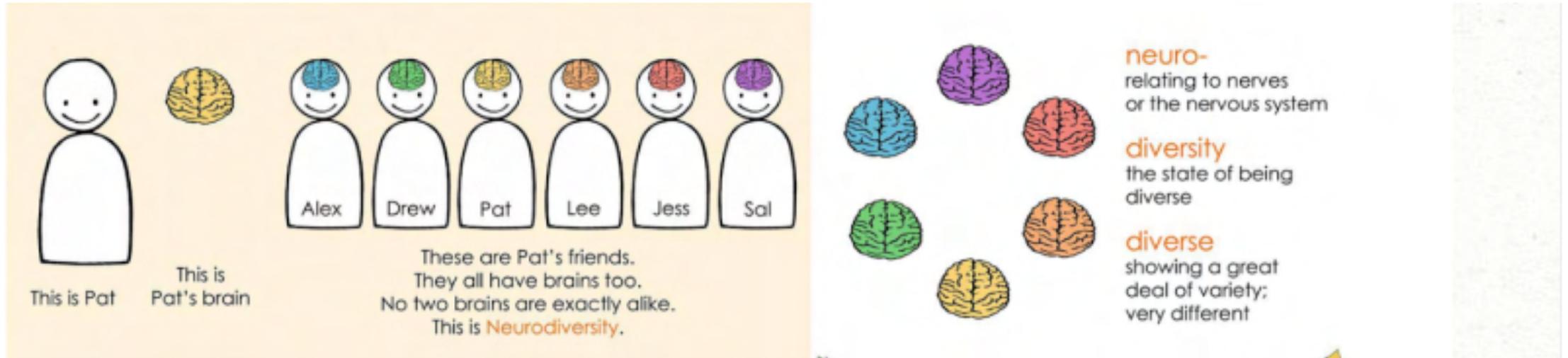


Hidden Talents: What is Neurodiversity, why should you bother, and how can neurodiverse hires benefit your company and your bottom line?

Pre-ambling or, how it all started



Introduction & What is Neurodiversity?



Neurodiversity is a concept where neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other human variation. These differences can include those labeled with Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Dyscalculia, Autistic Spectrum, Tourette Syndrome, and others.

Why Talk About Neurodiversity?

There are no reliable statistics on how many people have a neurodiverse condition, but you probably know at least one neurodiverse person, maybe even a few.

Diagnosis rates vary between countries, as do diagnostic criteria. Women and girls are much less likely to be diagnosed, particularly with autism and ADHD. Race can play a part too, with black people less likely to get an accurate diagnosis.

People with neurodiverse conditions are usually classified as disabled. We are also categorised as having special needs, learning difficulties or disorders. But some of us with these conditions don't feel like they're a disability or disorder at all! We feel that, while they definitely present challenges, they also come with unique strengths and abilities.

Common Neurodiversity Conditions

ADHD, Autism, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, and Tourette's syndrome are all examples of neurodiverse conditions. They're diagnostic labels used to explain the diverse ways of thinking, learning, processing and behaving.

Of the global adult population, 10% are dyslexic, 5% are dyspraxic, 4% have ADHD, and 1-2% are autistic. Each of these neurodiverse conditions will be experienced differently by every individual.

As Dr. Stephen Shore famously said, "If you've met one individual with autism, you've met one individual with autism".

Everyday Challenges

- Over- or under-sensitivity to sounds, touch, tastes, smells, light or colours
- Difficulty to “read people”, which can lead to accidentally offending people
- Overestimating or underestimating how much time we need to finish a task
- Connecting names with faces
- Non-visible: Someone looking at a neurodiverse person will not be able to identify them as neurodiverse, yet society currently insists that neurodiverse individuals identify as disabled to receive reasonable accommodations

Everyday Challenges



A family looks out to the airport's runway. Airlines are working to make air travel more accessible to neurodivergent travelers.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIA DUBOVA, ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

| TRAVEL |

How airlines are making travel easier for autistic passengers

Traveling can be complicated for neurodivergent travelers. That's why airlines are working to make air travel more comfortable.

- Neurodivergence is invisible, so it's not always apparent to strangers that extra assistance is needed – especially when traveling
- Challenges at airports are just one example of the systemic issues neurodivergent travelers face, often rendering trips difficult or impossible for some
- Several travel companies have implemented programs to increase accessibility for neurodivergent travelers, and many took time during the pandemic to boost competency with additional training.

Read more:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/how-airlines-are-making-travel-easier-for-autistic-passengers>

Challenges at Work (and Finding Work!)

- At least 50% of professional success is determined by social issues: Different thinkers often have problems in social interaction & communication
- Honesty, reliability and factual orientation are not always given: Different thinkers expect these principles.
- Meetings are often dominated by extroverts quiet, introverted employees are often overlooked
- The processing depth & speed of different thinkers can be overwhelming: Exclusion and frustration on both sides
- Team spirit and social adaption as a basic requirement: Different thinkers are often reclusive loners

What Value can Neurodiverse Employees Bring?

As an employer, it's important to get to know your employees on an individual basis. That way, you'll find out more about their personal strengths and challenges.

Neurodivergent individuals often bring to the workplace out-of-the-box thinking, creative solutions and more. They may also spend a lot of time trying to adjust their work environment to suit their needs. That's because typically, working environments are set up for neurotypical ways of thinking and doing.

Benefits for companies:

- Radically simplified business processes
- Original, innovative products and services

What Value can Neurodiverse Employees Bring?

Different thinkers have specific strengths and challenges. Time then to treat unequal people unequally.

- See things before they exist
- Recognize structural, system-related problems
- Inform themselves broadly and in detail
- Looking for the core of things
- Don't know taboos or boundaries in thinking
- Genuine quality awareness
- Pattern recognition
- Deep thinking

What Value can Neurodiverse Employees Bring?



Watch: <https://youtu.be/pjgQqxAtvKk>

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Examples

auticon is an international information technology consulting firm that exclusively employs adults on the autism spectrum as Information technology consultants.
<https://auticon.com/>



Diversicon is a German government funded platform, which helps neurodiverse people find and keep jobs and companies to hire neurodiverse talent. <https://diversicon.de/>

DIVERSICON

#verschiedenistnormal

Rising Tide was founded by a family affected by autism in an effort to empower individuals with this diversity by giving them the tools to be elite car wash professionals.
<https://www.risingtidecarwash.com/>



Examples

There are many others companies that aim to employ neurodiverse people, incl. Ameritrade, Dell Technologies, Ernst & Young, Ford, Hewett-Packard, IBM, Microsoft, and Willis Towers Watson.

A great place to find neurodiverse employers and initiatives is the Neurodiversity Network - > <https://www.neurodiversitynetwork.net/>



Neurodiversity Network

Learn | Connect | Work | Achieve

Summary & Q&A

"Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all - the apathy of human beings."

[Helen Keller]

- It is rare that impairments are truly 'invisible' – you just need to adjust how you look at things
- We need to constructively challenge ourselves and others with regards to myths, assumptions, and stereotypes – but also our fears/uneasiness
- A "social model approach" to 'disability' empowers us all to make positive changes – disability is **caused by the way society is organised**, rather than by a person's impairment or difference.

"Nobody realizes that some people expend tremendous energy merely to be normal."

[Albert Camus]

Your Speakers & Presenters

Peter Regelous

Forever 60, neurodiverse, ingenious, and creative serial entrepreneur.

I hold a Masters degree and have extensive freelance and fixed-term experience in business, especially in the service delivery sector.

Recruiters don't seem to want to hire me and I hope to open their eyes to the opportunities that employing neurodiverse people holds.

Want to know more? Get in touch & let's have a chat!

Martin Kubler

Hotel GM turned HORECA consultant, (start-up) mentor, speaker, and writer.

I create. I consult. I connect.

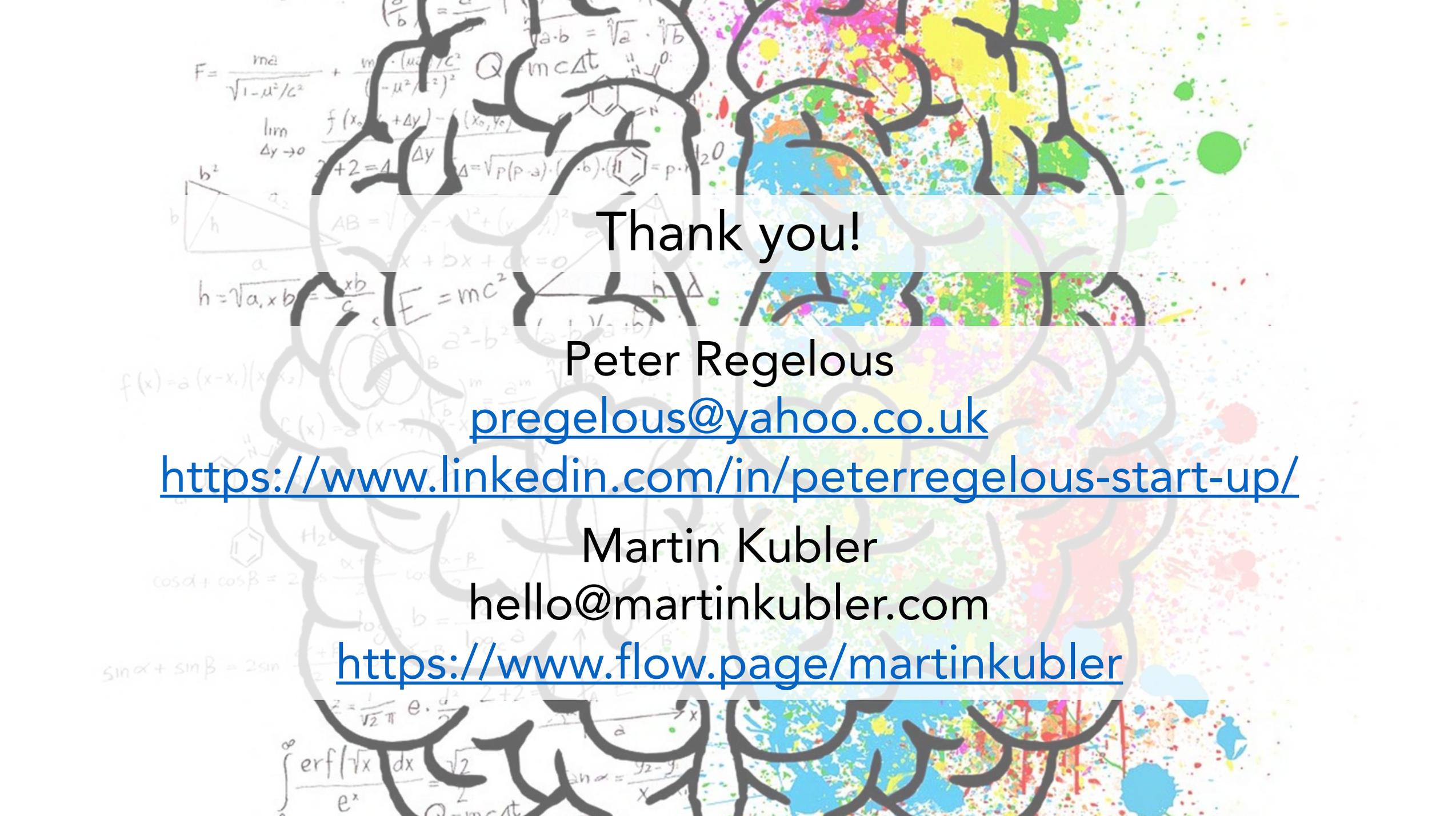
Stockholm | Dubai | KSA | Munich

I am interested in many things and understand an eclectic mix of business, science, and art.

Want to make sense of things? Get started? Get in touch!

Sources & References

- Title & background “brain” graphic: [© 2020 Bangkok Post](#)
- <http://risingtideu.com/> - road maps for entrepreneurs who wish to start businesses that empower individuals with autism through gainful employment
- <https://www.linktalent.org/> - Link OT partners with employers to improve neuro-inclusive recruitment, hiring, onboarding, integration, and retention/career development practices.
- <https://www.differentbrains.org/> - Different Brains® strives to encourage understanding & acceptance of individuals who have variations in brain function and social behaviors known as neurodiversity.
- <https://hbr.org/2017/05/neurodiversity-as-a-competitive-advantage> - Neurodiversity as a competitive advantage.



Thank you!

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