A workplace that explains itself

Hiring, onboarding, feedback, and working together

The best place to start is with the job, not a diagnosis. Make essential expectations visible, build predictable communication, and use individualized conversations when adjustments are needed.

10 PRACTICAL MOVES

1 Specify the actual job

Describe essential functions, outputs, timing, performance criteria, and real environmental demands. Separate necessities from habit or tradition.

2 Use accessible hiring procedures

Keep selection tied to job requirements and follow rules governing disability-related inquiries and reasonable accommodations.

3 Write the first-week map

Provide a checklist with priorities, tools, contacts, workplace terms, and whom to ask if instructions conflict.

4 Use concrete task instructions

State the goal, deliverable, deadline, quality standard, and priority. A brief written recap can help the whole team.

5 Discuss communication preferences

Ask whether a short meeting, written instructions, or a shared task board works well. Do not demand a diagnosis to discuss everyday work routines.

6 Make the sensory environment adjustable

Where practical, consider noise, lighting, interruptions, break areas, and predictable schedules without assuming everyone needs the same thing.

7 Give usable feedback

Describe an observation, its impact, and the next expected action. Replace “be professional” with the specific behavior required.

8 Provide a real point of contact

A manager or mentor can answer questions about unwritten norms and clarify conflicting priorities, without becoming a substitute for formal HR processes.

9 Handle accommodation requests correctly

Follow applicable procedures, confidentiality requirements, and the individualized interactive process where required.

10 Review and revise

Ask whether expectations are understandable and adjustments work. Changes in tasks or context may require different supports.

Read the full guide: ttwnest.org/for/employers/

Questions, suggestions, or corrections? info@ttwnest.org

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PUT IT INTO WORDS

When a task is “obviously” urgent

LESS HELPFUL

“You should have known I meant today. Use common sense.”

TRY THIS INSTEAD

“Please revise the first two slides by 2 p.m. today. This takes priority over filing; let me know if the timeline conflicts with another deadline.”

The manager makes urgency and priority visible instead of making the employee decode them.

FIVE-MINUTE ACTION CHECKLIST

- [ ] Review one job description for vague requirements.
- [ ] Create a first-week onboarding checklist.
- [ ] Agree on written task and deadline conventions.
- [ ] Train supervisors to give concrete, non-stigmatizing feedback.
- [ ] Confirm accommodation and confidentiality processes with HR.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE SAYS

U.S. EEOC guidance sets legal limits on pre-offer disability inquiries and explains reasonable accommodation and undue hardship. Dwyer’s neurodiversity framework helps challenge categorical assumptions; it is not a trial of a particular management technique.

BOUNDARIES AND CAVEATS

Practical clarity strategies are not all mandatory accommodations. Employment law varies by context and jurisdiction; consult HR or qualified counsel on specific obligations.

SOURCE STARTERS: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (n.d.) · U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (2002) · Dwyer (