

How to Talk to Your Employer About Being Neurodivergent

TL;DR · QUICK SUMMARY

- Plan what you want to say and what outcome you're hoping for before the conversation.
- You can lead with needs ("here's what helps me") rather than diagnosis, if you prefer.
- Putting things in writing afterward helps create a clear, shared record.
- You can request this conversation happens confidentially, if that matters to you.

A Note Before You Read On

This resource offers general guidance and reflects common experience, not professional, legal, medical or financial advice. It is not a substitute for employment law, HR policy, occupational health guidance, or individual professional assessment. Every person's experience of neurodivergence is different, so please adapt anything here to your own situation. The Uniquely Wired Network does not accept liability for decisions, actions or outcomes arising from the use of this material. If you need advice specific to your circumstances, please consult a qualified professional (e.g. HR, legal, medical, or financial advisor).

Why This Matters

This conversation can feel high-stakes. Having a rough plan (what to say, what to ask for, and what to do if it goes badly) makes it much less daunting.

What This Might Look Like

- Booking a private 1:1 with your manager or HR specifically for this conversation.
- Bringing a short written summary rather than relying on memory in the moment.
- Following up afterward by email to confirm what was discussed and agreed.

Before the Conversation

- Decide what you want to share, and what you'd like to happen as a result.
- Write a short summary in advance; a few bullet points is enough.
- Consider whether you want this kept confidential, and say so explicitly.

During the Conversation

- Lead with the practical impact and what helps, not just the label.
- Ask directly for what you need. Be as specific as possible.
- It's okay to pause, or ask to continue the conversation another time if needed.

After the Conversation

- Send a short follow-up email summarising what was discussed and any agreed next steps.
- Note down what was said, in case you need to refer back to it later.
- If it didn't go how you hoped, you can ask HR or occupational health to get involved.

Helpful Phrases You Can Borrow

You don't have to use these exact words. Take what fits and leave the rest.

"I wanted to let you know I'm neurodivergent, and share a few things that would genuinely help me do my best work."

"Could we keep this conversation between us for now, while I figure out how much I want to share more widely?"

"To summarise what we discussed, I'll follow up with a short email so we're both clear on next steps."

Quick Tips

- Prepare a short written summary; it's easy to forget details under pressure.
- Ask for confidentiality explicitly, if that matters to you.

- Focus the conversation on practical impact and solutions, not just explanation.
- Follow up in writing to create a clear record.
- If your manager reacts unhelpfully, that reflects on them, not on you.
- You can involve HR or occupational health at any point if it helps.

Want to Know More?

- See our companion guide: “Whether & When to Disclose” if you haven't decided yet.
- ACAS ([acas.org.uk](https://www.acas.org.uk)) provides free templates and guidance for workplace conversations about health and disability.

Before You Go

This conversation takes courage, whatever the outcome.

You deserve to be met with curiosity and support, and if you're not, that's not a reflection of your worth.