




# WORKING WITH AUTISM

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others.

Autistic people see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. If you are autistic, you are autistic for life; autism is not an illness or a disease and cannot be 'cured'. Often people feel that being autistic is a fundamental aspect of their identity.

## Access Assistance

 **0800 652 1618**

 **support@electricalcharity.org**

Available 7 days a week offering free and independent assistance for virtually any problem or issue you may encounter. Our trained advisors assist everyone with respect and empathy.



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**Autism is a spectrum condition. All autistic people share certain difficulties, but being autistic will affect them in different ways. Some autistic people also have learning disabilities, mental health issues or other conditions, meaning people need different levels of support. All people on the autism spectrum learn and develop. With the right sort of support, all can be helped to live a more fulfilling life of their own choosing.**

## Here is an example:

Martin was the best process engineer Tom had ever worked with. But Martin often struggled when the team would hold impromptu meetings around his desk.

- > **Do you work with someone with autism?**
- > **What can you do to make your interactions sensitive to their needs?**

## Handling autism in the workplace

1. Clarify expectations of the job. You may need to be more explicit about your expectations for an autistic member of staff.
2. Provide training and monitoring. Clear and structured training is invaluable.
3. Make sure instructions are concise and specific. Try to give your employee clear instructions right from the start about exactly how to carry

out each task, from start to finish, as this will lay the foundations for good working practices.

4. Ensure the work environment is well-structured. Some autistic people need a fairly structured work environment.
5. Regularly review performance. As with any employee, line managers should have regular one-to-one meetings with the person to discuss and review performance and give overall comments and suggestions.
6. Provide sensitive but direct feedback. Autistic people often find it difficult to pick up on social cues, so make sure your feedback is honest, constructive and consistent.
7. Provide reassurance in stressful situations. Autistic people can be quite meticulous and can become anxious if their performance is not perfect. This means they may become very stressed in a situation such as an IT failure.
8. Support your staff member to prepare for changes.
9. Ask about sensory distractions.
10. Help other staff to be more aware.

## EIC support services

**Telephone counselling and support**

**Training support through our partners**

**Managers training through our partners**

**Free confidential helpline available 24/7**