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Top autism tips: Employment - reasonable adjustments (for employees)

Text Top Tip 1: What is a reasonable adjustment?

A reasonable adjustment is an alteration that your employer can make to your working life, to help support you in your role. There are loads of different types of reasonable adjustments; you can have physical reasonable adjustments that adapt to your workplace; you might have a reasonable adjustment to help you with managing anxiety. Other reasonable adjustments can include things like making sure that you're getting proper support in work, or even accessing therapy outside of work.

Top Tip 2: How can reasonable adjustments help with performance difficulties?

When you're having performance difficulties, reasonable adjustments can really help you. That doesn't mean you're not gonna get any negative feedback and there won't be things that you have to change, but it does mean that your disability and your autism will be taken into account when you're having a performance review done. If you're worried that you're going to be put under a work capability assessment, you should request specialist advice and support to make sure that you've got the right reasonable adjustments in place before your performance review happens.

Top Tip 3: What type of environmental adjustments might an autistic employee need?

A lot of autistic people find that they have sensory sensitivities that mean their environmental adjustments can be really helpful for them. You might have sensitivities to noise – the sound of people talking – taste, certain foods; smell, the smell of people's perfume or their lunches; touch, people touching you to get your attention; and sight, lights might appear really really

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bright for you. All of these things can be supported through reasonable adjustments. Things like noise cancelling headphones, or adjusted lighting.

Top Tip 4: Are there any other reasonable adjustments?

Some of the other adjustments that you might benefit from as an autistic employee include having a buddy or mentor to explain the nuances of the workplace to you; training for you, your manager and maybe even your colleagues; or support from a specialist workplace adviser. The National Autistic Society can provide a bespoke workplace assessment for you in your role. We can come in and meet with you and your manager, maybe even some colleagues or HR, and afterwards provide you with a full report detailing the adjustments we think could help you. It's not a report that looks at whether you can or can't do a job but a report that looks just at the adjustments that you need to help support you in your role.