Neuroinclusive Manager Action Guides

Practical tools to improve clarity, performance, and consistency across your team.

Disability:IN®

How to Use This Guide

By 2040, it's estimated that 40% of the global workforce will identify as neurodivergent. But the opportunity is not future-oriented- it's already shaping how high-performing teams operate today.

Adopting neuroinclusive ways of working such as clearer communication, more structured workflows, and more consistent practices, helps teams move faster, reduce friction, and deliver stronger outcomes for all employees.

Managers need practical ways to apply these approaches in real work, right now.

This playbook brings together three tools designed for everyday use: running 1:1s, setting team norms, and communicating day to day. Each tool can be used on its own, or together to create more effective, scalable ways of working across your team.

This playbook provides practical tools managers can use in real work: 1:1s, team norms, and day-to-day communication. Use them individually or together to build more effective ways of working across your team.

How to Use This Playbook:



Use the 1:1 Guide to refine how you structure ongoing conversations with your team

Use the Universal Supports Menu to standardize how work is designed across your team

Use the AI Prompt Pack to improve how communication is executed in real time

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Universal Supports Menu

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management



As the workforce evolves, competitive advantage is increasingly tied to how effectively organizations design work for a range of thinking, processing, and communication styles.

Leaders who build clarity, structure, and flexibility into their operating models are better positioned to drive performance, retain talent, and scale effectively across teams.

Rather than relying on individual accommodation requests alone, this menu outlines foundational practices that can be embedded into team operations to create more consistent, productive, and accessible ways of working that benefit all employees. To start, select 2–3 supports to implement across your team.

Communication Supports:

Written follow-ups after meetings

- When to use: After decisions, complex discussions
- Business impact: Reduces rework, increases alignment, clarifies ownership of next actions

Clear, unambiguous instructions

- When to use: Assigning tasks or deliverables
- Business impact: Improves execution speed and quality

Opportunities to ask follow-up questions

- When to use: after complex discussions, after providing critical feedback
- Business impact: Promotes deeper understanding, improves behavioral alignment and quality

Meeting Supports:

Agendas shared 24 hours in advance

- When to use: All meetings with decisions or open discussion
- Business impact: More focused, goal-oriented meetings

Multiple participation options (chat, verbal, async input)

- When to use: Team discussions, brainstorming
- Business impact: Increases contribution and quality of ideas

Universal Supports Menu

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management



Work Design Supports:

Defined time blocks

- When to use: Deep work tasks
- Business impact: Reduces context switching, improves output

Sensory Reduction or Calm Work options

- When to use: Office settings
- Business impact: Sustained attention, reduced fatigue, increased productivity

Technology Supports:

Automatic captioning + transcription

- When to use: All virtual meetings
- Business impact: Accessibility + better documentation

AI-assisted communication tools + workflows

- When to use: Drafting emails, summarizing meetings, follow-up and task reminders
- Business impact: Faster, clearer communication

Access to productivity tools such as timers, deadline trackers, and task management software

- When to use: Tracking complex projects and tasks
- Business impact: Team-wide visibility into projects



Key Takeaway

When these supports are standardized, all employees benefit, fewer employees need to request individual accommodations, and overall team performance improves.

Hosting Neuroinclusive 1:1s

Action Guide for Managers

A recent study shows that neurodivergent professionals weight a positive relationship with their manager as one of the most important factors in their success at work. As neurodiverse workforces grow globally, these relationships are becoming more tied to performance, engagement, and retention.

This guide provides a structured approach to one-on-one (1:1) or check in conversations that reduces ambiguity and creates space for different working styles. While these practices are especially impactful for neurodivergent employees, they improve communication and productivity across entire teams.

This guide helps managers refine their existing 1:1s by introducing more clarity, structure, and flexibility.

Before the Meeting:

Share a simple agenda in advance (even 3 bullets would be helpful)

Use a standard/repeatable format when possible

- Top priorities this week
- Any blockers or questions
- Decisions needed

Offer optional written input or feedback ahead of time. Many neurodivergent employees have co-occurring conditions such as auditory processing disorder, slow processing speed, and rejection-sensitive dysphoria that can impact their ability to receive, synthesize, and respond to feedback appropriately in the moment. Providing feedback in writing ahead of time enables the employee to have the necessary time to process the feedback and come prepared for a constructive conversation.

Sample script:

"As your manager, I want to make sure I'm supporting you in the way that helps you do your best work. I'm going to try a couple of small changes- let me know what's helpful or what we might want to adjust. I'd like this to be an open and ongoing conversation so we can make sure we're setting you up for success."

Hosting Neuroinclusive 1:1s

Action Guide for Managers

During the Meeting:

Make expectations explicit: instead of ""Let's keep moving this forward", try "The next step is X, by Y date, with Z outcome" or "for this project, success looks like X"

Normalize different communication preferences:

- "Would it be easier to respond to this in writing after?"
- "Do you want to think about this and follow up async?"
- "Is this level of detail helpful, or should I adjust?"

Reduce ambiguity in feedback: instead of "this could be stronger" try:

- What's working: X
- What to adjust: Y
- Next step and deadline: Z

Make space for ***their*** feedback:

- "Anything slowing you down right now?"
- "Are there ways I can make priorities clearer?"
- "What's been most helpful from me lately?"

After the Meeting:

- Summarize priorities
- Confirm ownership
- Clarify deadlines
- Follow-up in writing, if needed

Sample script:

"Before we wrap, here are the key next steps as I see them- tell me if I missed anything. Would it be helpful for me to send this to you in writing? Our next conversation will be on X date, at Y time. If you need additional support between then, you can do X, Y, or Z."

AI Prompt Pack

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management

Many workplace norms rely on implied expectations, indirect language, and unstructured information sharing. For many neurodivergent professionals, this can create friction.

This prompt pack is designed to help managers turn everyday tasks such as emails, meetings, feedback, and workflows into clearer, more actionable outputs. The result is not just more accessible communication, but faster execution and more consistent outcomes across teams.

Start with one or two high-impact use cases and build from there.

Communication Prompts:

Clarify instructions:

- "Rewrite this message so it is clear, direct, and free of ambiguity. Break it into bullet points with expected outcomes and deadlines."

Simplify complexity:

- "Summarize this into 5 concise bullet points with clear actions."

Remove implied expectations:

- "Rewrite this so all expectations are explicit, with no reliance on implied context."

In general, it can be helpful to prompt the AI with a question such as "What other information do you need in order to accomplish this task?", to direct the AI to show its work and sources. It can also be helpful to direct the AI to provide 3-5 responses to the same question to ensure that you have a range of options from which to choose.

AI Prompt Pack

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management

Meeting Prompts:

Build a structured agenda

- "Turn this topic into a structured meeting agenda with objectives, discussion points, and clear decisions needed."

Create a follow-up summary

- "Summarize this meeting into decisions made, next steps, owners, and deadlines."

Offer async option

- "Rewrite this meeting plan to include an async participation option for those who prefer to contribute in writing.

As always, check AI generated outputs for accuracy before sharing.

Feedback Prompts:

Deliver clear, actionable feedback

- "Rewrite this feedback so it is direct, specific, and focused on actions and outcomes."

Reduce emotional ambiguity

- "Make this feedback more neutral, structured, and easy to interpret. Clearly describe what success looks like."

Workflow & Productivity Prompts:

Break down tasks

- "Break this project into step-by-step tasks with clear sequencing and estimated time to complete."

Create predictable workflows

- "Turn this recurring process into a repeatable checklist with clear inputs and outputs."

AI Prompt Pack

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management

AI-Supported Workflows & Tools

Neuroinclusive communication practices such as clear expectations, structured information, and reduced ambiguity are most effective when they are consistently implemented. Rather than relying on managers to remember these practices each time, tools like Microsoft Copilot or internal GPTs can be used to embed them directly into everyday workflows.

This section outlines five high-impact workflows you can implement immediately, along with a simple agent configuration to make these practices the default.

Step 1: Set up a Neuroinclusive Communication Agent (Lightweight)

Before using the workflows below, create a reusable Copilot instruction (or internal GPT) using the following. Please note: fields and instructions may not be consistent across all user roles, permission levels, or models.

Name: Neuroinclusive Comms Agent

Description: This assistant helps managers create clear, structured, and neuroinclusive communication.

It improves how emails, meetings, feedback, and workflows are written- making expectations explicit, reducing ambiguity, and enabling more consistent execution across teams.

Agent Instructions: You are a workplace assistant designed to improve clarity, structure, and accessibility of communication across cognitively diverse teams.

When generating or rewriting content:

- Make expectations explicit (no implied context)
- Use clear, direct language
- Structure information with bullet points or sections
- Break complex ideas into manageable steps
- Include, when relevant:
  - Objective
  - Actions
  - Owners
  - Deadlines
  - Definition of success

- Avoid vague language (e.g., “soon,” “keep moving,” “circle back”)
- When applicable:
  - Highlight key decisions and next steps
  - Offer structured formats (agenda, checklist, summary)
  - Ensure outputs are easy to scan and act on
- Do not change the meaning—only improve clarity, structure, and effectiveness.

In the Knowledge Field

Upload:

- Download of Disability:IN’s Neuroinclusive Human Capital Management Report (PDF)
- Your internal comms guidelines (if applicable)
- Toggle OFF “only use specified sources” so the agent can access meeting notes, chats, emails, presentations, etc.

Capabilities:

- Toggle ON “Create documents, charts, and code”

Suggested Prompts:

- Clarify a Message- Rewrite this to be clear, structured, and easy to act on.
- Create a meeting agenda- Turn this into a structured agenda with objectives, decisions, and prep.
- Summarize a meeting- Summarize this into decisions, next steps, owners, and deadlines.
- Improve feedback- Rewrite this feedback to be clear, specific, and actionable.

AI Prompt Pack

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management

Step 2: Apply High-Impact Workflows

WORKFLOW 1: CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS GENERATOR

Use Case: Managers assigning work, projects, or deliverables

Prompt: Rewrite this message to be clear, direct, and neuroinclusive.

Break into bullet points with:

- Objective
- Specific tasks
- Owner(s)
- Deadline(s)
- Definition of success
- Remove any implied expectations or ambiguous language.

How it Works:

- Draft message normally
- Run through tool
- Send structured version

Outcome:

- Faster execution
- Fewer clarification questions
- More consistent expectations across the team

Real Impact: When faced with a complex project, someone who struggles with executive function may use AI to break down tasks into manageable steps, set deadlines, and assign priorities. The structured workflow provided by AI reduces overwhelm and supports consistent progress toward project completion.

AI Prompt Pack

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management

WORKFLOW 2: NEUROINCLUSIVE MEETING BUILDER

Use Case: Creating agendas and organizing discussions

Prompt: Create a structured, neuroinclusive meeting agenda with:

- Purpose and desired outcomes
- Timed agenda sections
- Clear decision points
- Pre-read or prep required
- Options for async input

Optional Enhancement:

Save as a Loop template or recurring meeting format

Outcome:

- More focused meetings
- Increased participation across different communication styles
- Reduced cognitive load

Tip: pre-reads are another place where AI may assist in condensing or clarifying long blocks of text. When sending meeting materials, consider whether they can be abbreviated or an executive summary can be added.

Real Impact: A person sensitive to information overload might use AI to summarize lengthy documents, agendas or prepare for a meeting, highlighting key points and actionable items. This enables them to focus on what's most important without feeling overwhelmed by excessive details.

AI Prompt Pack

Action Tool for Neuroinclusive Management

WORKFLOW 3: TASK STRUCTURING FOR COMPLEX WORK

Use Case: Complex or multi-step work

Prompt: Break this project into a structured workflow with:

- Step-by-step tasks
- Sequence and dependencies
- Owners
- Timelines
- Clear outputs for each step

Outcome:

Reduced overwhelm, clearer execution, improved project consistency

Real Impact: For professionals who find it difficult to initiate tasks, AI can generate prompts or suggestions, helping them get started and maintain momentum. This guidance can be especially helpful when tackling unfamiliar or ambiguous assignments.

Better-designed communication leads to better outcomes.

Neuroinclusive practices make work clearer, more consistent, and easier to execute benefiting every member of the team.

Explore the Neuroinclusive Human Capital Management Framework

The practices in this playbook reflect a broader shift in how high-performing organizations design work.

Disability:IN's Neuroinclusive Human Capital Management Framework shows that when companies prioritize clarity, structure, and flexibility, they create more consistent, scalable systems that improve performance for all employees.

This playbook is a starting point. The full framework provides a roadmap for embedding these practices across teams, functions, and enterprise systems.

Download the Study

About Disability:IN®

Disability:IN is the leading nonprofit resource for business disability inclusion worldwide. Disability:IN partners with leading companies and drives progress through initiatives, tools, and expertise that deliver long-term business impact.

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