How Neurodiverse Teams Can Level Up Your Testing Game

By Maddy McMurray
Who am I?

• Non-Functional Test Analyst
• Neurodiversity Advocate
• Career Changer
• Non-Binary ADHD’er

they / them
What is NEURODIVERSITY?
So, what is neurodiversity?

- Autism
- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Tic Disorders
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Sensory Integration Disorder
- Epilepsy
- Tourette's
- ADHD
- Intellectual Disability
- Dyspraxia
- Bipolar Disorder
Why is it important?

1 in 7 people in the UK are neurodiverse
Different brains = different strengths
Your team is already neurodiverse!
1. Computational Thinking
2. Questioning the “how”
3. Imagination
4. Innovation & Intuition
5. Drawing Connections
6. Observational Skills
7. Design Mindset
8. Adaptability
9. Focus
10. Depth of Thinking
Okay, so what ABOUT TESTING?
TESTING CHALLENGES

- Communication Issues
- Time Constraints
- Test Data Management
- Diversity in Testing Environments
- Dealing with Changes
- Missing Documentation
How Neurodiverse Teams Can Help

- Communication Issues
- Time Constraints
- Test Data Management
- Dealing with Changes
- Diversity in Testing
- Missing Documentation

- Honest, transparent and upfront communication
- Creative solutions to tough problems
- Focused and dedicated
- Pattern recognition and abstraction
- Detail oriented and organised
- Diverse range of experience and thinking styles
- Detail oriented and organised
- Detail oriented and organised
- Focused and dedicated
- Pattern recognition and abstraction
How can teams be more inclusive?
ADJUSTMENTS ARE INDIVIDUAL AS NO TWO NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE ARE THE SAME!

MAKING ADJUSTMENTS SHOULD BE A DISCUSSION, NOT ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL
• PROVIDING WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS
• USING CLEAR AND SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION
• PROVIDING ASSISTIVE SOFTWARE
• ALLOWING LONGER READING TIMES
• USING ALTERNATIVES TO WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS
• STANDING DESKS OR MOVING CHAIRS
• FIDGETS
• MENTORING AND COACHING
• PROVIDING EXPLANATIONS OF “UNWRITTEN RULES”
• PROVIDING QUIET WORKSPACES
• ALLOWING FOR WORK FLEXIBILITY

SOME EXAMPLES...
Belonging and psychological safety play a huge part in a neurodivergent person’s success in a workplace. A person is more likely to disclose their neurodivergence if they feel safe at work.
CULTURE

• UNDERSTAND AND MITIGATE UNCONSCIOUS BIASES AND MICROAGGRESSIONS
• CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT DOESN’T “SINGLE OUT” THOSE WITH WORKPLACE ADJUSTMENTS
• PROVIDE TRAINING ON DIFFERENT WAYS TO COMMUNICATE
• INCREASE AWARENESS AND SHARE RESOURCES
BENEFITS

- DRASTICALLY REDUCED EMPLOYEE TURNOVER
- LOWER RATES OF BURNOUT
- ELEVATED RATES OF PRODUCTIVITY, INDIVIDUALLY AND IN TEAMS
- HIGHER RATES OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
- ATTRACT THE NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT
THANK YOU!

More resources available here