



Neurodiversity in Volunteerism

Introduction



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She/Her

Today's Agenda



Terminology

Creating an inclusive environment: preparing your organization for neurodivergent volunteers

Position descriptions: creating position descriptions that are able to be molded to fit each volunteer

Best practices for training staff to work with neurodivergent volunteers

Neurodiversity

Neurodivergent

Neurotypical

Neurodiversity

Neurodivergent

Neurodiversity

Difference in "kinds of minds"

-Judy Singer

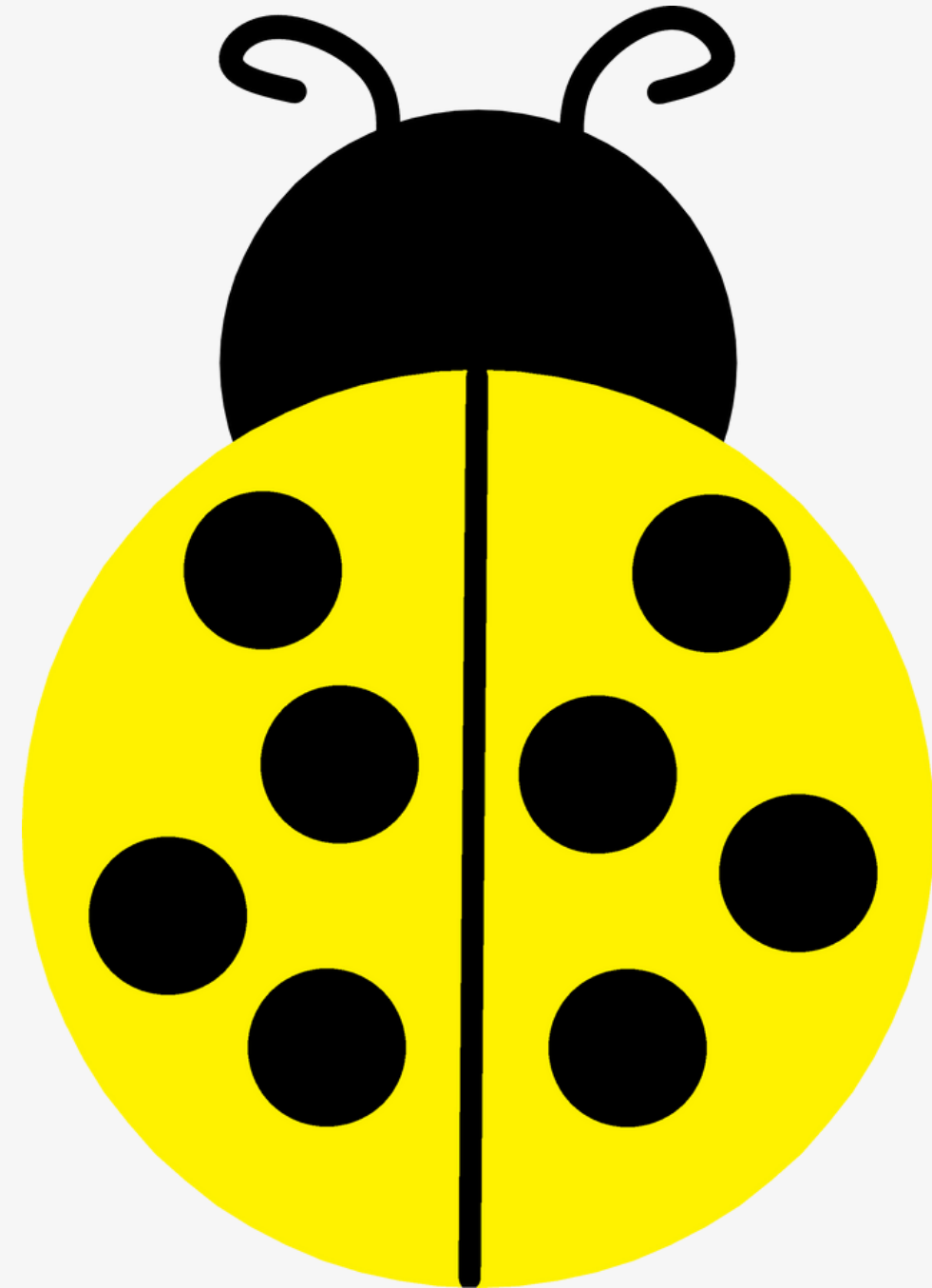


umbrella term used to
describe the natural
diversity of human
brains.

-Yellow Ladybugs

The image above is a yellow umbrella with a
greenish handle.

Neurodivergent



A person whose brain
differs from the statistical
norm and diverges from
what society deems
typical.

-Yellow Ladybugs

The image above is a yellow ladybug with 8
spots divided by a black line

Autism

PTSD

ADHD

OCD

Dyslexia

Synesthesia



Neurodiversity Rainbow

The image above is a rainbow with the
seven standard colors



The World Needs All Sorts of Minds

-Temple Grandin

The image above is a brain with the left side depicting formulas and the right side having different colors (pink, yellow, green, blue, red)

Working with neurodivergent volunteers

Communication

Make it standard practice to ask every volunteer "how do you work best?"

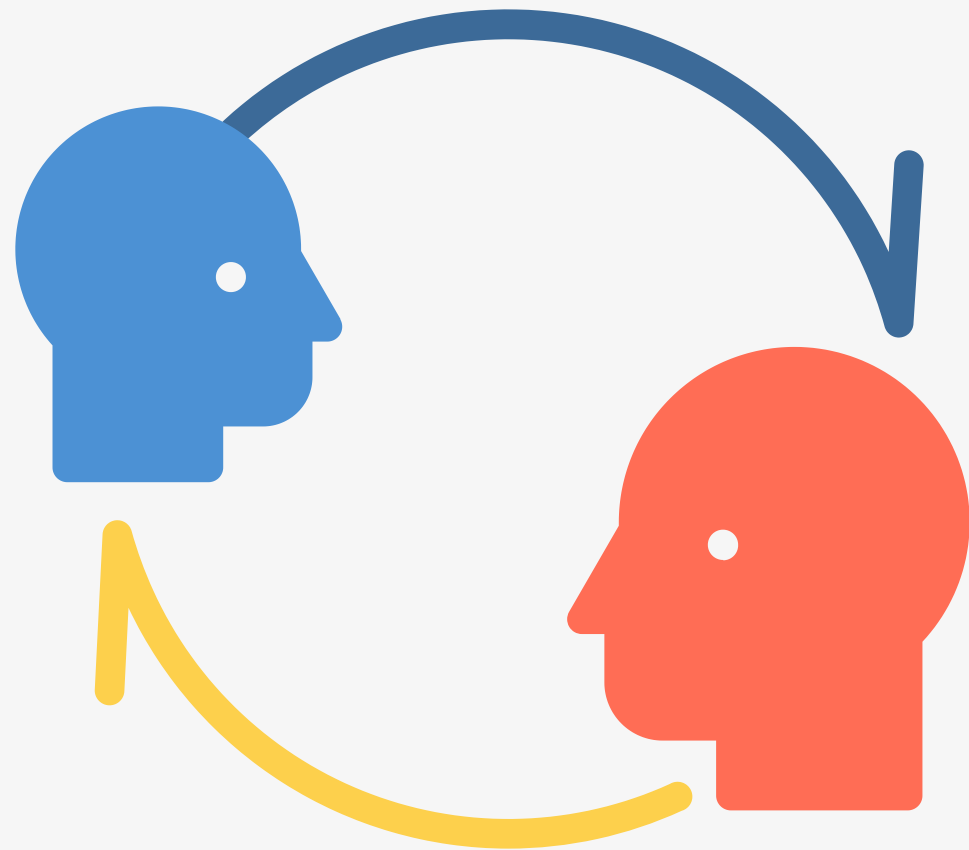
Accessibility

Focusing on the positives and what volunteers bring to the table.

Environment

Creating an inclusive, open, and psychologically safe space.

Communication



The act of giving,
receiving, and sharing
information.

the image above is two faces with
arrowss connecting them to form a circle

The language you use matters!

- Communication is a two way street
- Be clear and direct
- Be able to meet them where they are at
- Check biases at the door

Ableism

Language that is
derogatory or insulting
when referring to a
disability.

Differently-abled

Special Needs

© Randy Glasbergen
glasbergen.com



"I'm not disabled or differently-abled or specially-abled or exceptionally-abled. I'm an accountant in a wheelchair."

The image above is of a man in a wheelchair at a desk with a computer talking up to a women holding a piece of paper.



the image has a laptop in the middle with accessibility written in the middle and lines in different colors, drawing out with circles showing: lips, finger, ear, brain, 6 small ovals, and an eye to represent the ways to incorporate accessibility

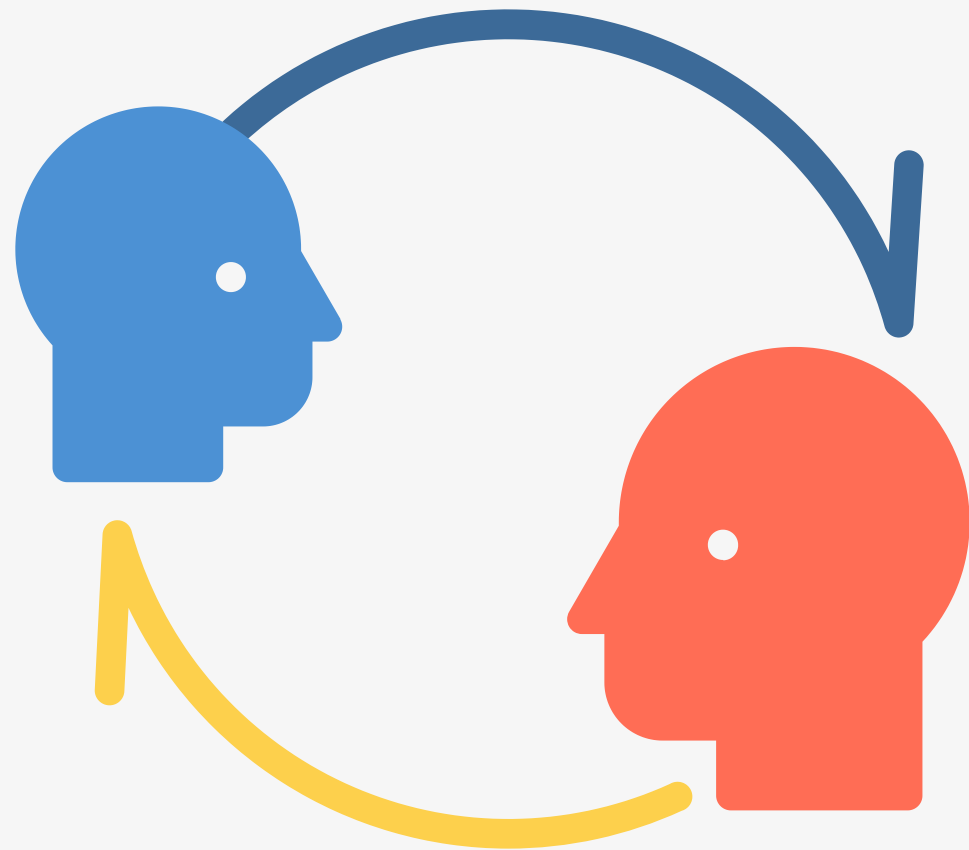
Volunteer Experience

- Onboarding
- Learning styles
- Orientation
- Ongoing Supervision

Supervision

- "How can I help you be successful?"
- Regular check-ins
- Constructive feed back

Communication



The act of giving,
receiving, and sharing
information.

the image above is two faces with arrows
connecting them to form a circle

Creating inclusive position descriptions

- Avoid generic and vague descriptions
- Watch out for ableist language
- Time Commitment
- Invite all to apply

Avoid generic and vague
descriptions

**Must have strong
communication
skills**

Must have strong communication skills.

-How do we define communication skills: it is the ability to be responsive when prompted and able to establish open lines of communication. This means engaging in structured conversation with patients and staff at varying levels.

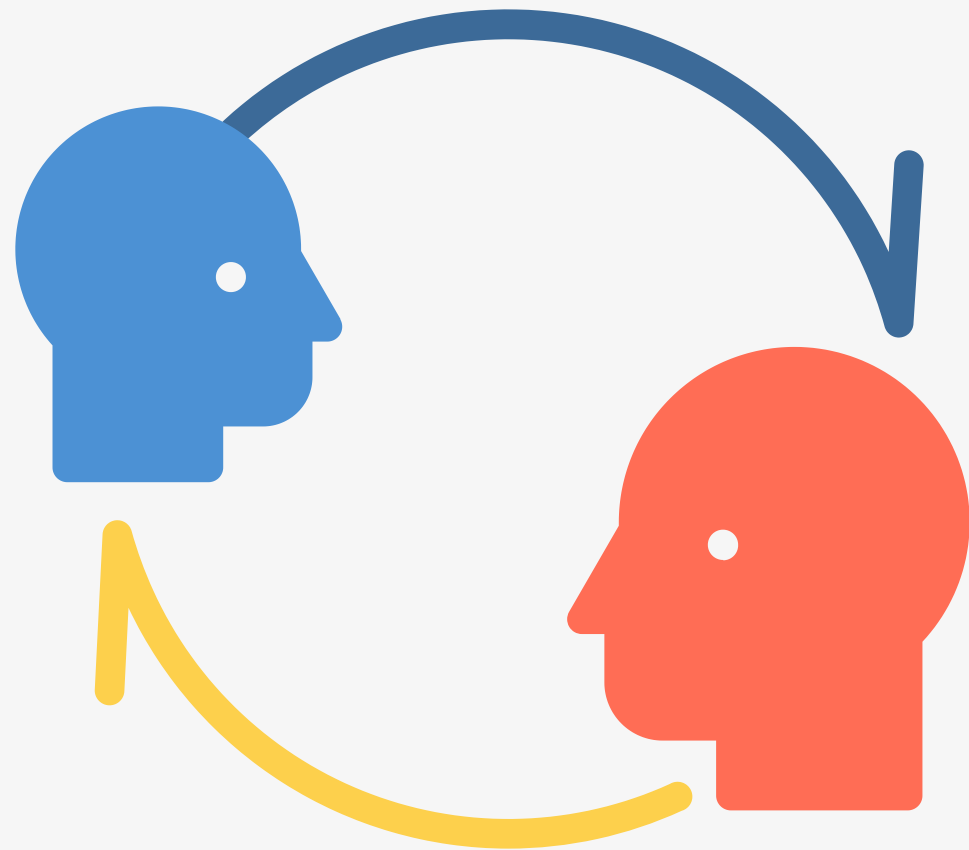
If this position requires handling a phone, using phone etiquette: “Hello, this is xxx(location/department) at United Hospital, this is xxx(name) speaking how can I help you?”

Creating inclusive position descriptions

- Avoid generic and vague descriptions
- Watch out for ableist language
- Time Commitment
- Invite all to apply

Accommodations

Communication



The act of giving,
receiving, and sharing
information.

the image above is two faces with
arrowss connecting them to form a circle

Job Crafting

Psychological Safety



Being able to show and
employ one's self
without fear of negative
consequences of self-
image, status, or career.

-Mary-Francis Winters

the image above is a black square with the words
safe space and an arrow pointing to the right
written in chalk

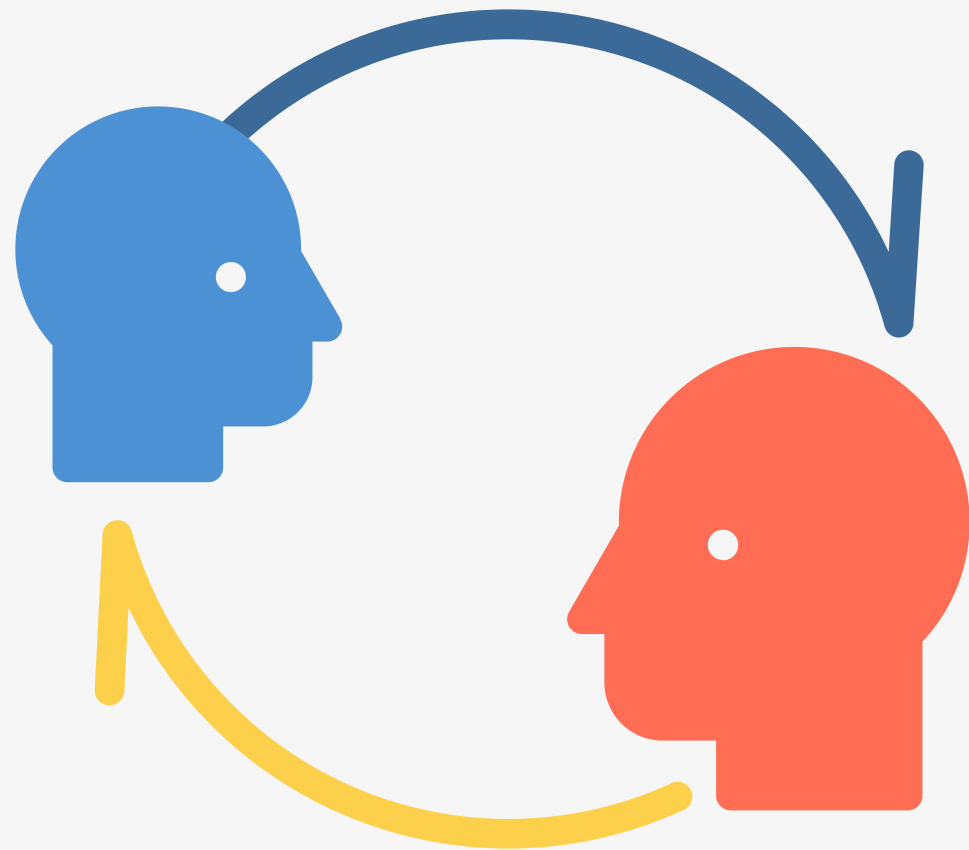
Environment



- Welcoming and Supportive
- Sensory Sensitivity
- Work Productivity

Source: Tiffany Jameson, "Understanding and Supporting ADHD Colleagues in the Workplace", LinkedIn Learning, 2021

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Preparing staff

Things to consider:

- Get buy-in from top down
- Educate and create awareness
- Support, Support, Support

HELPFUL RESOURCES

WEBSITES

- The Arc- thearc.org/
- US Department of Labor-Hiring People with Disabilities
- JAN Network- www.askjan.org
- Datapeople- datapeople.io
- Uinclude- www.uinclude.com/
- Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion- askearn.org
- ChatGBT

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- "Inclusive Conversations"
by Mary-Francis Winters
- "Thrive with Neurodivergent
Colleagues" by Suzanne K.
Whang
- Temple Grandin Ted talks
 - *The World Needs All Types of Minds
 - *Educating Different Types of Minds
- LinkedIn Learning
 - *Mary Francis Winters
 - *Tiffany Jameson
- Judy Singer
 - *"Neurodiversity:
The Birth of an Idea"
 - *Reflections on
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QUESTIONS



SOURCES

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- Katie Koullas, Post | Feed | LinkedIn, March 15th 2023
- Mary Winters-Francis, *Inclusive Conversations: Fostering Equity, Empathy, and Belonging Across Differences*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2020
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