

Rethinking Recruitment: A Guide to Support Autistic and Neurodivergent Candidates

This guide was created by [Aspect \(Autism Spectrum Australia\)](#) and [Hirevue](#). It gives practical tips on how to make recruitment more inclusive for Autistic and neurodivergent people.

The guide shows how to use HireVue in a way that helps candidates feel comfortable and confident, so they can best show their skills and abilities.



Preparing to recruit

1. Clearly define the role

Why it matters: When a role is clearly defined, the purpose is clear and expectations are well understood. This makes success easier to measure.

Things to consider as a Talent Acquisition Professional:

- Conducting a job analysis: This might include surveys and focus groups to gather information about the skills required to successfully perform the role.
- Be mindful of unnecessary requirements such as rigid qualifications or specific years of experience, as these can unintentionally exclude neurodivergent candidates and those with non-linear career paths.
- Ensure interview questions and assessments measure candidate suitability against these skills.

2. Write a clear and accessible position description

Why it matters: Clear, accessible job descriptions help Autistic and neurodivergent candidates assess suitability, make informed decisions and apply confidently.

Focus on making it easy to understand:

- Add a brief explanation to your template about what a position description is for. This will support clarity and set candidates up to answer questions with more confidence.
- Use plain English and concise language, avoid metaphors, colloquialisms, hypotheticals.
- [Structure for readability](#) by using headings, bullet points, line breaks and icons to make content easier to read. Avoid long blocks of text which can be visually overwhelming.
- Indicate whether each requirement is essential or desirable to help candidates understand expectations and support clear decisions about suitability.
- Be specific and transparent describing what the role really looks like. Consider using "day/week in the life" examples.

3. Write an inclusive job ad

Why it matters: Inclusive job ads demonstrate an organisation's commitment to inclusion. They help increase psychological safety by reducing ambiguity and bias and help Autistic and neurodivergent candidates feel safer and supported to apply.

They should:

- Keep language simple, specific and relatable.
- Use inclusive language that avoids biases against people with disabilities. We suggest using a free language tool such as The Field Jobs or [DEI Language Highlighter](#) to check the inclusivity of your language.

Biased example: We're looking for a dynamic, fast-paced team player who thrives under pressure and can multitask in a high-stress environment.

Inclusive example: We're looking for someone who is organised, communicates clearly, and can manage multiple tasks with support and structure. We value different working styles and provide flexibility to help you do your best work.

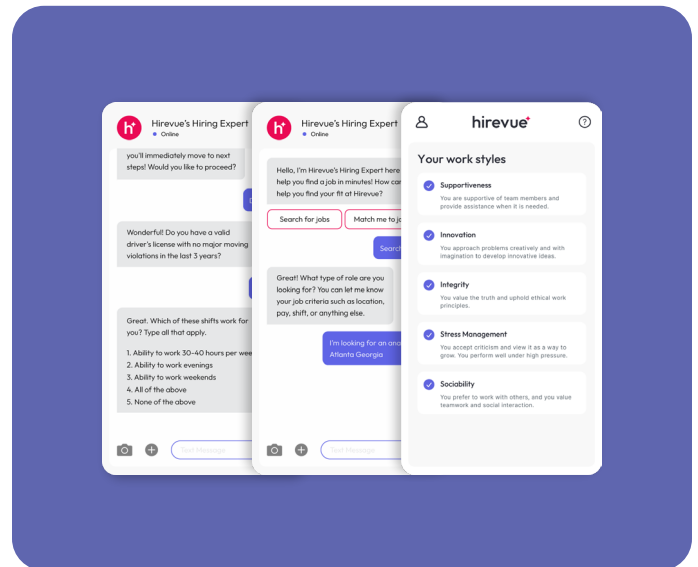
- Outline key role details including salary, location and remote or hybrid working options.
- Detail each stage of the recruitment process up front and explain how to apply, what to expect (e.g. how many interview questions or assessments), describe interview formats such as the use of [Hirevue OnDemand interviews](#) or [Assessments](#) and expected timelines for each stage.
- Provide contact details and invite candidates to reach out with questions.
- Include a statement that encourages Autistic and neurodivergent candidates to apply, even if they don't meet every listed requirement.

Inclusive recruitment

Why: Inclusive recruitment practices help Autistic and neurodivergent candidates fairly demonstrate strengths. By offering clear instructions and flexible formats, and making adjustments where needed, employers create a more accessible and equitable process that focuses on capability rather than cultural fit.

Prior to starting the interview or assessment:

- Use screening methods that validate rather than infer skills (e.g. structured interviews, assessments). Screening methods such as reviewing CVs or unstructured interviews can inadvertently disadvantage Autistic candidates by focusing on factors unrelated to the job such as career gaps or interview “chemistry”.
- Support preparation and predictability for Autistic candidates. Best practice is [offering actual interview questions](#) at least two days in advance. Candidates may also be supported by providing practice questions, video/written examples of good interview responses and other preparation materials such as “what to expect” screens or multi-modal Realistic Job Previews in [Virtual Job Tryouts](#).
- Create a [Realistic Job Preview](#) to provide candidates with detailed information on the role, the day-to-day expectations and what it’s like to work for your organisation:
 - Videos should include captions and transcripts.
 - Audio should be optional, with the ability to toggle sound on/off.
 - Written transcripts of spoken content should be available for those who prefer reading.
- Modality preferences vary widely among Autistic and neurodivergent individuals who may process and engage with content differently. Offering a range of modalities is generally more inclusive and effective, provided the structure is clear and predictable. This allows candidates to choose how they engage, which supports autonomy and reduces cognitive load.
- Provide adjustment options prior to starting the interview by moving beyond “please let us know” to actively listing available adjustments for all candidates.



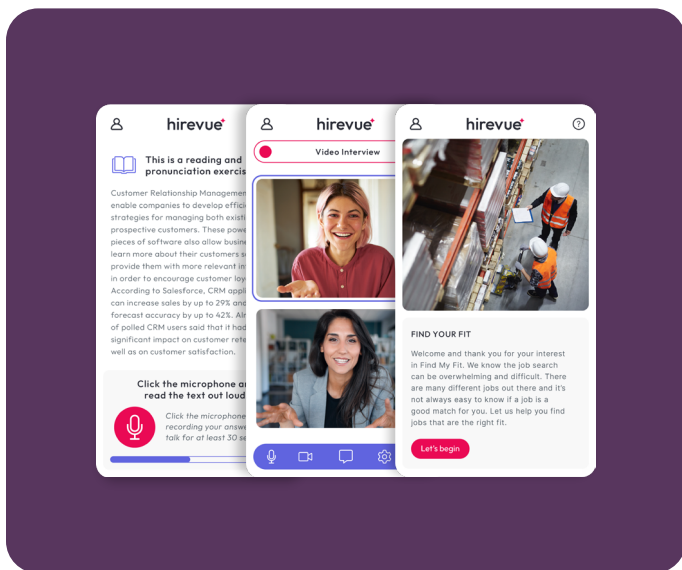
During the interview or assessment:

- Visual cues and structure (like an interview progress bar) can help candidates orient themselves and reduce anxiety by making the process feel more navigable and known.
- Make interviews Autism-friendly by incorporating things such as interviewing at a time and location that suits the candidate, providing the ability to re-record or pause on digital interviews, using an [Inclusion Statement](#) encouraging candidates to use personal strategies for support (e.g. fidget toys). For digital interviews, inform candidates that they can hide their self-view if it makes them more comfortable and point out that anything in the video (e.g. stimming or fidgets) will not be considered in interview scoring.
- When scheduling an interview, give the interviewee as much notice as possible and provide guidance for what to wear and who to contact with questions. Avoid changing plans at the last minute to decrease anxiety. If plans change, make sure the interviewee understands and is comfortable with the new schedule.



During the interview or assessment (continued):

- Adapt traditional interview and assessment formats to reduce barriers:
 - Hirevue video interview questions have been reviewed by a third-party organisation to ensure they are Autism-friendly (e.g. avoiding ambiguous, figurative or colloquial language).
 - Explore alternatives to interviews like job simulations, task-based assessments, or structured written responses to evaluate real-world skills in less pressured ways, particularly when the candidate is given unlimited time to respond and complete the activity. Hirevue assessments can help measure candidates' ability to respond to job-related situations (e.g. working with financial information, verifying information, prioritising.)
- Consider alternatives to traditional psychometric assessments which can disadvantage Autistic candidates. [Hirevue's Game-Based Assessments](#) have been [shown](#) to produce similar results for Autistic and neurotypical candidates.
- Provide candidates with feedback after every interview stage, whether they are successful or not.



Onboarding new starters

Why: A well-planned and welcoming onboarding experience is especially helpful for Autistic employees, reducing uncertainty, building trust, and creating a sense of belonging from day one.

- Offer support with reading, signing, and understanding employment contracts and onboarding documents reducing stress. This could include body doubling (working alongside a person to help them complete these tasks) or offering plain English forms.
- Reach out before day one to reduce uncertainty. Share practical details like what to wear and what to bring on day one, what time to arrive and who they'll meet.
- Ensure [continuity of accommodations](#). Carry forward any adjustments from the recruitment process so new starters don't need to re-advocate for their needs.
- Consider whether pre-hire assessment results can provide information about a new hire's strengths and development areas and consider how these can be supported.
- Set aside regular time for questions and clarification. Let new starters know it's okay to feel unsure and that asking for help is always OK.
- Offer clear and detailed guidance on how to navigate internal systems and tools rather than assume capability.
- Ask new starters if they have preferences for how they are welcomed.