

AUTISM STRENGTHS BASED JOB MATCHING

This document provides a list of **possible** roles for autistic people. It is important to note that this document is a **guide only**, as every autistic person is unique and has different strengths, interests, capabilities, and goals. What makes a role 'autism friendly' is how supportive the work environment is and the organisation's willingness to accept different ways of thinking and being, rather than the role itself.

Autistic employees tend to thrive in roles that are:

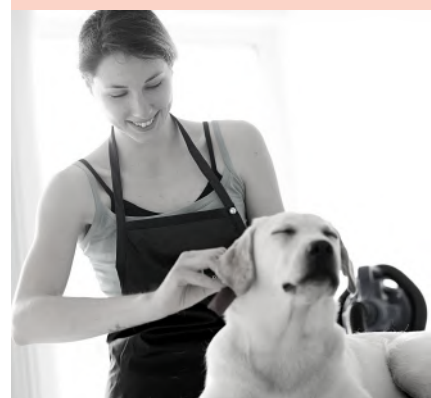
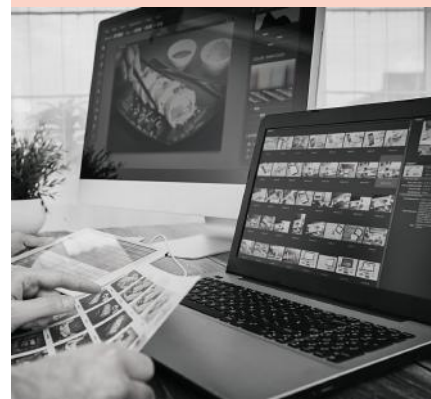
- Sequential, linear, well-defined series of steps
- Logical
- Have a well-defined goal or endpoint
- Focus on one task at a time, need a high level of focus
- Have clearly defined responsibilities and expectations
- Emphasize quality and accuracy over speed
- Involve structure and routine
- In a low sensory environment
- Within their social limitations
- Focus on work capability and talent, not personality
- Related to their area of interest

AUTISM AND GENDER DIFFERENCES

While widely recognized to have more males than females diagnosed, females are often undiagnosed due to their social masking skills. When considering job roles suitable for autistic individuals, we recommend learning about their preferences.

It is common for females on the autism spectrum to be drawn to roles that allow creative, supportive, or sensory expression. Some examples are working in arts and media, human services, working with animals, nursing, legal and advocacy, or psychology/ counselling. It is common for males on the autism spectrum to be drawn to roles in more technical fields that reward structure and have less social interaction, such as working in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, finance, and/ or agriculture.

NOTE: This is general information only. Autism is a highly individualised condition and each autistic individual will have different interests, strengths and talents. It is important to treat each person on their merits.



EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE ROLES FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE:

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHS (STEM) ROLES

Engineering: Great for those motivated by maths, following rules, attention to detail, high levels of concentration, logical thinking and reasoning, problem solving. Information Technology: Computer programming, automation, fixing data and scripts, cybersecurity, attention to detail and appreciation of order. Avoid open plan workplaces (noise and distraction). Limited need for social interaction in the field of IT and working from home options.

Laboratory technician/assistant or medical transcriptionist: Quiet environment, high level of concentration, adherence to procedures, policies and safety guidelines, attention to detail, producing accurate data. Technicians analyse urine, blood and tissue samples to search for abnormalities or evidence of disease. This detail-oriented role requires a high degree of precision. Does not require a lot of social interaction.

Science: Economist, environmental science, political scientist: depth of focus, exploratory process of experimentation, strong attention to detail, stating facts without influence from own thoughts

Statistician: Work in fields such as Research, Australian Bureau of Statistics, CSIRO, Australian Electoral Commission. Requires attention to detail, high concentration and adherence to rules. Logical role.

BUSINESS, ACCOUNTING AND ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

Business and Law: Accountant, auditor, actuary, paralegal, lawyer: Solve complex problems, motivated by mathematical equations. Great for non-visual thinkers, precise, follow procedures and rules, attention to detail, record keeping, maintain financial records, prepare accurate paperwork.

Data entry: High level of concentration, accurate information, attention to detail. Flexible work times.

Filing: Quiet environment. Very definite rules, high levels of accuracy, high level of concentration, very ordered. Does not require a great deal of social interaction.

Document/data comparison: Cross-checking document versions or data sets to compare changes. High levels of accuracy, high level of concentration. Does not require a great deal of social interaction. Flexible work times.

NOTE: this is a general guide only and the roles suggested above are examples only



EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE ROLES FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE (CONT):

CREATIVE ROLES

Book/manuscript/assignment editor: Attention to detail, problem-solving, spot typographic and grammatical errors that few other people seem to see, verify facts, question details, best use of language and grammar. Can work from home doing proof reading.

Film and TV roles (behind the scenes): A wide range of roles from gaffer (sequencing, order, and OHS) to set painter (creativity and focus) to boom mic or camera operator (technical and focus) to film editor/continuity officer (problem-solver, attention to detail, focus) to cinematographer (creativity, focus, initiative, leadership), etc. Depending on level of interest and focus, contribution to media can be satisfying, focused on creativity and a logical format of work.

Graphic/Web Design/Photographer: Visual thinker, creative out of the box thinking, ability to work alone.

Journalist/translator: State facts, attention to detail, research and focus.

Writer: Creativity, see things uniquely, focus. Depending on the role, they can excel with researched pieces, referencing and logical flow of prose, or work more creatively with a narrative and develop characters, settings and plot immersion.

OTHER ROLES

Defence roles: Structured environment, strong sense of discipline, following clearly defined rules.

Librarian/Library Shelving: Working within an ordered cataloguing system and predictable shelving locations. Attention to detail. Quiet low sensory environment.

Mechanic: Attention to detail, logical, perfectionism. Great career choice for autistic people who have an interest in mechanical systems and an aptitude for visualising the inner workings of a motor vehicle.

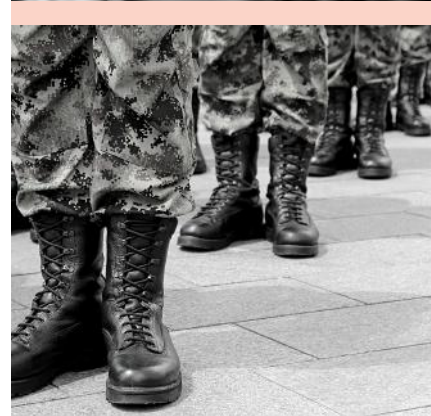
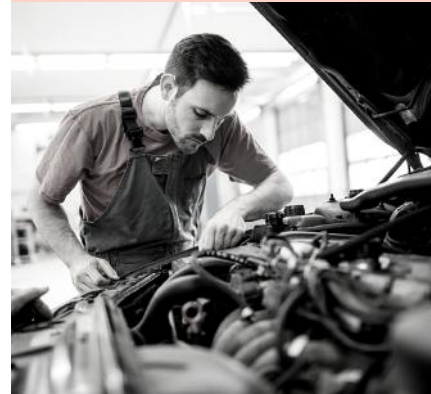
Postie: Work alone, focus, order/ sequencing, logical route to follow to deliver the mail, little social interaction.

Road traffic controller: Manages and directs traffic to ensure safety, very clear rules to follow, independent role and often in quiet locations.

Warehousing/Inventory/logistics: Processing orders, maintaining stock locations and amounts, inventory control, following safety guidelines. Not usually a customer facing role.

Working with animals (pet groomer, dog walker, trainer etc): Visual thinker, animal lover, attuned to the needs of animals, enjoys low stress of working with animals over people.

NOTE: this is a general guide only and the roles suggested above are examples only



EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE ROLES FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE (CONT):

The roles listed below would suit autistic employees who work best with repetition, high levels of focus, limited decision making and analysis, and limited customer interaction:

- Sorting jobs
- Gardener
- Restocking shelves
- Running a photocopier/general admin (filing, data entry)
- Manufacturing line
- Chef's plating assistant
- Traffic controller/crossing supervisor
- Animal care: grooming, dog walking, pet sitting
- Orchard picking/ fruit picker roles
- Postman
- Counting Assistant (during elections time)
- Data entry

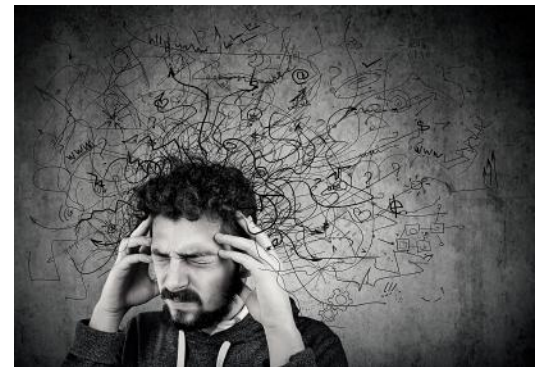
NOTE: this is a general guide only and the roles suggested above are examples only



JOBS TO AVOID FOR MANY PEOPLE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM:

Autistic employees can have difficulty in roles that:

- Don't have clearly defined goals or a specific process of undertaking them (or lacking an ability or freedom to self-define new policies and procedures for these roles)
- Require a lot of social interactions (especially where 'small talk' is required)
- Places emphasis on the employee's personality traits, rather than their work ethic and results
- Are constantly changing, interrupted, requiring analysis and decision making based on customer questions (NOTE: only if time sensitive. An online customer service job, where the autistic employee has time to think and write a reply, would be a better option)



Examples of jobs to avoid for some autistic workers:

Sales/Cashier: Making change quickly puts too much demand on short-term working memory (and is worse if co-existing issue of dyslexia or dyscalculia)

Waiter/Waitress: Challenging to deal with customers, and especially difficult if have to keep track of many different tables or orders

Taking oral dictation: Difficult due to auditory processing problems

Airline ticket agent: Challenging to deal with disgruntled people when flights are cancelled. Also, rapidly making decisions about alternate travel arrangements can heighten anxiety

Air traffic controller: Information overload and stress

Receptionist and telephone operator: Dealing with busy phones, social interactions and making quick on the spot decisions.

NOTE: This is a general guide only. Not every autistic person has the same set of strengths. There is vast diversity across the autism spectrum, as there is with non-autistic people. Every one of us has different thinking styles, strengths, preferences, interests and goals.

With quality training, a flexible approach, an appreciation of different ways of thinking, and an openness to learning about an autistic employee's needs, an autistic employee will thrive in employment.

Reference: Choosing the Right Job for People with Autism or Asperger's Syndrome . By: Temple Grandin, Ph.D. Assistant Professor Colorado State University Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA (November, 1999)