

Successfully managing competing neurotype needs within teams



Catherine Leggett

Expertise since 2014 –
Employment, Employability, Mental
Health, Community Participation,
Accessibility

Who are we?



Founder
Catherine Leggett

Expertise since 2014 –
Employment, Employability, Mental
Health, Community Participation,
Accessibility

Autism/Dyslexia



Support
Justin Mactavious

Expertise since 2017 - dementia, Autism,
ADHD, Schizophrenia, chronic depression,
personality and perception disorders,
traumatic brain injury and intellectual disability

Autism, Global Majority

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Regular lived-experience contributors



Drew Edwards
Pharmacy Dispenser

*Autism/Dyspraxia
Hypermobility*



Ffion SFX
Special Effects Artist

*Autism/ADHD
Sensory Processing Disorder*



Muttley
Disability Advocate

*Autism/ADHD
Neurofibromatosis, Amputee
Global Majority*



Pip Irving
Data Scientist

*Autism/Dyspraxia
Gender-queer*



Sophie Varley
Education and
Learning Consultant

Autism



Alex Kegie
Founder - Neurologik

*Autism/ADHD
Fibromyalgia/Hypermobility*



Aûtentic

What do we do?



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CPD accredited training for line managers, HR, recruiters, careers professionals – and 1 hour introductory talks



Consultancy, for example

- Neurodivergent Environmental Assessments
- Language and accessibility reviews
- Policy reviews
- Recruitment/promotion process reviews
- Launching employee resource groups and networks

Neurodivergent communities

perception disorders
e.g. Schizophrenia
Altered reality, unable to concentrate

Autism
Literal thinking, processing delays, needs predictability, sensory sensitivities

ADHD
Impulsivity, sensory sensitivities, quickly shifts focus of attention

Tourette's Syndrome
Physical and vocal tics

Dyspraxia
Coordination, motor skills and processing

Dyslexia
reading and writing

Dysgraphia
symbols and graphics

Dyscalculia
numbers

Amnesia
remembering or loss of memory

Aphasia
understanding speech or speaking



long term Depression
Fatigue and difficulty concentrating

Epilepsy
Recurrent, unprovoked seizures

KEY

- Condition that you are born with
- Condition you develop after birth
- Condition that you are born with or that you develop after birth

Neurodivergent-affirming core principles

Prioritise

- Lived-experience
- Intersectionality
- Accepting difference

Support

- Self-advocacy
- Autonomy
- Adjustments

Adapt

- Processes
- Communication
- Environment



**Universal
design**

Participation

Provide flexible options for participation

- Remotely and on-site (hybrid ideally)
- In group and 1:1 sessions
- In writing
- AI for note taking/summaries
- Closed captions



Universal design

Intersectionality



Ensure intersectionality is considered

- Consider specific cultures and community
- Consider intellectual disability
- Consider mental health and physical disability

Universal design

Policies and procedures



- **Carry out language and accessibility reviews**, on all written and visual information about policies and processes
- **Review the procedure or process itself** to ensure that is accessible for all

Universal design

The environment

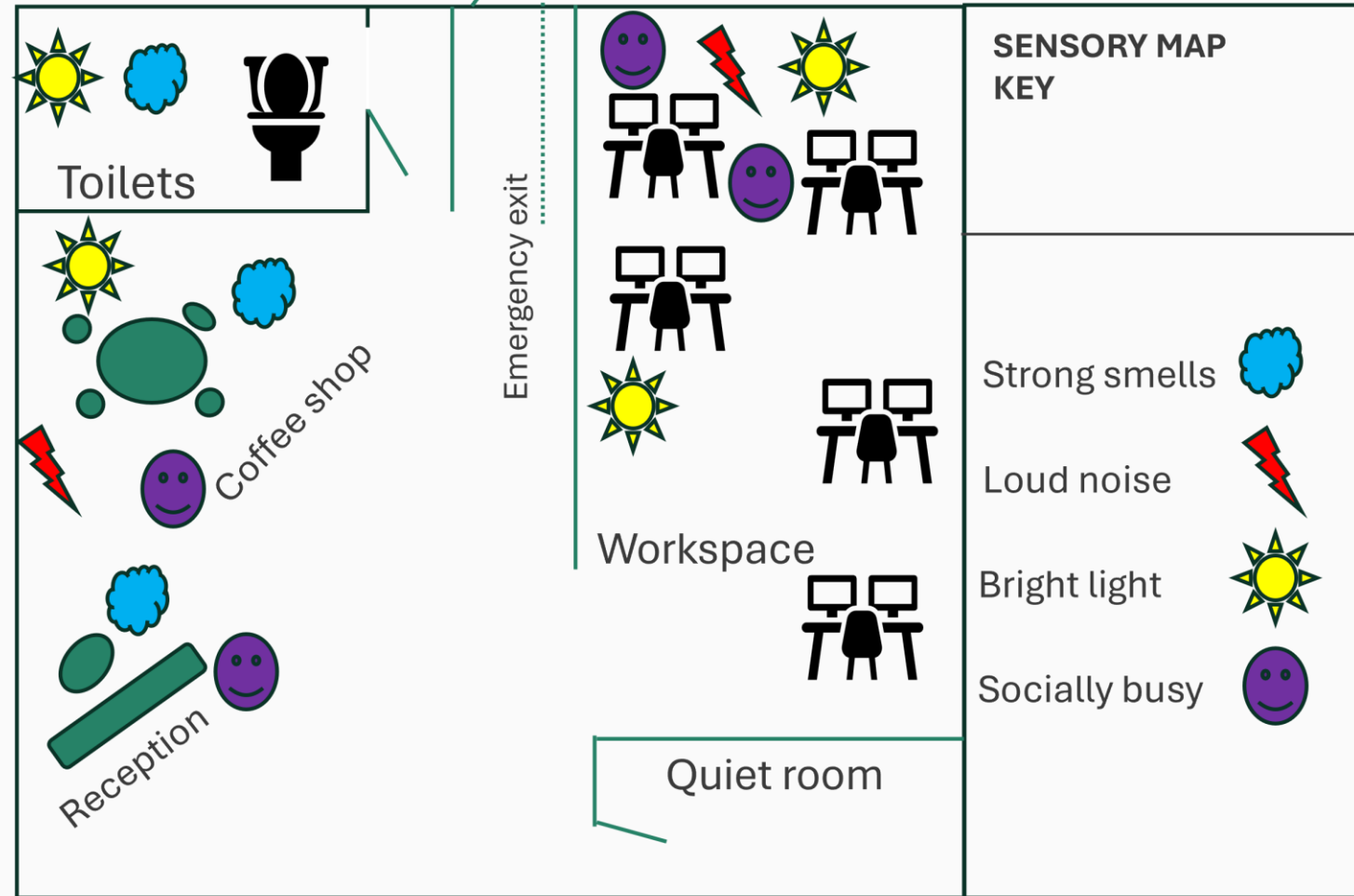
provide a sensory map

RESOURCE

[Download: quiet room design guide](#)



Sensory



Main entrance

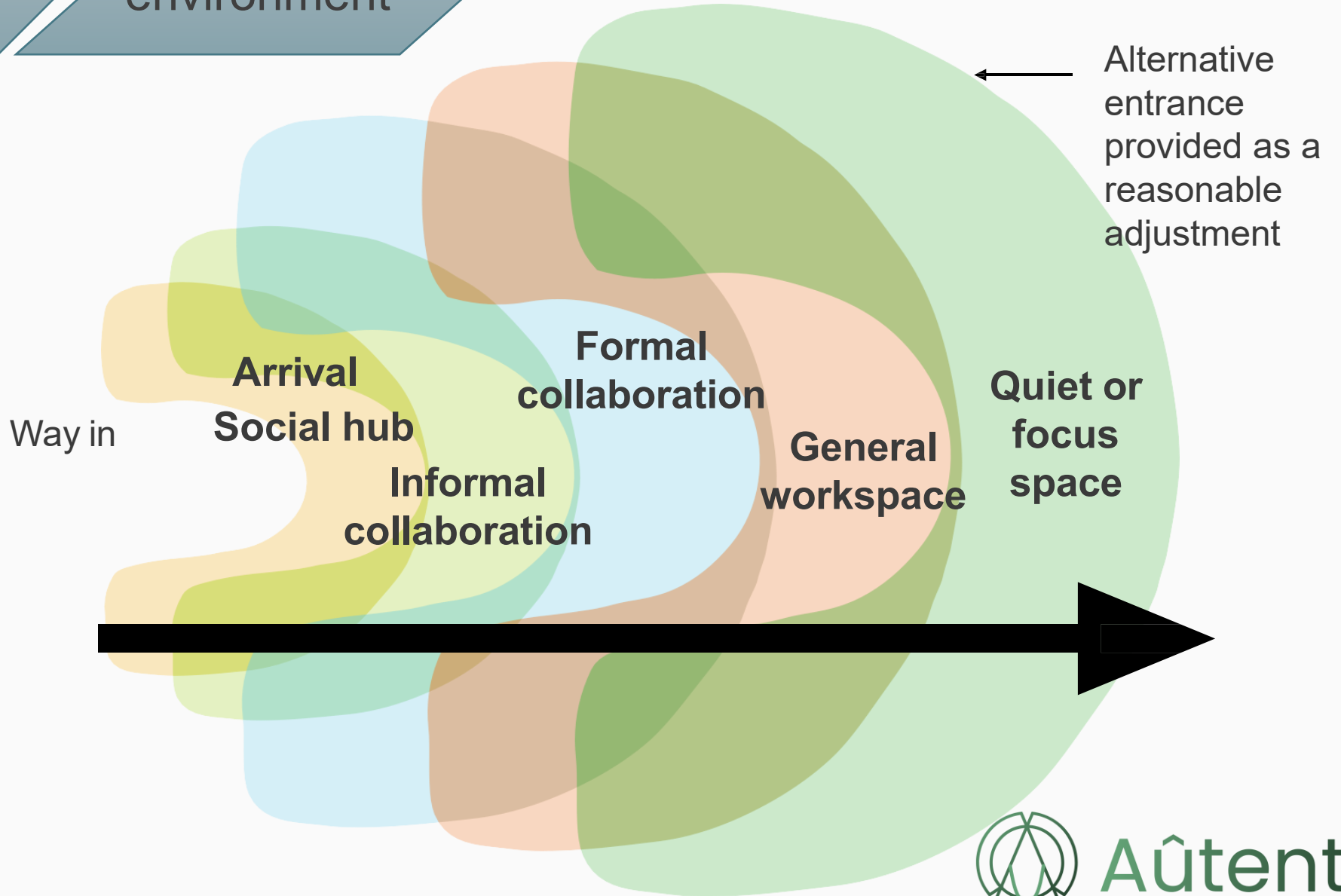
Universal design

The environment

ZONING SPACES in buildings to be neurodivergent-affirming

The zones start at the entrance as 'high-stimulus' and then gradually get 'quieter'.

The zones should flow logically like this so that there aren't any focus/quieter zones next to highly stimulating, busy, noisy, smelly, bright or highly social areas.



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Establishing individual needs
(to identify competing needs)

Support

self-advocacy

In email communications and letters, on websites and in pre-surveys or customer/service user registration forms:

‘let us/me know if there is anything we could do to help you attend and take part, by emailing (X) or phoning (X)’

or

‘Please contact (named person), to request any reasonable adjustments by emailing (X) or phoning (X)’

Support

Tailored
Reasonable
adjustments

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Downloadable Resource

[https://www.autentic.uk/
workplace-reasonable-
adjustments-passport-
w-r-a-p](https://www.autentic.uk/workplace-reasonable-adjustments-passport-w-r-a-p)



Create a **reasonable adjustments process** including **flexible ways to request** them - and **ensure that everyone is aware** of it - in much the same way that you do for complaints.

Thinking point

Is there fit-for purpose training and support in place for decision makers?

Is decision making transparent and time-bound?

Disclosure/Knowledge:

template is needed

A template to request adjustments to LM

Guidance for LM's/employees is developed once the process and policy has been agreed

Supportive conversation:

Guidance /template is needed

Meeting should incl. line manager and/or representative from HR

Develop guidance on structuring these conversations if necessary

Refer to in-house/external specialists to identify adjustments and document employee self-reported effective adjustments

A template should be developed to document identified reasonable adjustments

Decision making: Guidance /template is needed

Requests considered by LM and documented.

Where the LM declines a request refer to panel

Panels include the LM, HR and business leader

Panels refer to specialist when assessing efficacy/and employee's self-report.

Template to inform the employee of what adjustments can be taken forward, and what will be referred

Decision timelines : 14 days from request to LM, further 14 days for panel meeting, additional 14 days to gather expert input etc.

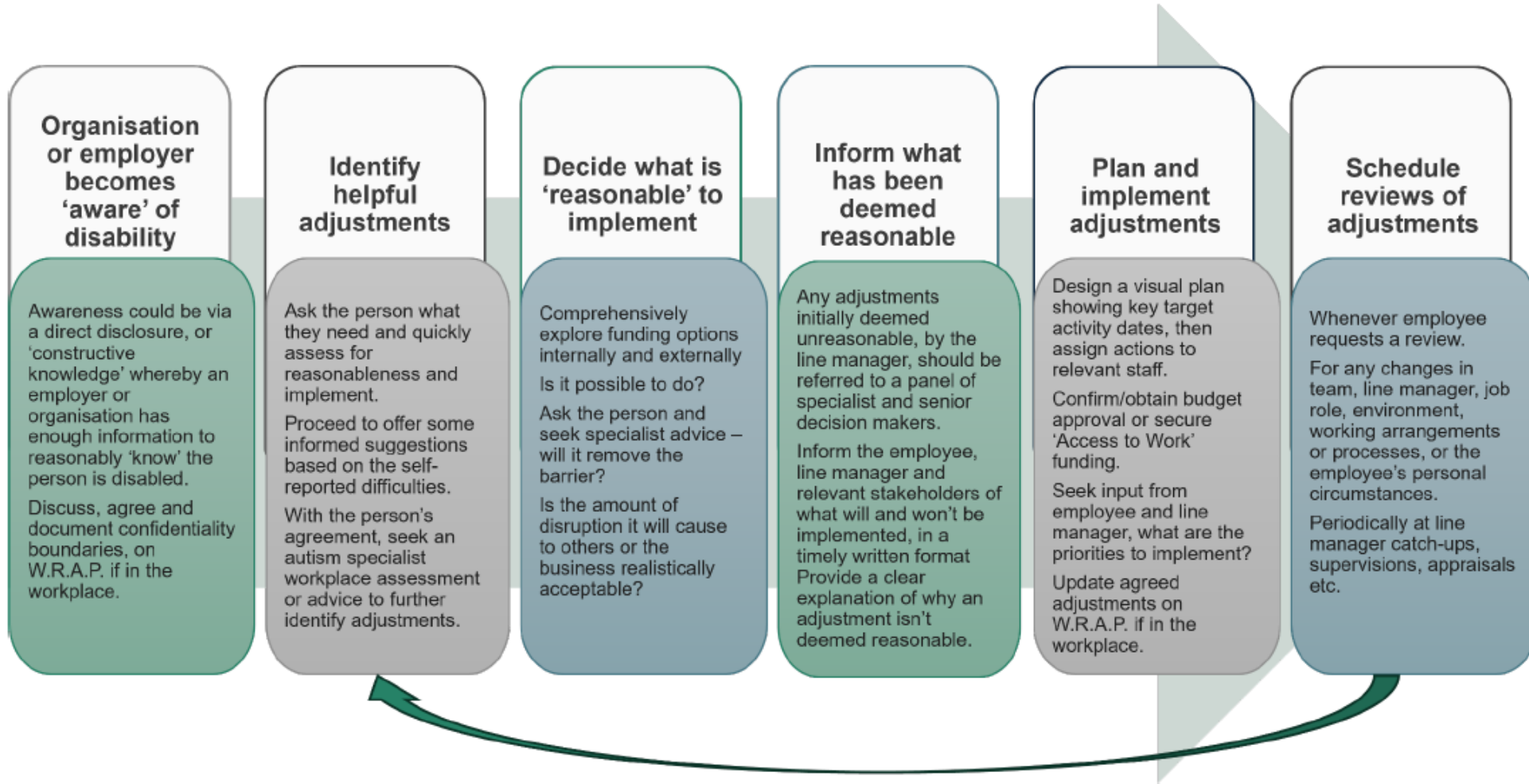
Inform outcomes, clearly and in writing, with decision making rational

So what could a best-practice reasonable adjustments request process look like?..

Recommended reasonable adjustments process overview

A basic overview of a recommended process is shown below.

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Agreeing disclosure boundaries

what – will be helpful for most people to know, and what may be helpful only for specific people to know like the line manager, HR or buddy.

who - will brief colleagues, for example the person/you, a buddy or line manager.

how – the disclosure will be made, for example, on a 1:1 basis discretely, by sharing a digital copy of a disclosure profile or workplace adjustments passport or by briefing in a group situation during autism training.

when – to check with the person/you before briefing or sharing information with others, for example, for any new colleagues joining the team the person/you may prefer to be asked on a case-by-case basis or it may be ok generally to let all new people know who will be working closely with the person/you.

whether - the person/you are comfortable answering any questions from colleagues about how best to help and support.

Additional specialist support for identifying reasonable adjustments

“

My autistic colleague and I both had workplace assessments carried out by the organisations' occupational health provider. Both of our assessments recommended the exact same adjustments, but we are completely different autistic people and the adjustments we need are also completely different!.” (Autistic charity worker)

- **Access to work** – depends on the assessor, can be inconsistent or not specialised (carrying out a ‘tick-box’ exercise that potentially harmfully stereotypes the person a recommends ineffective adjustments or doesn’t consider other co-occurring conditions)
- **General Occupational Health Providers** – inconsistent in the quality or level of specialism and person-centred approach (same as above)
- **Specialist Occupational Health providers**
 - Lexxic - neurodivergence specialists
 - Exceptional Individuals – autism specialist
- **Independent specialist autism workplace assessors** – may or may not be able to consider other ND conditions, health conditions, mental health conditions etc.
- **We recommend ThinkDIF for workplace assessments**

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<https://thinkdif.uk/>



Informal communication of needs

RESOURCES

[Make your own one page profile by downloading our editable template here](#)



Predictability



Cloud Busters
Specialist cloud architecture for your future

EMPLOYEE PROFILE



Name: Anna Brown
Role: Senior architect
HR Rep: Manuel Lopez
Line manager: Zainab Barakat
Pronouns: They/them

Specialisms/specific skills

infrastructure migration strategies
training and assistance to all employees
working with corporate clients
virtualisation technologies



Things that interest me and are important

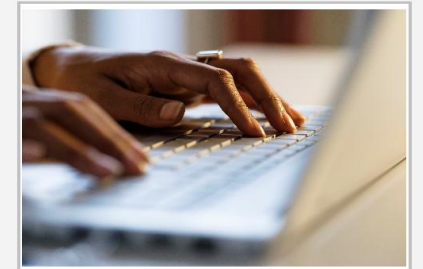
gardening and painting
the 'detail'
my cat 'John'
honesty and reliability

Best ways to work with me/support me

Schedule calls in advance using my calendar link
Remote working and internal meetings
Follow up important points with written summary
Be patient when I ask for additional detail and time

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Download an editable one page profile template from <https://www.autentic.uk/>

Managing competing needs

John - needing clear, detailed and written information

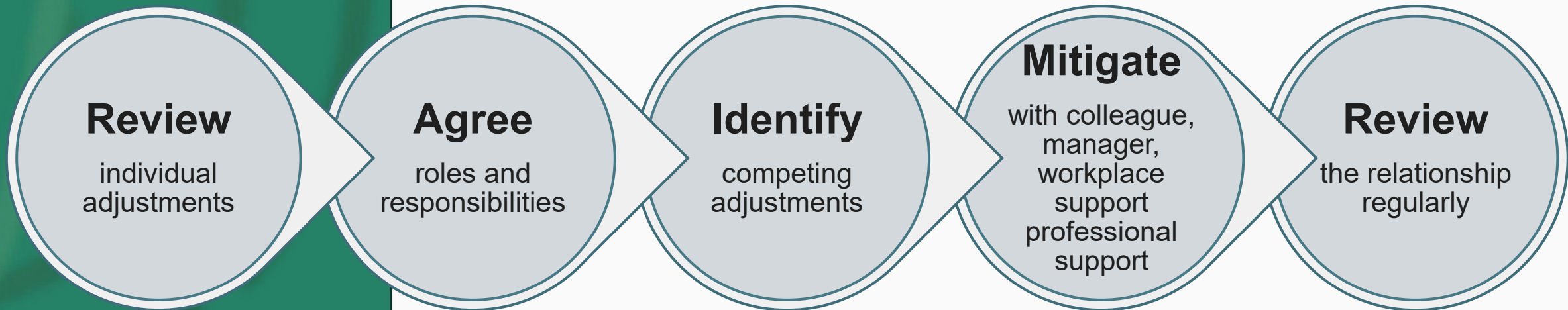
VS

Mei - need to talk rather than write

Aisha - needing structure, including during conversations - adherence to deadlines or early notice when things are going off track to avoid overwhelm

VS

Drew - may be distracted by parts of the project which come later in the order of activities, have difficulty meeting deadlines, and interrupt or digress during conversations



Employer resources:

<https://www.autentic.uk/resources-for-employers>



The Neurofriendly pledge supports businesses to identify gaps, take manageable steps over 12 months, and be recognised publicly for their commitment.