

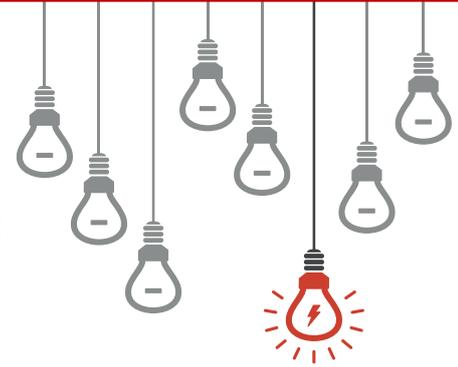


Celebrate achievements
and contributions

Untapped recognises International Day of People with Disability on 3 December 2021 and celebrates the unique, creative and diverse skillsets that neurodivergent people have.

Untapped Ability

78%
of Untapped's
employees are
neurodivergent



Untapped Training

For more information:

www.neurodiversityhub.org/training

Untapped has a range of training resources developed to:

- Help autistic individuals develop skills to be successful at work and for life in general
- Help employers and co-workers to understand autism and how to best support autistic employees

1

MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

A world first online training course designed to support the mental health and well-being of all employees including those on the autism spectrum.

The 'Supporting a Neurodiverse Workforce: A Mental Health and Well-being Online Training Course' presents current, evidence-based information, and strategies about mental health and well-being for autistic individuals. Content is available for executives, supervisors, mentors, co-workers AND employees on the autism spectrum.

2

AUTISM & INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT

Aims to help managers and colleagues understand differences in how autistic employees think and process information. It provides practical strategies to adopt for different working styles and suggests common workplace accommodations to enable autistic employees to succeed at work.

3

INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

Designed to help recruiters/hiring managers to understand autism inclusive interview and hiring practices. It provides examples of adjustments to ensure an autistic candidate can adequately represent themselves.

4

MANAGER TRAINING

Demonstrates some common barriers to employment success for autistic employees. It provides strategies for working with different working and communication styles and gives tips to ensure the work environment is supportive.

5

AUTISM & ANXIETY AT WORK

Designed and written with Untapped's Psychologist, this training explains the signs and behaviours associated with autism and anxiety at work. The training outlines some of the signs to look for, identifies common triggers and suggests some initial support strategies.

6

MENTORING: HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MENTOR AN AUTISTIC MENTEE

Aims to build a mentor's autism knowledge and confidence to effectively mentor an autistic mentee. The training explores differences in social, communication and interpersonal styles and gives tips for setting goals and giving feedback.

Contact mht@untappedholdings.com to enquire about our face-to-face training.



Autism is an asset in the Cyber security workforce: A tech leads reflection

By Raza Nowrozy

Autism is an asset to cyber security, as many of the traits of autistic individuals are valuable for investigating cybercrime (Payne, et al., 2019). My involvement with the neurodivergent community as a Cybersecurity Tech Lead has been enriched by the Genius Armoury platform. Together with Curtin & La Trobe universities and government funding, Genius Armoury was launched during the Australian AUSCERT cybersecurity conference with the objective of attracting more talent from the autistic community into the cyber-security industry (Genius Armoury, 2021).

“My direct work experience with autistic individuals has been very positive”

As a cybersecurity professional, and a Cyber Tech Lead working with Autistic people at some of the top 5 employers in Australia and Untapped over past years, I have uncovered great talent amongst people who I am working with directly. In my experience, autism means extra challenges but rewards with extra talents too. I can certainly reflect positively on my engagement with the Untapped-BHP Neurodiversity employment program and the talented autistic individuals who I currently lead, train, and work with. Attention to detail, the ability to focus on projects from a different perspective, identifying patterns and system vulnerabilities, and having remarkable visual memory are some of the characteristics I observed about the team members over the past months. In addition, the integrity and honesty of the autistic employees is remarkable which is a great asset for any employer.

Many hiring managers see autism as a barrier when it comes to employment. However, my direct work experience with autistic individuals has been very positive. Autistic people have differences in the way their brains develop and process information – and as a result they can experience the world differently. However, they may also possess excellent talents when it comes to Information Technology-related roles, including in the Cybersecurity industry.

The idea to utilize the skills of individuals on the autism spectrum is not a new concept and the popularity of the idea is beneficial to many autistic people. Currently in Australia more than a third (31.6%) of working age adults on the autism spectrum are unemployed which is significantly higher than the general population (Perpitch, 2019). Using people on the spectrum may provide a different perspective on the techniques used by the perpetrators of cybercrime. Using these talents, strategies and methods can be developed to counter online criminals.

An article by David Cook in *Australian Cyber Security Magazine* advocates that autism offers a competitive advantage to organizations in building a defence against modern cyber-crime (Cook, 2021). They have some personal traits that make them personally suitable for the IT and cybersecurity industry, including a superior ability for spotting unusual patterns and an outstanding dedication to ‘software objectives’ (Cook, 2021). For this reason, autism should be seen by cybersecurity companies as an asset and there is even the possibility that in general recruitment activities, autistic traits should be front and centre in desirable attributes. If autism is leveraged as an asset, companies in the field of security should develop a competitive advantage over those companies seeking stereotypical behaviours of ‘good’ employees.

The [Genius Armoury platform](#) is a targeted solution to help tackle a critically important part of the nation's cyber security skills shortage, is being launched.

The platform was developed by Untapped Holdings with BHP, DXC Australia, Splunk, La Trobe University and Curtin University and partially funded by AustCyber's Projects Fund, a \$15 million, three-year initiative designed to help the Australian cyber security industry grow both locally and globally.

Genius Armoury is an online environment designed to identify and attract a previously untapped cyber security talent pool from within the autistic community.

Genius Armoury comprises five modules:

1. Introduction to cyber security
2. Threats and exploits
3. Networks
4. Digital forensics
5. Cyber security tools

Watch an introduction to Genius Armoury [here](#)



Genius Armoury completion certificate is provided once all the modules have been completed, and this can be included on a participant's resume.

In Australia, the unemployment rate for autistic individuals is 31.6%. This is three times the rate for people with a disability, and almost six times the rate for people without a disability.¹ Yet, some autists possess traits that are extremely useful in cyber security roles including attention to detail, the ability to focus for long periods and identify patterns, photographic memory, integrity and honesty.

Genius Armoury provides autists who have little or no prior knowledge of cyber security with a syllabus of fundamental learning. Delivered via a virtual platform, the materials can be undertaken by participants at any time and remotely.

REACH AND IMPACT OF THE PLATFORM (as at 16 Nov 2021)



Total registrations globally:	5,556
Completions to date:	632
Autistic:	47%
Number of countries:	82
Overall course rating:	c. 4.62 out of 5.0

“This program was amazing! The videos covered a good variety of content, and they were very easy to understand. I gained so much practical knowledge and I can't wait to continue learning more about the cybersecurity field.”

“I really enjoyed the friendly approach to cybersecurity. I managed to learn a lot about the threats and current landscape of cybersecurity and what it may look like in the future. The videos were really great in explaining topics for a person who has never had any experience in cybersecurity.”

¹ Amaze – <https://www.amaze.org.au/creating-change/research/employment/>



Autism@Work Pilot - EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

The Autism@Work Pilot was funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services and ceased on 8 October 2021. DXC Technology and Untapped were contracted to conduct this pilot due to our success in creating long-term employment success for individuals on the autism spectrum. The aim of the Pilot was to increase Disability Employment Service (DES) provider and employer confidence when supporting people on the autism spectrum into work and to increase successful employment outcomes for DES participants on the autism spectrum.

A range of resources were developed as part of the Pilot for DES providers, employers and autistic jobseekers. These resources are now available for use on the [Neurodiversity Hub website](#)



Four autism training modules designed to build DES providers' and employers' understanding of autism. The training provides simple support strategies to enable employment success for autistic employees



A Job Readiness Workbook designed to step autistic jobseekers through the process of recognising their strengths and employment goals. The Workbook provides advice about creating a resume/CV and cover letter and preparing for interviews.



A selection of information brochures for DES providers and employers to build understanding and confidence when supporting autistic individuals to get and keep a job.



Three assessment questionnaires created to enable DES providers to gain insight into an autistic jobseeker's individual work preferences, strengths and working styles.



Tools and resources to understand possible workplace accommodations and help the onboarding process. Information that explains the social conventions of the workplace and provides ongoing employment support for autistic employees in the workplace.



Knowing the 'right' thing to say when talking about autism can be difficult if you don't know a lot about it. These engagement resources give information on the strengths of autism and some common characteristics of autism at work.



Documents to help with engaging and selecting the right mentor or support person for an autistic employee. These resources outline the attributes and traits of an effective mentor and provide guidance on building a mentor-mentee relationship.

Understanding ADHD at work



ADHD is a common neurodevelopmental condition with a worldwide prevalence of around 6 in 100 children and adolescents and 3 in 100 adults (Spencer et al., 2002; Moffitt et al., 2015).

There are 2 groups of characteristics in ADHD

Inattentive characteristics

- not paying attention to details
- difficulty remaining focused
- avoiding tasks that take continuous mental effort
- start but not finish tasks
- difficulty organising tasks
- being easily distracted or daydreaming
- not seeming to listen when spoken to
- frequent task switching
- making mistakes
- forgetful

Hyperactive-impulsive

- fidgeting
- being constantly in motion
- talking non-stop
- interrupting conversations
- struggling to do tasks quietly
- acting without thinking

Higher prevalence of ADHD reported in males

(Polanczyk et al., 2007)

Females more likely to have the inattentive presentation

(Biederman et al., 2002)

Females with ADHD more anxious than males with ADHD

(Gaub and Carlson, 1997; Nøvik et al., 2006)

Males more disruptive behaviour and hyperactivity

(Gaub and Carlson, 1997; Nøvik et al., 2006)

It is common to have co-existing conditions with ADHD – such as anxiety, depression, OCD and autism. Comorbid conditions can occur simultaneously and may not be entirely independent of each other. Unfortunately, some people are diagnosed with another primary condition which can overshadow ADHD. Some of the more pronounced symptoms with ADHD are related to deficits in executive functioning. The executive functions are the brain's ability to prioritize and manage thoughts and actions. Some people with ADHD have difficulties in some or all of the areas relating to executive functioning - this is known as executive dysfunction. They may appear to lack initiative or the ability to plan and stay organized and on task and in self-regulating their emotions.

Strengths of ADHD

- **Being energetic.** Some individuals with ADHD have seemingly endless amounts of energy that they're able to channel into their work.
- **Being spontaneous.** Some people with ADHD may be more open and willing to try new things and break free from the status quo.
- **Being creative and inventive.** Some people with ADHD will give a different perspective and approach tasks and situations. They are inventive thinkers, original, artistic, and creative.
- **Being hyper-focused.** Some people with ADHD may intently focus on a task until its completion without breaking concentration.

Challenges of ADHD

- **ADHD can impact all aspects of daily living** - socially, emotionally, academically and at work
- Can be accompanied by emotional regulation challenges
- May have difficulty holding down a job
- May be easily frustrated
- May overreact to ordinary stress
- May be impatient at times
- Negative thoughts on own abilities
- Low self esteem
- May have difficulties with social interactions
- May also experience depression or anxiety

Strategies for success

ADHD can have significant impacts at work. It is important to learn how the characteristics of ADHD impact cognition and workplace behaviour and put strategies in place to minimise the impact.

The good news is that ADHD can be managed with the right workplace adjustments:

- minimise other potentially distracting stimuli
- establish structures and routines
- clearly define rules and expectations
- ensure that rules and instructions are clear, brief and, where possible, in written format
- build a good relationship — this will assist with their self-esteem
- observe — notice distractions and put in place strategies to manage the situation
- provide praise and positive reinforcement
- offer different modes of learning
- allow short breaks to sustain attention

**Prevalence data
(the number of new and
continuing cases) indicate that
ADHD is the most common of
the neurodevelopmental
conditions**

(Hansen et al., 2018).

For more information visit:

[ADHD Australia](#)

- [Practical Workplace Strategies to thrive at work with ADHD](#)
- [Managing ADHD in the workplace](#)



References:

- <https://adhdfoundation.org.au/understanding-adhd>
- <https://adhdfoundation.org.au/adhd-teenagers-and-young-adults>
- <https://www.adhdaustralia.org.au/about-adhd/the-role-of-executive-functioning-in-adhd/>



**Be Your Best Academy: a new educational program
developed by 100% neurodivergent professionals**

Be Your Best Academy: a new educational program developed by 100% neurodivergent professionals

By Autumn O'Connor, Executive Editor, Untapped Holdings Pty Ltd

If you are like 69% of parents who feel their neurodivergent kids are not learning adequate life skills, or you are a neurodivergent person who feels out of place or lacking in that special “adulting” knowledge of the wider world, maybe a new educational program developed by 100% neurodivergent professionals can help?

Life skills are quite literally ‘skills for life’; but sadly, many neurodivergent people arrive at adulthood feeling a bit out of place, without this essential knowledge.

Identified by the World Health Organization as “skills required to deal with the demands and challenges of everyday life”, they name the ten core life skills as self-awareness, critical thinking, problem solving, creative thinking, decision-making, interpersonal relationship, empathy, effective communication, coping with stress, and coping with emotions.

While education is meant to teach a lot of these skills (through the ‘social studies’ curriculums), many of these skills are osmotic; that is, they are learned through modelling social behaviours and in the typical development of a child.

Being a neurodivergent person means an atypical life experience, and often, a complete disconnect or lack of awareness around osmotic learning.

For autistic children, social skills and unspoken rules of society are rarely ‘picked up’ in childhood, despite their (often) highly detailed thought patterns and focus. For dyslexic children, social cues may also be missed, and they may have a more immature outlook than their peers which can lead to a poor self-image. For ADHD children, non-verbal cues and body language can be overlooked and tone of voice not perceived. For children with Tourette’s Syndrome, difficulties can also arise in the interpersonal sphere, as well as understanding impulse control with respect to social situations. Overall, neurodivergent children struggle, and asking them to then just ‘pick up’ unspoken rules and expected life skills is, in fact, *rather insensitive*.

So, a gap exists.

We can see that there are many neurodivergent children who reach adulthood feeling isolated, sad, confused, and / or frustrated about their lack of knowledge in key areas of life skills.

There are many other thoughts and worries that may pass the minds of neurodivergent adults, but these are some common concerns: ‘How do I find a new location without getting lost?’, ‘How do I cook food safely?’, ‘How can I plan my time and be productive?’, ‘What is a relationship/ sex/ intimacy, and how do I get it?’, ‘How can I manage my panic attacks/ depression/ anxiety?’ and ‘What’s the problem if I don’t shower for a week?’.

If you are reading this as a typical adult, you may be surprised at such questions. Perhaps you think these are obvious or clear. Alas, *this is the problem*. It may not be clear to neurodivergent people.

This life skills conundrum is exacerbated by reactions from society. If a neurodivergent adult does not know how to be organized or how to manage their personal hygiene, who can they speak to about it? Will this person receive specialized, neurodivergent-friendly techniques and assistance, or will they be made to feel “broken” and “defective”? Where can they find help without misinformation or ridicule? Where is a safe place to approach the topic and be met with complete support, love, and kindness?

In 2018, a group of caring minds came together to address this problem. The solution was to design, write, illustrate, and publish a set of life skills courses for the neurodivergent community. They decided to follow the strong community approach of **'Nothing For Us, Without Us'**.

This slogan calls for inclusion. It firmly asserts that if any policy is to be decided that will affect a specific group in the community, that a representative of that group ought to be directly involved.

It was *this* perspective that caused the change from 'created for the neurodivergent community by typical professionals', to 'being created *by a neurodivergent community for the neurodivergent community*'.

In the middle of 2018, the first autistic person was hired who would design the core curriculum of life skills materials. By the end of 2018, another autistic person was hired, then another. By 2020/2021, a number of individuals from a range of neurominorities are involved, including: autism, dyslexia, dyscalculia, ADHD, anxiety, depression, complex PTSD, and others.

What sets the work apart is the fact that these materials are researched, written, and designed by a complete team of neurodivergent individuals. There are those with higher degrees, and those without degrees, people with severe 'functioning' issues and more capable levels.

Working together and supporting each other, this team presents courses that go in-depth into the topic. For example, in the Organizational Skills course series, you will learn about music history, fractals, planning skills and even chaos theory! Everything shown relates to the topic, which gives learners a holistic education and the chance to *really understand*; leaving no stone unturned.

The curriculum is slowly appearing online, with courses that range from Organizational Skills to Self-Development, Setting Goals to Cooking Basics, Emotional Intelligence and Managing Change, Presentation Skills and Relationship courses: Making Friends, Love & Intimacy and Dating & Relating. The team at *Be Your Best Academy* are committed to designing courses that are relevant, compassionate and offer lots of different ways for experiencing, engaging and learning these necessary life skills at a self-directed pace.

Access the courses here:



Be sure to read the tabs at the top of the page including the one called, 'About Us' as it shows a long list of all the staff involved, their education, and their diagnoses.

We think this is a worthy curriculum and we long for the days that these courses become standard across the globe, so every neurodivergent person can feel included, accepted and welcomed into the world with a solid knowledge of life skills.

	<p>Courses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newly diagnosed: autism• Newly diagnosed: ADHD• Newly diagnosed: dyslexia• Understanding emotions• Organisational basics• Executive functioning• Time management skills• Planning and productivity• Order for the chaotic mind• Beat procrastination
---	--