



Supporting employees and candidates with anxiety and depression

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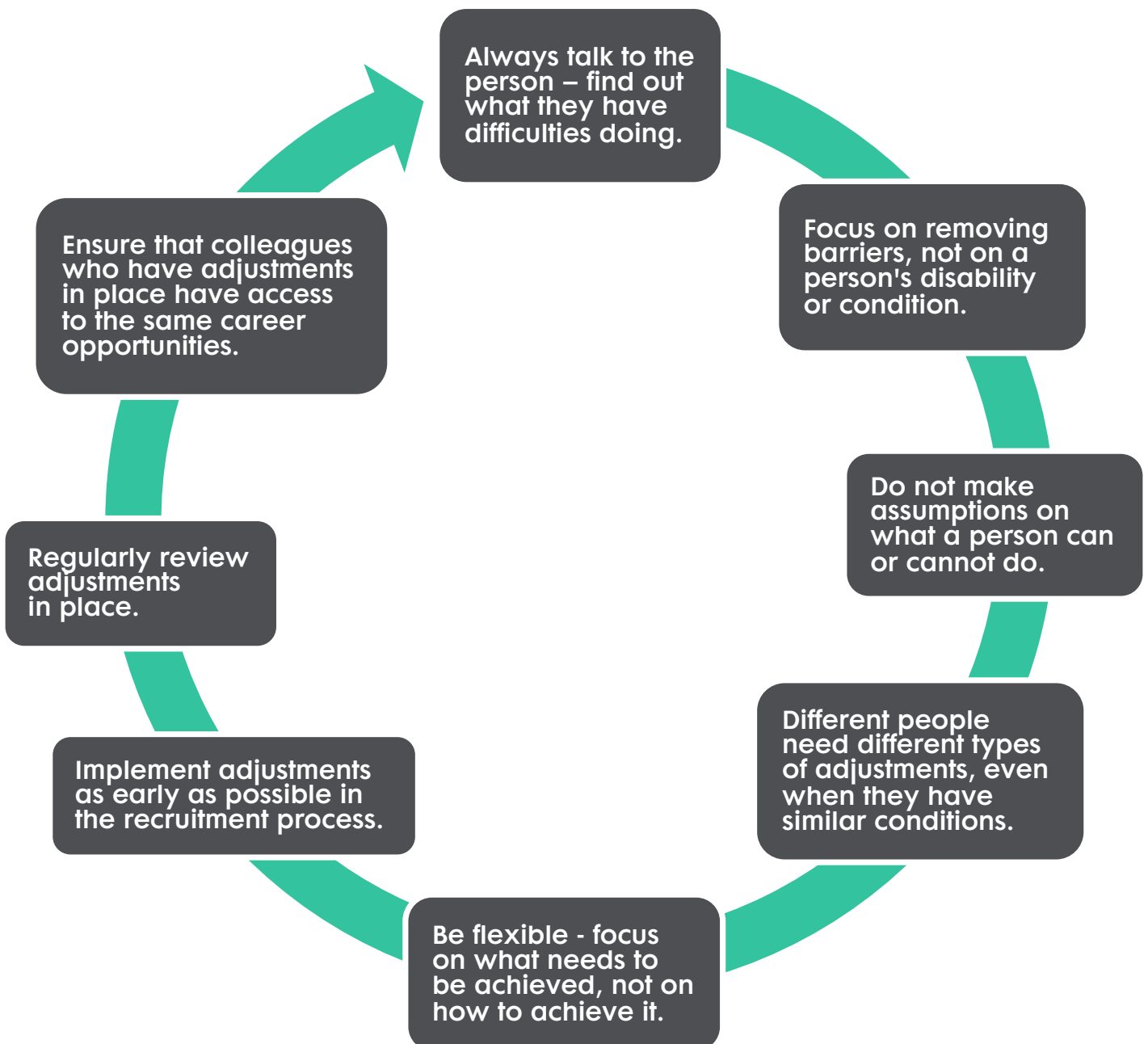


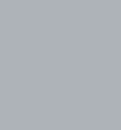
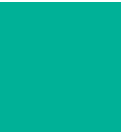


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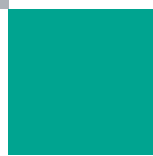
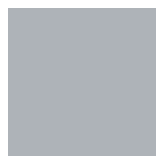
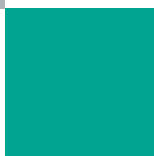
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Making adjustments – top tips





Introduction



This guide aims to give a general introduction to how anxiety or depression might impact someone at work and provide good practice tips on how to support them.

Diagnosis, treatment and cultural perceptions of anxiety and depression may vary between countries. Similarly, legal requirements will also differ: in some countries, anxiety and depression may not be legally recognised as a disability whereas in other countries, people with these conditions may be protected by local legislation.

Ensuring that you support your candidates and employees with anxiety and depression will help you create a more diverse workforce. It is often the case that when a line manager is confident managing a person with a disability or long-term condition, they become more effective managers for all employees.

Language

Talking about anxiety and depression

Language can be important in creating an open and inclusive workplace for people experiencing anxiety or depression. Individuals may describe themselves as having mental health issues or feeling 'very down' or feeling extremely distressed.

It is recommended to use the language that the person with anxiety or depression uses to describe their own condition and avoid placing 'labels' on employees.

Talking about disability

In this guide, we use the term 'disabilities' as used by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) [1] ratified by over 175 countries. The UN CRPD Article 1 provides a definition for 'persons with disabilities':

“Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

Talking about adjustments

Adjustments (in some countries referred to as 'accommodations') remove or reduce the effect of the barriers experienced by candidates and employees with disabilities.

Examples of adjustments include providing a ramp as an alternative to stairs or an electronic version of paper document so that an employee with a visual impairment can use screen reader software to access the information. Working hours and locations can be made flexible, and managers can agree different ways to communicate with their employees e.g. over the phone, via email, face-to-face or in writing.

These are small changes that can remove barriers that stop someone from doing their job and can support good performance. In this guide, we refer to these types of changes as 'adjustments'.

[1] United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: [un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html)

What is anxiety and depression

Wellbeing and mental wellness

Mental health refers to an individual's mental state or in other words, how they are feeling. An individual's mental wellbeing is variable and everyone can experience periods of mental distress. Many people will experience a mental health illness at some point in their life. In many cases, employees may work through their illness or take a short break before returning and successfully continue their career.

What is anxiety?

Anxiety is a feeling that anyone can experience however it can affect people differently. People with an anxiety disorder may experience a constant and unrealistic sensation of worry and fear, and difficulties controlling these feelings. This is often accompanied by physical symptoms such as: insomnia, sweating, a racing heart or palpitations.

What is depression?

According to the World Health Organisation, depression is 'a common mental disorder, characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks. In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following: a loss of energy; a change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and thoughts of self-harm or suicide'.

Internal and external sources of help


There are many sources of help and advice that you can access for detailed information about anxiety and depression in your country. Internally, you should speak to your own manager or to your local Human Resources (HR) team. Your organisation may also have diversity and inclusion officers or a disability liaison officer you can ask for help and advice on how to support employees with anxiety or depression at work.

Externally, there may be local organisations that can provide you with expert advice and information about anxiety and depression in your country. The International Labour Organisation's Global Business and Disability Network's website [2] contains some useful information about local requirements and the availability of disability support in countries all over the world.

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[2] ILO GBDN website: businessanddisability.org/country-profiles/

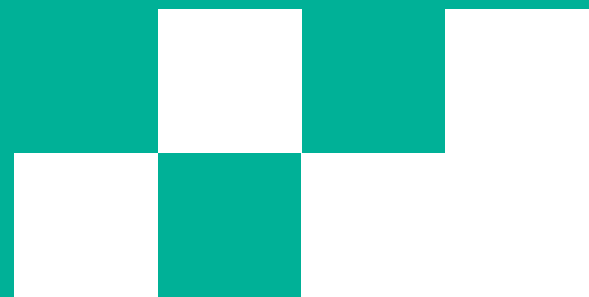


Employing people who are experiencing anxiety or depression



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11 to 22 are available in the
full booklet.**

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