

Proposal:

Neurodiversity Training for Supervisors

Abstract:

This proposal is to develop a comprehensive training session for supervisors that focuses on neurodiversity in the workplace. This training will equip supervisors with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively manage employees who are neurodiverse, including those with conditions such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorder (ASD), dyslexia, and others. Neurodiverse individuals make up the world's largest disability/minority group at [15-20% of the world's population](#). Recognizing and supporting neurodiversity is not only essential for creating an inclusive work environment but also for optimizing the talents and abilities of all employees.

Project Summary:

Neurodivergent employees are often overlooked as most often their "disability" is invisible and not well understood. Neurodivergent employees face additional stress due to "masking," or hiding their neurodivergent tendencies, to fit into the neurotypical workplace. Supervisors often do not understand or have the training to address the concerns of their neurodivergent employees, leaving the employee to feel unsupported and unwelcome in their workplace. This training would be strongly encouraged for all supervisors, including faculty directors who oversee university staff and individuals who supervise student employees. Supervisors may not even know they are managing a neurodiverse individual as not every individual receives a diagnosis or has gone through the ADA Office for official accommodations.

The Office of ADA Compliance has given initial agreement to further discuss creating this training for supervisors, tailoring it to the CU audience and providing CU specific content. The newly created Alliance for NeuroDiversity (AND) employee affinity group has given their full support and strong encouragement for this training to be developed to retain neurodivergent employees and increase a sense of belonging and support.

Training Objectives:

1. **Raise Awareness:** Increase awareness and understanding among supervisors about neurodiversity and its significance in the workplace.
2. **Build Inclusive Leadership:** Equip supervisors with the knowledge and tools to effectively manage and support neurodiverse employees, fostering an inclusive workplace culture.
3. **Enhance Productivity:** Provide supervisors with strategies to harness the unique strengths of neurodiverse individuals, thereby enhancing overall team and organizational productivity.
4. **Compliance and Legal Aspects:** Ensure that supervisors are well-versed in relevant laws and regulations related to neurodiversity, such as ADA and EEOC, to avoid legal pitfalls.

Proposed Training Content:

1. Understanding Neurodiversity
 - Definition of neurodiversity

- Common neurodiverse conditions (e.g., ADHD, autism, dyslexia)
- Dispelling myths and stereotypes

2. Benefits of Neurodiversity

- Exploring the value neurodiverse employees bring
- Success stories and case studies

3. Inclusive Leadership

- Communication and active listening skills
- Recognizing and accommodating different learning and working styles
- Creating a supportive work environment

4. Accommodations and Support

- Identifying reasonable accommodations
- Providing tailored support to neurodiverse employees

5. Legal Compliance

- Overview of relevant laws and regulations
- Reporting and addressing discrimination and harassment

6. Sensitivity and Empathy Training

- Developing empathy and understanding
- Addressing unconscious biases

7. Case Studies and Role-Playing

- Practical scenarios for supervisors to apply their knowledge

Delivery:

Training would be offered In-person and/or virtual formats. Once developed, the training could be offered multiple times, or on an as needed basis.

Budget: \$3,500

Training Development Costs: \$3,000 (compensation for current CU employee of the ADA office OR for a third-party training program)

In-person Training costs: \$500 (snacks, coffee, space rental fees if applicable)