

Whether & When to Disclose: A Pros and Cons Framework

TL;DR · QUICK SUMMARY

- Disclosure is a personal decision; there's no single right answer for everyone.
- Consider your workplace culture, your specific needs, and what you hope to gain.
- You can disclose fully, partially (sharing needs without a label), or not at all.
- You can also change your mind later; disclosure isn't a one-time, irreversible choice.

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

Disclosure can unlock support and understanding, or, in some environments, bring unwanted assumptions. Thinking it through deliberately, rather than reactively, tends to lead to better outcomes.

What This Might Look Like

- Weighing up whether to mention a diagnosis when requesting an adjustment.
- Deciding to disclose to one trusted manager but not the wider team.
- Choosing to describe your needs without ever using a diagnostic label.

Reasons People Choose to Disclose

- Access to formal reasonable adjustments and legal protection under the Equality Act 2010.
- Reduced pressure to mask or explain repeated requests.
- Access to Access to Work funding or occupational health support.
- A more accurate, supported working relationship with a manager.

Reasons People Choose Not To (Or Delay)

- Concerns about stigma, bias, or being treated differently.
- A workplace culture that doesn't feel psychologically safe.
- Wanting time to process a new diagnosis privately first.
- Preferring to request adjustments generically, without naming a condition.

A Middle Ground: Partial Disclosure

- You can share what you need without disclosing a diagnosis, e.g. "I work best with written instructions."
- You can disclose to HR/occupational health confidentially, without your wider team knowing.
- You can disclose later, if and when it feels right; there's no deadline.

Helpful Phrases You Can Borrow

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

"I'd like to share something in confidence. Is that possible to keep between us for now?"

"I'm not ready to share a diagnosis, but I do have some specific things that would help me work better."

Quick Tips

- Under UK law, you're generally not obliged to disclose unless safety-critical work is involved.
- Disclosure to HR/occupational health can often be kept confidential from your immediate team.
- You can request adjustments without disclosing a specific diagnosis.
- Consider testing the waters with a trusted colleague or manager first.
- Written records of any disclosure conversation can be useful to keep for yourself.
- There's no "right" amount to disclose, only what feels right for you.

Want to Know More?

- See our companion guide: "How to Talk to Your Employer About ND" for practical wording.
- ACAS ([acas.org.uk](https://www.acas.org.uk)) has guidance on disclosure and reasonable adjustments in the UK.

Before You Go

Whatever you decide, it's your information to share on your own terms and timeline.

There's no wrong choice here, only the one that feels safest and most useful for you right now.