to the neurotypical. 20% is a big slice of the pie! *If I asked for a slice of apple pie and someone gave me 20%, I’d be pretty darn chuffed.*

Focus on the inclusion needs, not the condition

What we find helpful is to focus on what *need or support* the person has, as opposed to their exact condition or diagnoses. After all – we all have these needs, the helpful thing is to recognise when someone’s needs are different to our own, and consider ways to flex.

On the next few pages you’ll find individual and team prompts related to these 6 needs.

Sensory Regulation & Perception	How people experience and process sensory inputs <i>like sound, light, temperature, touch, smell, movement or internal signals.</i>
Communication clarity	How information is delivered, structured and interpreted. <i>social cues, instructions, expectations, decision-making, feedback.</i>
Processing & Executive Function	How quickly and effectively people take in, make sense of, and respond to information. And our ability to <i>plan, prioritise, remember, focus, manage time and follow through on tasks.</i>
Predictability & Routine	The amount of information, clarity and processes needed around <i>what is happening, when, why and what is expected.</i>
Emotional & Psychological Safety	Safety to be themselves, <i>express needs, ask questions, contribute, make mistakes without fear of ridicule, punishment or exclusion.</i>
Social Interaction & Participation Flexibility	How people prefer to <i>socialise/participate, process and recover from social interactions.</i>

Check out our [Neurodiversity @ Work notes](#) to see a non-exhaustive list of some neurodivergent conditions, more examples and actions for each of these six needs.

Sensory Regulation & Perception

How people experience and process sensory inputs like sound, light, temperature, touch, smell, movement or internal signals.

SENSE CHECK

What types of environments help me focus and feel calm?	
What sensory inputs drain me the most? <i>What distracts me?</i>	
How can I respond when I’m feeling over (and under) stimulated?	
What small sensory change would make my workspace better?	

TEAM SENSE CHECK

What are our biggest sensory stressors?	
What would make this space more comfortable for everyone? <i>Are there any tools – technology – that helps with this?</i>	
What expectations & agreements can we set around: <i>noise, lighting, smells, movement?</i>	
When we WFH: What sensory shifts can we make when we finish to send the ‘turn-off’ signal to our brains?	

Communication Clarity

How information is delivered, structured and interpreted. This can impact how people view *social cues, instructions, expectations, decision-making, feedback, etc.*

SENSE CHECK

How do I prefer to receive: <i>general communications?</i> <i>complex information?</i>	
How do I check that others have understood me correctly?	
What communication channels help me best?	
What feedback have I received on my communication? <i>verbal, visual, vocal, comms style</i>	

TEAM SENSE CHECK

Communication channels: What comms. channels do we use and when? Explicitly – what are our expectations around these?	
What ‘shared language’ can we establish to reduce confusion? <i>acronyms, definitions of done, agreements</i>	
At which meetings should we implement an ‘agenda-mandatory’ policy?	
How can we be more explicit in what we’re asking – needing from: <i>each other, customers, stakeholders</i>	



Processing & Executive Function

Processing: How quickly and effectively people take in, make sense of and respond to information

Executive Functioning: The brain’s ability to plan, prioritise, remember, focus, manage time and follow through on tasks

SENSE CHECK

What helps me start and finish tasks?	
What are my priorities? <i>How do I manage multiple or competing priorities?</i>	
What tools and habits help me remember and track work?	

TEAM SENSE CHECK

How do we structure information so it’s easier to remember and act on?	
What systems & tools best support follow through?	
What would help us think about new ways to do things – improvements – innovations?	
How can we make our expectations more explicit?	
When we WFH: What sensory shifts can we make when we finish to send the ‘turn-off’ signal to our brains?	

Predictability & Routine

The amount of information, clarity and processes needed around what is happening, when, why and what is expected..

SENSE CHECK

What does my work day routine entail?	
What type of planning do I need to feel prepared?	
What do I need to feel comfortable with change, adapting, flexibility?	

TEAM SENSE CHECK

What routines & rhythms do we have in our team? <i>Think of these like 'islands-of-certainty'.</i>	
Where can we add more predictability and routine? <i>meetings, actions, agendas, updates, etc.</i> <i>How do we balance this with our need to be flexible & adaptable?</i>	
What one predictable ritual could strengthen our team work?	



Emotional & Psychological Safety

Safety to be ourselves, express needs, ask questions, contribute, make mistakes without: fear of judgement, ridicule, punishment or social exclusion.

SENSE CHECK

Do I feel safe to speak up or disagree in my team?	
Do I feel understood and included? <i>What information would help other people know and work with me best?</i>	
How do I recover from conflict?	
How open and aware am I to other people’s individual work: <i>needs, preferences and styles?</i>	

TEAM SENSE CHECK

How do we respond when someone shares a different: • need? • way of thinking? • idea?	
What team discussions would help us connect and understand each other better?	
How can we make sure everyone is heard during discussions? <i>(not just the loudest or first voices)</i>	

Social Interaction & Participation

how people prefer to socialise and participate, how much energy social interaction requires, whether they process internally or externally and their need for space/recovery.

SENSE CHECK

Am I more introverted or extroverted? <i>Do I get drained or filled from social interactions? Do I process internally or verbally?</i>	
How can I best add my thoughts to group discussions? <i>speaking, typing, responding later, email</i>	
What helps me contribute confidently and authentically at work?	

TEAM SENSE CHECK

How can we create space for different contribution styles? <i>speaking, chat responses, written input, 1:1s, voting, anonymous polls</i>	
What social expectations do we have in our team? <i>Let's be explicit. Rules of engagement for team meetings, connections, hybrid & office-based working.</i>	
What norms can we set around breaks and respecting people's energy levels?	
What would encourage participation (and social connections) without forcing it? <i>Anything we'd like to do more or less of?</i>	

