



Call to Action:

Autism @ Work – Orange County

WE ARE READY TO GET GOING! WHAT DO I DO?

There are two resources that can help you begin your journey.

- Grit & Flow, Tiffany@GritandFlow.com
- The Spectrum Works, Jessica@TheSpectrumWorks.org

Both resources will meet with you for free and help you begin your journey.

I WOULD LIKE TO APPROACH MY EMPLOYER, BUT WHERE DO I START?

There are many easy ways to approach your employer. Here are a few suggestions.

- Set aside some time to talk about what you learned tonight and how you would like to explore autism at work in your organization.
- Highlight the free resources available to navigate your organization through the process.
- Offer to set up a free session to learn what autism looks like at work and how it can benefit your organization.
- If there is an Employee Resource Group for autism/disabilities, or a Diversity & Inclusion team, they may be your best allies.
- Offer to organize a lunch and learn on autism and neurodiversity in the workplace.

WE ONLY HAVE A FEW EMPLOYEES. WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN I MAKE?

- Each new job created changes a life and positively impacts the stigma surrounding individuals with autism.
- There are many incentive programs that fit well with smaller organizations and provide support resources and potentially initial compensation to the autistic individual.
- Many individuals will prefer working for a smaller company. It is more personal, and they find more security in the smaller number of managers and co-workers.

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SOUNDS GREAT, BUT WE JUST DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT CULTURE.

- A culture of inclusion can benefit all employees and it doesn't have to be a huge effort. Inclusion is often best built starting with small teams.
- Initial steps to increase inclusion are:
 - Lunch & Learns about Autism in the workplace
 - Sensitize programs such as inviting young adults into your workplace for a tour
 - Summer interns
 - Getting involved in a charity event supporting autism
- Strong steps:
 - Set-up initial conversations with your manager or HR about the importance and benefits of employing this population.
 - Invite Grit & Flow or The Spectrum Works to discuss discovery of where a hiring effort may be feasible and most strategic.

I WOULD LOVE TO, BUT WHAT IF I CAN'T SUPPORT THE EMPLOYEE(S)? WE ALREADY HAVE SO MUCH TO MANAGE.

- You don't have to do this alone. We have often seen employees gladly and eagerly volunteer in companies to support autism at work programs
- In addition, there are many competent agencies in Orange County that can support you and the employee to provide a productive and rewarding experience.
- Our teams (instead of "An employee support"?) will assist you with training the employee and ensure that he or she is headed in the right direction.

THIS SOUNDS GREAT, BUT I DON'T THINK THERE WOULD BE BUDGET FOR A PROGRAM LIKE THIS.

- Desire, but no budget... No Problem!
- There are incentives that provide an employer of reference
- The accommodations an individual need is not always costly
- Paid Internship Program (\$10,400) <https://www.gritandflow.com/paid-internship-program>
- Tax Incentives for hiring persons with disabilities
- Federal employment goals (7%) for companies with federal contracts (Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act)



www.GritandFlow.com



www.TheSpectrumWorks.org