

SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT

Strategies from Autistic Employees

INTRODUCTION

1 IN 66
Canadians have an autism diagnosis



percent of small and medium-sized businesses are having difficulties finding new workers. ²

Once considered quite rare, **Autism Spectrum Disorder** (also referred to as "ASD" or simply "autism") has dramatically increased in prevalence in recent years. With such a high prevalence rate, there is an excellent chance that **an employer will eventually have at least one autistic employee working for them.** With an aging population, Canada is currently facing a labour shortage. Many employers are looking to tap into a previously untapped talent pool to combat this problem, which includes autistic Canadians. **Autistic persons can make great employees but often need additional support and workplace adjustments** to provide them with an equal chance of success to their non-disabled colleagues.

PURPOSE

Success in the Workplace: Strategies from Autistic Employees, is designed to be an **easy to read, user-friendly toolkit to help employers and HR professionals meet the needs of autistic employees** while still meeting the business needs of the organization or company they represent. The ultimate goal is to increase the odds of successful and sustained employment for autistic adults. The resources provided in this toolkit have been identified and developed based on information gathered through surveys of both autistic workers across Canada and Canadian employers, large and small, and have been informed by pre-existing resources on inclusive workforces.



Increase the odds of successful and sustained employment for autistic adults.

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit is the product of a collaboration between the **Adult Autism Stakeholders Group** and **The Sinneave Family Foundation (Sinneave)** and is supported by an **Autism Speaks Canada's Family Services Community Grant**. To inform the toolkit, Sinneave, in collaboration with **The Centre for Interdisciplinary Research and Collaboration in Autism (CIRCA)**, conducted surveys of both autistic workers and inclusive employers. To ensure this toolkit meets both employers' and autistic employees' needs, Sinneave hired an actually autistic self-advocate as the project lead and the primary author of this toolkit and engaged with autistic employees, employers and human resources professionals across Canada to inform the content.



A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE

The guidelines around inclusive language are always evolving, and the autism world is no exception. Some autistics express a preference for person-first language and prefer to be referred to as a "person with autism." In contrast, others prefer identity-first language and ask to be referred to as autistic. While there is no complete consensus, more self-advocates prefer identity-first language, including the project lead for this toolkit.



This toolkit will primarily use identity-first language; however, the author intends no disrespect for those who prefer person-first language.



¹ [Public Health Agency of Canada, Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children and Youth in Canada, March 2018.](#)

² [Business Development Bank of Canada, Labour Shortage Here to Stay, 2018.](#)

SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT

Strategies from
Autistic Employees

USER GUIDE



Information highlight



Big idea



Resource for additional information



Reference



Tool



Additional information in another section of the toolkit