

# Language of Neurodiversity: A Practical Guide

## Introduction

At [Bee Brilliant People™](#), we believe in the power of inclusive language to foster understanding and respect. Embracing neurodiversity starts with how we communicate.

This practical guide will help you navigate and use neuroinclusive language more effectively to create a supportive and inclusive work environment.

## Key Terms (Alphabetical Order / Not Exhaustive)

- **Allistic:** A term used to describe individuals who are not autistic. It encompasses people who are neurotypical as well as those who are neurodivergent but not autistic.
- **Burnout:** Extreme exhaustion from prolonged stress.
- **Emotional Dysregulation:** Difficulty managing emotions, leading to intense reactions.
- **Executive Functioning:** Mental skills like working memory, flexible thinking, and self-control.
- **Hyperfocus:** Intense concentration on a specific task, often seen in neurodivergent individuals.
- **Masking:** Concealing neurodivergent traits to fit societal norms.
- **Meltdown:** Intense response to overwhelming situations.
- **Neurodivergent:** Individuals with atypical neurological development, including differences such as Autism, ADHD, and Dyslexia. Estimated to be around 1:7 people.
- **Neurodiversity:** The recognition that neurological differences should be respected as variations of human diversity.

- **Neurotypical:** Individuals with typical neurological development and functioning, often contrasted with neurodivergent individuals.
- **Overstimulation:** Being overwhelmed by sensory input causing distress for the individual.
- **Rejection Sensitive Dysphoria (RSD):** Extreme sensitivity to perceived rejection or criticism.
- **Sensory Processing:** How the nervous system interprets sensory messages.
- **Shutdown:** Becoming minimally responsive due to overwhelming stress.
- **Stimming:** Repetitive behaviours that help manage sensory input and emotions.

### **Inclusive Language - Best Practices**

- **Ask Don't Assume:** If unsure, ask directly which terms to use.
- **Avoid Ableist Language:** Terms like "crazy" or "insane" are harmful and stigmatising.
- **Be Patient and Understanding:** Accommodate different communication styles and needs.
- **Educate Yourself and Others:** Continuously learn and share knowledge about neurodiversity with your team and peers.
- **Person-First Language:** Use "person with autism" unless identity-first language is preferred.
- **Respect Individual Preferences:** Always ask and respect how individuals prefer to be identified.
- **Use Descriptive Terms:** Clearly describe behaviours and experiences.
- **Example of Harmful Language:** Avoid saying, "We're all on the spectrum," as this phrase minimises the unique experiences and challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals and can invalidate their specific needs and the accommodations they require

## **Right and Wrong Way to Use Terms in the Workplace**

### **Right:**

"Beth experiences hyperfocus, which helps her complete tasks efficiently."

"Mike is a person with autism who excels in analytical thinking."

"We should create a quiet space to help employees manage overstimulation."

### **Wrong:**

"Lucy is obsessive about her work."

"Sam is autistic and weird."

"Why can't they just handle the noise like everyone else?"

### **Practical Tips**

- Ask Don't Assume: If unsure, ask directly which terms to use.
- Educate Yourself and Others: Continuously learn and share knowledge about neurodiversity.
- Be Patient and Understanding: Accommodate different communication styles and needs.

### **Conclusion**

Using neuroinclusive language fosters a supportive and inclusive environment. Adopting these practices ensures neurodivergent individuals feel respected and valued.

For further information about our wide range of expert services to support neurodiversity in the workplace, tools and resources, visit our website:

[www.beebrilliantpeople.com](http://www.beebrilliantpeople.com)

Connect with us on [LinkedIn](#)

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### **Sources**

The terms and concepts included in this guide are based on the following sources:

1. [National Autistic Society](#)
2. [Neurodiversity Hub](#)
3. [ADHD UK](#)
4. [Neuro Cards- Amy Peters, Everglade Counselling](#)

Please refer to these organisations and their extensive resources for a deeper understanding of these terms and best practices.