



The Career *Development* *Professional's* Guide to ASD

SARAH TAYLOR
NEXT LEVEL ASD

Biography

- Over 20 years serving the autism community
- 10 years as a Psychometrist and Behavioural Consultant.
- Specialized in assessment of children, consultation to families and School boards.
- Past five years running a specialised employment initiative to help get people living on the spectrum appropriately employed.
- Neurodiversity consulting support to companies and HR teams



What do You Know
about ASD?





01

PERSISTANT DIFFERENCES
IN SOCIAL COMMUNICATION
AND INTERACTIONS

lack or reciprocity, theory of mind,
etc.

02

RESTRICTED, REPETITIVE
PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR,
INTERESTS, OR ACTIVITIES

Perfectionism, Unusual 'rules',
interests, etc.

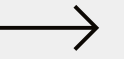
03

SENSORY PROCESSING
DIFFERENCES

hyper or hypo-reactivity to sensory
input

visible vs. *invisible*

low functioning vs. high functioning



Most memorable job interview...

1996 Interview Culture Shift

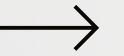
- Changes in interview questions and styles
- Recruitment for the right personal values versus the right education
- Emphasis on social skills versus technical skills



Approximately 85% of adults living on the autism spectrum are *unemployed* or *underemployed*.

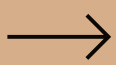
HOWLIN, P. (2013). SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE AND EXCLUSION: ADULTS WITH AUTISM LAG FAR BEHIND IN EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS. *JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY*, 52 (9), 897–899.

The whole truth



It gets worse...

- The number one neurological disorder diagnosed in children today, more than Down Syndrome, muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis, cerebral palsy, and diabetes combined.
- Autism has the lowest employment rate among disability groups even when controlling for impairment severity, household income, and social demographics. (JAACAP, 2013)
- High IQ, low employment. 53.4% of young adults with an ASD have never worked for pay (JAACAP, 2013)
- 1 in 59* children is diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This number is thought to be consistent among adults
- There are approximately 46,000 diagnosed adults with ASD in Alberta



What's so different about autism?

*WITHOUT INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY



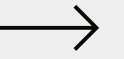
However it is
equally
true...

ASD STRENGTHS IN THE WORKPLACE

Individuals with ASD are reliable, dedicated employees, and can excel in the workplace!

Obvious strengths can include:

- Sustained concentration
- Attention to detail
- Strong logical/analytical thinking
- Tolerance for repetition and routine
- Honesty
- Task-focused
- Attentive listener
- Less likely to gossip or get caught up in office politics



Unique *ASD* Challenge #1

The challenge of invisible disability

Lack of patience for differences that we cannot see



*"IF SOMEONE TELLS YOU THEY ARE
AUTISTIC, IT MEANS THEY ARE
UNDER SENSORY ASSAULT WHILE
WORKING UNBELIEVABLY HARD TO
APPEAR NORMAL TO YOU."*

Christine M. Condo - Autistic self-advocate
and Columnist, The Washington Post





Unique *ASD* Challenge #2

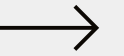
FEAR/DISCOMFORT AROUND DISCLOSURE

*In addition nature of the challenges
makes it hard to conceal



Real life *email*

> Submitted on Friday, May 19, 2017 - 1:52pm Submitted by anonymous user: [108.173.183.138] Submitted values are:
>
>
> I turned down a job's program before, I know, but I need help with something related to autism, Executive Dysfunction. It's honestly the root cause of many of my mental health problems and...I'm getting desperate.
>
> I don't need help with social skills, I'm more or less borderline normal in that regard. But this...it makes me spin my wheels without going anywhere. I don't care what it takes, therapy or medication. I just need for the future to be clear for me. I need my present to build up to a future worth having.
>
> P.S: Hire someone to answer your phone. Heck, I'll take that job.
>



Unique ASD Challenge #3

Communication Challenges may look like behaviour challenges



VERY LITERAL UNDERSTANDING

may be incorrectly interpreted



HONESTY

Without social nuance can create challenges



DETAIL ORIENTED COMMUNICATION

may lack the feeling of reciprocity



So...what can we do?

As a CDP there are several things you can do to help your ASD clients circumvent these challenges

Three main areas that you can help your clients build skills:





IMPORTANT CDP SERVICE *AREAS* FOR ASD CLIENTS



APPLYING FOR JOBS

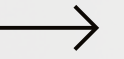


INTERVIEWING FOR JOBS



ASSIMILATING

Case Study



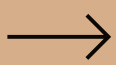
Meet Logan

Logan graduated from University with top honours and an undergraduate degree in Geomatics Engineering. From the time that he was a young child, Logan always loved anything geomatics related. His mother reports that he was 6 years old, he knew that he was going to be a Geomatics engineer. In school, Logan studied hard and took more courses than necessary to achieve extraordinary results. He was the student others would go to for help on exams and assignments. Everyone was sure that he would get snapped up by an engineering firm immediately upon graduation.

However, it has been three years since Logan graduated and he has not received a single job offer. In fact, he has not even had an interview. Recently Logan has sought the aid of an employment counsellor to help him land a role in his field. His counsellor has noticed that Logan faithfully attends his appointments and usually shows up at least 30 minutes early.

Logan has also taken all suggestions to revamp his resume and CV, and has spent many hours making edits. He carefully crafts coverletters and keeps detailed spreadsheets of all the companies that he intends to apply to, however, Logan seems stuck when it come to actually applying for a job.

Whenever he sees a posting that seems like a good fit, Logan finds something wrong with the job, a reason he can't apply, be it an article that he read in the paper about the district the company is located in, a negative story he heard from a passing stranger about the company or the fact that the hours required on Monday would interfere with his Dungeons and Dragons group. Whatever it is, somehow he never seems to actually apply for jobs, in fact when his counsellor probes, she finds that Logan has only applied for 2 jobs since graduation. What strategies could be effective in helping Logan break out of his rut?



ASD barriers to applying for jobs

- PERFECTIONISM STRUGGLES
- 100 PERCENT OF QUALIFICATIONS
- TOO NARROW A SEARCH
- NO LOCATION FLEXIBILITY
- ONLY “PERFECT” POSITION
- ANXIETY DRIVEN DECISIONS
- TOO LITERAL ON RESUME
- KEY WORDS
- ALL OR NOTHING WITH APPLICATIONS
- LACK OF MOTIVATION

ACTUAL RESUME

14/15

EXAMPLE



Objective

To provide a summary of my skills and achievements to whomever is reading this resume.

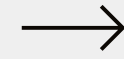
Skills

Objective

To provide a summary of my skills and achievements to whomever is reading this resume.

Skills

- Proficient with Sony Vegas 11.0.
- Knowledge with digital cameras.
- Knowledgable with using using programs to download content from the Internet, as well as transferring data between formats, example being flv to mp4, etc.
- Experience in writing newspaper articles, as well as essays in narrative and descriptive

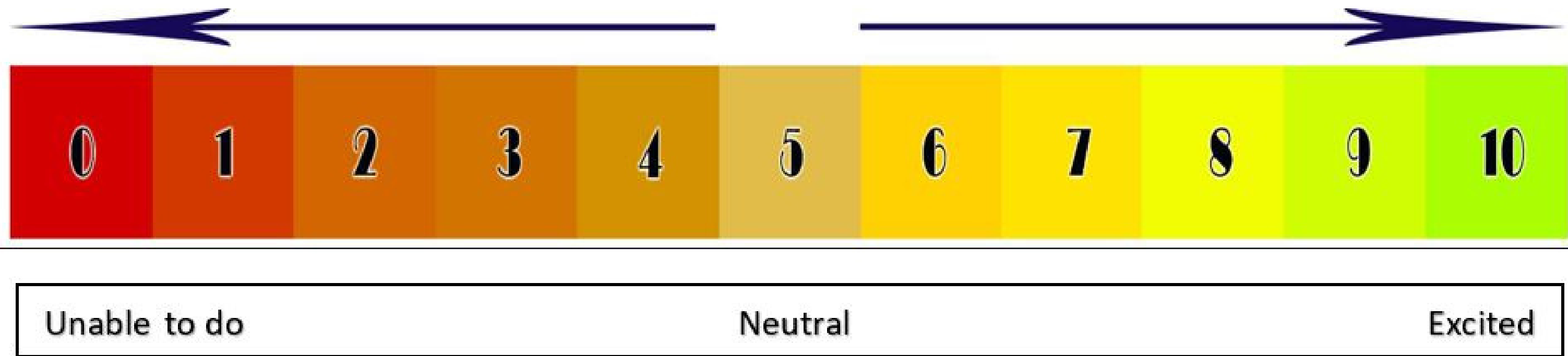


STRATEGIES FOR APPLICATION SUCCESS

- Productivity Targets
- 2/3rds rule
- Survival versus Career Jobs
- Target and Key words
- Discomfort Spectrum
- Employment bingo
- Standard resume
- Cover letter template

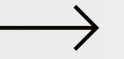


The Discomfort Spectrum



Case Study

Getting Back to Logan...



Logan graduated from University with top honours and an undergraduate degree in Geomatics Engineering. From the time that he was a young child, Logan always loved anything geomatics related. His mother reports that he was 6 years old, he knew that he was going to be a Geomatics engineer. In school, Logan studied hard and took more courses than necessary to achieve extraordinary results. He was the student others would go to for help on exams and assignments. Everyone was sure that he would get snapped up by an engineering firm immediately upon graduation.

However, it has been three years since Logan graduated and he has not received a single job offer. In fact, he has not even had an interview. Recently Logan has sought the aid of an employment counsellor to help him land a role in his field. His counsellor has noticed that Logan faithfully attends his appointments and usually shows up at least 30 minutes early.

Logan has also taken all suggestions to revamp his resume and CV, and has spent many hours making edits. He carefully crafts coverletters and keeps detailed spreadsheets of all the companies that he intends to apply to, however, Logan seems stuck when it come to actually applying for a job.

Whenever he sees a posting that seems like a good fit, Logan finds something wrong with the job, a reason he can't apply, be it an article that he read in the paper about the district the company is located in, a negative story he heard from a passing stranger about the company or the fact that the hours required on Monday would interfere with his Dungeons and Dragons group. Whatever it is, somehow he never seems to actually apply for jobs, in fact when his counsellor probes, she finds that Logan has only applied for 2 jobs since graduation. What strategies could be effective in helping Logan break out of his rut?

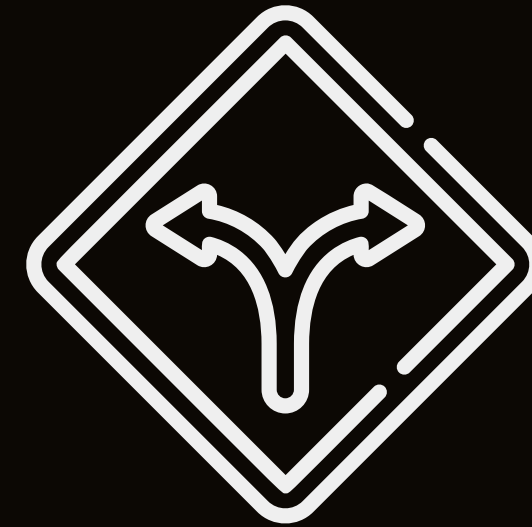


ASD Specific Job Interview Challenges



Verbal

- Concrete and literal interpretation of questions.
- Getting stuck on words having specific meaning
- Honest in opinions & responses to questions regardless of person or situation
- Details framed as paragraphs



Non-Verbal

- Lack of facial expression
- poorly modulated eye contact
- sensory supports (i.e, sunglasses)
- unusual body movements, fidgeting
- lack of reciprocity
- lack of curiosity

Employable Me: Thomas





STRATEGIES FOR INTERVIEW *SUCCESS*



PRACTISE, PRACTISE

practise reciprocity, curiosity,
repoire building



CREATE SCRIPTS

self advocacy script for behaviours
that the individual cannot control



SCRIPT QUESTIONS

Presentations are tools that can
be used as lectures, and more.



RECORD INTERVIEW

Reviewing footage provides an
opportunity to adress social
nuances



PROVIDE FORMULA

For behvioural Scenario
interview questions

Self Advocacy Script Example

3/15



I'm the type of person who always says what's on my mind. Sometimes I might interrupt you. I'm not trying to cut you off. I'm just the type of person who feels anxious when I can't express my thoughts. If I interrupt you. It would be helpful if you gave me a non-verbal reminder such as gently lifting your hand. Then I can/will remember to write down my comments and wait to speak.

*underlined segments should be altered to reflect individual circumstances



How *CDP's* can Help Autistic Clients Adjust



AND HELP WORKPLACES ADJUST TOO

- one on one Coaching sessions
- introducing mindfulness practices
- encouraging self awareness
- asking coaching questions
- Checking in with supervisors
- Providing workshops and learning opportunities to companies
- finding services (ie coaching, HR)

REFERENCES

15/15



Center for Disease Control. (2016). CDC Estimates 1 in 68 school-aged children have autism; no change from previous estimate [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/p0331-children-autism.html>

Howlin, P. (2013). Social disadvantage and exclusion: Adults with autism lag far behind in employment prospects. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 52 (9), 897–899.

Miller-Merrell, J. (2016) 27 Companies Who Hire Adults with Autism and Disabilities. Retrieved from <https://workology.com/companies-hiring-adults-with-autism/>

Turcotte, M. (2014). *Persons with Disabilities and Employment. Insights on Canadian Society*. Statistics Canada. Catalogue no. 75-006-X ISSN 2291-0859

Zwicker, J (2019). *The Untapped Neurodiverse Workforce*. University of Calgary School of Public Policy. Retrieved from <https://www.cphrab.ca/filebrowser/download/1618>

Dr Norman Giesbrecht, Ph.D., R. Psych.; Retrieved from; *Social Communication and Positive Self-Advocacy in the Workplace*. Autism Calgary. February 2015

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR



WWW.NEXTLEVELASDCONSULT.COM

