



Why neurodiversity is good for business

In Australia, the approximately [four million people with disability have a combined disposable annual income of around AU\\$54 million](#). One in three Australians either has disability or is close to someone who does. With our ageing population, this figure is only set to increase. Despite the size and spending power of this group, many mainstream businesses still fail to recognise people with disability as an emerging market. Employing people with disability and developing accessible products and services for people with disability is just good business.

Strengths of neurodiverse workforces

Neuroinclusive businesses are better businesses. Your workforce benefits from greater diversity in general, and greater neurodiversity in particular. ‘Groupthink’ can be a real problem – and when you create a group of people who think differently from each other, you increase the likelihood of finding a breakthrough solution or innovation.

One way to avoid such problems is to embrace neurodiversity. It’s no coincidence that DXC’s Dandelion Programme – a program that helps adults with autism find jobs – reports that [neurodiverse teams are around 30 per cent more productive](#).

If you’re struggling to retain talent, consider that SAP’s ‘Autism at work’ program, launched in 2013, has since expanded to 13 countries, including Australia, and has a [90 per cent retention rate](#).

Data on employment rates are difficult to come by, but there are many anecdotal reports that people who are neurodivergent (such as Autism, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia) often face significant barriers to gaining and thriving in employment. Employers who embrace neurodiversity can reap rewards in terms of productivity, retention, and employee wellbeing.



Making adjustments

[JobAccess National Research](#) found 60 per cent of Australians lack awareness about adjustments, yet most workplace adjustments are simple to implement and come at no cost to the employer, such as flexible working hours. Larger changes such as assistive technology and work-related modifications can be funded through the [Australian Government's Employment Assistance Fund \(EAF\)](#).

Australian Disability Network's [Workplace Adjustment Research Report](#) found that the majority of organisations noticed positive impacts of workplace adjustments including:

- Increased employee engagement and retention (89 per cent)
- Improved reputation of the business (85 per cent)
- Increased productivity and performance (85 per cent).
- Increased access to a broader talent pool of job seekers (84 per cent)

Most workplace adjustments cost nothing in the long term but can make a real difference for employees, customers, clients and service users.

Business Disability Forum research shows that people whose employers are trying to get it right on neurodiversity are more satisfied in their jobs. Furthermore, such benefits extend to other employees as well.

Thinking about neurodiversity forces you to get to know and support your employees and customers – neurodivergent and neurotypical, better.