

11-14-2025

Strategies to Provide Organizational Support to Neurodivergent Employees on Work Teams

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Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

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Keila Y. Molina González

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Walden University
2025

Abstract

Strategies to Provide Organizational Support to Neurodivergent Employees on Work
Teams

by

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MS, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 2013

BS, University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez Campus, 2002

Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

November 2025

Abstract

Ineffective strategies for supporting neurodivergent employees can lead to decreased productivity, talent loss, and stifled innovation, ultimately harming a company's operational efficiency. Industry training managers who struggle to improve productivity, retention, and innovation may find their businesses facing instability as a result.

. Grounded in attribution theory, the purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry research project was to identify and explore effective strategies used by industry training managers to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. The participants were nine industry training managers who had implemented supportive strategies. Data were collected through semistructured interviews, public websites, and public documents—both current and archival. Using thematic analysis, five themes were identified: (a) making reasonable accommodations, (b) acknowledging the individual's condition, (c) communicating and building rapport, (d) changing culture, and (e) measuring the effectiveness of the strategy. A key recommendation is for industry training managers to increase organizational performance through the creation of a safe work environment and support for the individuals on their respective teams. The implications for positive social change include the potential for industry training managers and organizations to implement the identified strategies, thereby expanding meaningful employment opportunities for neurodivergent individuals and strengthening local workforce inclusion.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated with love and gratitude to my sons, Daniel, Diego, and Derek, whose encouragement, patience, and joy gave me strength throughout this journey. Daniel, your courage and perseverance in living with ADHD have been a profound source of inspiration, motivating me to investigate and learn more about how to support neurodivergent employees in their work areas. All of you remind me daily of the importance of empathy, understanding, and resilience.

I also dedicate this project to my parents, whose unwavering support, guidance, and sacrifices laid the foundation for my growth and success. Your faith in the value of education and perseverance continues to guide me. To my eternal love, whose steadfast belief in me and in my potential gave me the courage to persevere and complete this doctoral journey, I am forever grateful.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my Chair, Dr. Kim Critchlow, for her invaluable guidance, encouragement, and unwavering support throughout this doctoral journey. To my Critchlow Scholars, thank you for all your support. I am also profoundly thankful to my family members and friends, whose patience, understanding, and belief in me sustained my determination and made it possible to reach this milestone.

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Section 1: Project Foundation

Background of the Problem

Some industry training managers do not know how to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams, resulting in loss of productivity, talent, and innovation. Employee engagement is a physical and psychological condition related to work cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally to achieve the goals of the organization (Satata, 2021). Neurodiversity is atypical neurological development resulting in a difference in how the brain works. A neurodivergent person's thinking is a biological variation, deserving both understanding and support (Hutson & Hutson, 2023). Industry training managers have difficulties tailoring employment programs to support the special needs of neurodivergent employees (Weber et al., 2024). Industry training managers do not know how to support neurodivergent employees, resulting in reduced productivity, innovation, and employee attrition. The Tolerance Test of Creative Thinking, used to measure employees' creativity, demonstrated that 30% of neurodivergent employees scored above the average cut, showing their potential in innovation and creativity (Hoogman et al., 2020). The findings of this project might help managers and organization leaders incorporate neurodivergent people into their workforce, thereby improving employee performance, engagement, and loyalty.

Business Problem Focus and Project Purpose

The specific business problem was that some industry training managers lack effective strategies to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry project was to

identify and explore effective strategies used by some industry training managers to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. The sampling method was purposeful sampling with a sample size of nine industry training managers. To collect data, I used (a) semistructured interviews, (b) publicly available documents, websites, and (c) artifacts. The conceptual framework for this project includes Weiner's (1972) attribution theory. I will use thematic analysis to analyze the data collected, member checking to ensure my interpretations are correct and ensure that I have reached data saturation.

Project Research Question

What effective strategies do some industry training managers use to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation?

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

An assumption is a true statement that the researcher cannot verify (Cooper et al., 2020). An assumption is an issue, idea, or position taken for granted, viewed as granted and accepted as true (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). First, I assumed the participants of the project would have knowledge about the strategies to support neurodivergent employees increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. Second, I assumed the participants would answer the interview questions honestly and responsively. The third assumption was that industry training managers are involved in the strategic training process to support neurodivergent employees.

Limitations

A limitation is the extent to which there are concerns about the design or conduct of the primary studies that contributed evidence to an individual review finding (Munthe-Kaas et al., 2019). Limitations can be a result of the project design, method of data analysis, or any other imposed factor (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The first limitation in this research project was that the sample might have industry training managers who rely on others for the management of the support strategies and might not have details, information, and perspectives of them. The second limitation was that the participants might withhold pertinent information regarding their support strategies.

Business Project Ethics

My role as the researcher was to manage the research process to gather data to address my project's research question. My responsibilities included establishing data collection methods, recruiting potential participants who met eligibility criteria, collecting data from the participants, collecting publicly available secondary data, and analyzing the data collected to provide answers to the project's research question.

I adhered to the Belmont Report guidelines to ensure respect for persons, beneficence, and justice and to protect the identity of the participants.

As the researcher, I followed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols and obtained informed consent from all potential participants. The IRB approved the research process and questions (IRB Approval No. 02-06-25-1223169). Through this process, I acknowledged to the participants my intent to ensure their autonomy. The consent form was reviewed with the participants to ensure and enhance their understanding of the

research process and their participation. Determining the full understanding of the participants was crucial for the informed consent process (Kazembe et al., 2024). The informed consent preceded the scheduling of interviews to start the data collection. Obtaining informed consent was an ethical and critical aspect of the research process. It was important to acknowledge participants' autonomy, and to develop effective communication between the researcher and participant to provide all the necessary information to the participant to understand what they were volunteering for (Kazembe et al., 2024). My process for obtaining informed consent involved providing the selected participants with information regarding the research project, how their participation might benefit the research. I also informed them that their participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time simply by telling me or emailing me with their wish to withdraw. The consent form stated the voluntary nature of their participation and that they can withdraw at any time through a written or verbal communication by means of an email, text, or phone call without explanation and penalty. I did not offer incentives to take part in my research project.

As the researcher, I ensured identity protection of the participants. I ensured their identity was protected by assigning a code to each participant (i.e., PA, PB, PC, etc.) and referring to the code in place of their names. Masking was a process of concealing the identity of a participant to protect their confidentiality during a research process (Shelton & Brooks, 2021). All documentation produced for the research like reports, presentations, or any publication related to my project contained codes, and patterns to support identity

protection. I will safely store the data, interview transcripts, and documentation collected for the research in a bank-locked box for 5 years.

Evidence-Based Integrative Review

Through this professional and academic evidence-based integrative review, I aimed to analyze and synthesize scholarly research on effective strategies that industry training managers use to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation to evidence the existence of the problem and to convince the readers of the scope and significance of this research inquiry. According to Shahveisi and Shahveisi (2024), a literature review is not a summary of works done previously; rather, a literature review requires a complete and systematic analysis of the sources and an evaluation of its strengths, limitations, and inexactitudes to guide the reader through the research field. Through the review, I also searched for aspects that required more research, which allowed for the development of the theoretical and conceptual framework.

The literature review comprised the analysis and synthesis of the articles and sources relevant to my research project found in various academic databases at the Walden University Library and Google Scholar. Databases used for the literature review included Emerald Insight, Education Source, Academic Search Complete, ERIC, APA PsycArticles Frontiers, Taylor and Francis, Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, APA PsycInfo, ProQuest, Emerald, SAGE, ScienceDirect, and Business Source Complete (EBSCO). I used keywords and phrases such as *neurodivergent*, *neurodiversity*, *neurodiverse*, *neuroatypical*, *industry training managers*, *industry*

training managers, support, employees, work team, and workforce to find relevant articles, academic journals, and materials from the databases. The literature review involved a critical analysis and synthesis of literature concerning to the conceptual framework and themes and phenomena, and different points of view, and the relationship of this project to previous research and its findings.

The organization of the literature review consists of the following hierarchy: (a) conceptual framework of Weiner's attribution theory discussed in detail; (b) previous research supporting this project; (c) autism; (d) attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); (e) Asperger's syndrome; (f) diagnosis; (g) education and intervention; (h) typical development; (i) technologies to assist in training, development, and retention; and (j) gaps in literature. The specific business problem was that some industry training managers lack effective strategies to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. The research design addressed critical aspects that may have led employees enduring or leaving, the impact of turnover, and the effective strategies industry training managers may have used to support neurodivergent employees increase their productivity, retain them in the organization and improve their innovation within their work team.

Application to the Applied Business Problem

Conceptual Framework: Attribution Theory

The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry project was to identify and explore effective strategies used by some industry training managers to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. The

conceptual framework theory for this qualitative pragmatic inquiry research was Weiner's (1972) attribution theory, which establishes how humans interpret and understand events and how these interpretations can affect how individuals think and behave. According to this theory, we attribute our successes and failures to certain external factors like effort, luck, the difficulty of the work, and the abilities we have. We tend to ascribe causes to our actions and the way we react to a particular situation. Weiner believed that current actions and reactions to a particular event might determine how people will act on similar future related events (Weiner, 1972). Common-sense psychology theory proposed by Heider (1958), covariation theory proposed by Kelley (1967), and Weiner's attributional theory are attribution theories. This conceptual framework includes discussions of the tenets from the theories proposed by Heider and Kelley as contributors to Weiner's attribution theory.

Fritz Heider (1958) is the founder of the attribution theory. Heider based their theory on how humans show their need to make sense of the world around them and their environment in which they live to predict or control effects, events or problems. Heider's theory first tenet suggests that people make attributions dependent upon the internal or external causality, or both. The internal is related to the person's abilities and the external is related to the environment in which they live or their immediate surroundings (Heider, 1958). Using this first tenet, an industry training manager would try to understand a situation surrounding an employee based on internal and external factors of ability, motivation, and environment. His second tenet is attribution errors. These errors can be fundamental or actor-observer error. A fundamental error is when using internal versus

external factors to explain how and why an individual acts a certain way. The actor–observer error is when the actor’s actions are a result of external forces of the observer, or where the observer’s actions are a result of internal factors of the actor (Hewett et al., 2018). The third tenet of Heider’s theory is self-serving bias. This means that individuals tend to take personal responsibility for desired results and externalize responsibilities for no desired results (Larsen, 2021).

Kelley’s (1967) argued how individuals determine what causes a person’s behavior, events, or situations (see also Hewett et al., 2018). They introduced the use of a covariation principle to determine the cause of a person’s actions based on previous behavior in similar situations. Kelley observed three aspects that influence how an observer assigns a person’s behavior or reaction to internal or external forces. The first aspect is distinctiveness; this refers to the pattern of behavior in similar situations. The second is consensus, which occurs when various observers have the same opinion about a person’s behavior, given that similar situations will be the same every time; the observers understand that the behavior is because of internal factors. The third and final aspect in Kelley’s theory is consistency. It develops when a person acts, reacts or behaves in the same way to a situation every time; no matter the event or situation, the internal factor reacts regardless of the environmental factors acting upon them.

Weiner (1972) established that the achievement of motivation is directly proportional and dependent on the person’s ability to learn, representing the value of their effort. His research demonstrated that a person’s effort could develop alongside and in accordance with achievement motivation. Weiner proposed a parallel relationship

between achievement motivation and effort. The parallelism represents the interaction between the abilities and the intention of a person to do a certain activity.

Another concept discussed by Weiner (1972) is attributional conflict, which emerges when two or more entities have different positions about an event (. They attributed this type of conflict to external or environmental factors that affect the achievement based on ability versus effort. Attributional conflict might be between a training manager and an employee, teacher, and learner. Another attributional conflict discussed in Weiner's theory is the personal behavior attributional conflict, which emerges when individuals perceive their actions, or lack of action affected by external or environmental factors instead of their characteristics. A final attributional conflict arises when the educator's observation differs from the participant's observations in terms of achievement.

Achievement motivation has two factors: "can" and "try." Weiner (1972) demonstrated that achievement motivation is proportional and dependent on a person's ability to learn impacted by effort. Weiner's research proved that effort develops and improves with achievement motivation. It is important for organizations, managers, supervisors, and trainers to decide if neurodivergent employees' performance is not as expected because of lack of desire (try) or inability (can). Leaders should know how to mitigate attributional conflict among neurodivergent employees effectively.

Attributional conflict might arise from experiences in the following areas: (a) successes and failures, (b) performance, (c) social expectations, (d) time on assignment, and (e) other environmental and personal aspects. Attributional conflict may also arise

between learner (employee) and educator (supervisor or manager) (Weiner, 1972).

Managers, supervisors, trainers, educators, and others in training areas must be aware of neurodivergent employees' expectancies at work. Settling expectations on neurodivergent employees might lead to the assumption that they lack abilities for the job.

An attributional conflict concerns observation conflict. Observations from the educator, trainer, manager or supervisor's perspective may differ from the participant's when making observations related to achievement. Trainers, supervisors, managers, educators, and others must not take false credit on an employees' achievement success or failure as their own success or failure (Weiner, 1972). The attribution process might explain the role of the factors "try" and "can" play in performance, development, and retention on neurodivergent employees. It is important to understand that an employee who spends more time than others on a particular task or job may not show a cause or relationship to ability, knowledge, success or failure, or motivation.

Recent empirical studies underscore the critical need for organizational leaders to address employment disparities affecting neurodivergent employees. Branicki et al. (2024) examined employment data from more than 25,000 individuals in the United Kingdom and found that neurodivergent employees were significantly more likely to experience underemployment, precarious work, and shorter job tenure compared to neurotypical peers. Branicki et al.'s (2024) study further revealed that flexible working arrangements and remote work practices helped mitigate these disparities by improving job stability and retention. Similarly, Khan et al. (2023) demonstrated that organizations implementing neurodiversity-affirming practices, such as redesigned recruitment

processes, strength-based role allocation, and equitable supervision, reported notable improvements in both employee retention and productivity. Together, these findings suggest that workplace inequities are not inevitable but can be effectively reduced through strategic, inclusive management practices. By adopting policies that recognize individual strengths and promote flexibility, organizations can create environments where neurodivergent employees are empowered to sustain meaningful and productive careers, reinforcing the broader importance of neuroinclusive strategies for organizational success and social sustainability.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition marked by challenges in social communication, sensory processing, and restricted or repetitive behaviors. In the workplace, autistic employees may encounter difficulties in interpreting social cues, adapting to unstructured environments, or managing sensory sensitivities. At the same time, they often demonstrate exceptional strengths, such as sustained attention to detail, advanced pattern recognition, and deep knowledge in specialized domains (Bury et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2024).

From a business standpoint, recognizing and accommodating employees who have ASD is critical to reducing turnover and enhancing employee productivity. Clear role expectations, structured work routines, sensory-friendly environments, and mentorship programs can improve job satisfaction and retention (Fong et al., 2021). Employers who integrate such supports not only fulfill diversity and inclusion goals but

also tap into unique talent pools, driving innovation and problem-solving capacity within their organizations.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD is characterized by persistent patterns of inattention, impulsivity, and/or hyperactivity that interfere with daily functioning. In the workplace, ADHD may manifest as difficulties with time management, organization, sustaining focus on routine tasks, or meeting deadlines (Turjeman-Levi et al., 2024). These challenges can hinder productivity, but with tailored interventions, employees with ADHD can thrive (Branicki et al, 2024).

Business leaders and human resources (HR) professionals can mitigate performance barriers by offering flexible scheduling, frequent feedback, project management tools, and task segmentation strategies. Research has indicated that when managers are aware of ADHD's impact, they can adopt inclusive practices that enhance performance outcomes and reduce attrition (Branicki et al., 2024; Lauder et al., 2022). Supporting ADHD in the workplace is not only an ethical responsibility but also a strategic advantage, as organizations retain skilled employees who may excel in creativity, rapid problem solving, and high-energy engagement when placed in the right roles.

Asperger's Syndrome

Asperger's syndrome, now classified under ASD in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.; DSM-5), describes individuals who may have average to above-average intelligence yet face difficulties with social interaction,

pragmatic communication, and behavioral flexibility. In organizational contexts, employees with Asperger's often excel in highly structured, detail-oriented, or technical roles such as information technology (IT), engineering, or data analysis (Albright et al., 2020). Evidence suggests that providing clear expectations, structured routines, and mentorship opportunities enables employees with Asperger's to leverage their cognitive strengths while minimizing workplace stress and disengagement (Fong et al., 2021). Recognizing and accommodating these profiles allows organizations to retain specialized talent, enhance innovation, and strengthen overall team performance, reinforcing the need for managerial awareness and intervention strategies to address the business problem.

For businesses, acknowledging and responding to these traits is essential to creating inclusive and effective workplaces. Providing explicit expectations, predictable routines, and strength-based role assignments allows employees with Asperger's profiles to maximize their contributions (Zhou et al., 2024). Failure to recognize and support these diagnostic profiles may lead to disengagement, underemployment, or turnover, resulting in organizational loss of specialized talent. Conversely, companies that embrace neurodivergent strengths often see improved innovation, stronger problem-solving teams, and enhanced organizational reputation in diversity and inclusion.

Diagnosis

Accurate diagnosis of neurodivergent conditions is foundational to effective support in the workplace. A diagnosis typically involves a thorough evaluation by qualified health or mental health professionals, including assessment of developmental history, behavioral symptoms, standardized tools, and often input from family members

or educators. Early or correct diagnosis enables targeted accommodations, role matching, and supports that can improve performance, reduce misunderstandings, and prevent unnecessary turnover (Branicki et al., 2024; Sturesson Christiansen et al., 2021). This can enhance neurodivergent employees' performance and, as a result, improve business results.

From a business perspective, diagnosis influences key organizational outcomes. Studies show that autistic adults with a formal diagnosis (or who disclose their diagnosis) have better employment status compared to those without such disclosure. For example, a cross-sectional study of 254 adults with ASD found that those who disclosed their diagnosis to their employer were more than three times as likely to be employed than those who did not disclose (Ohl et al., 2017). Disclosure and diagnostic awareness allow managers and HR professionals to understand behaviors or performance issues not as personal failings but as features of neurodivergence to be accommodated.

Diagnosis also affects long-term attachment to the labor market. The systematic review by Sturesson Christiansen et al. (2021) compared childhood-diagnosed ADHD cases to non-diagnosed controls and found that diagnosis was associated with persistent occupational disadvantages: lower quality of employment, lower earnings, and poorer overall labor market attachment across time. These effects indicate that absence of diagnosis (or late/incorrect diagnosis) contributes to reduced productivity, lower retention, and missed opportunities for innovation, all of which align with the business problem this project addresses.

In addition, vocational outcomes among autistic adults correlate with work readiness factors that are often connected with diagnostic clarity. A study examining 281 autistic young adults found that stronger work readiness skills, especially adaptability, job search work style, and adaptability, were linked to more favorable vocational outcomes. Among barriers identified were lack of diagnostic disclosure, limited awareness of the autism phenotype by employers, and insufficient workplace accommodations tailored to diagnostic profiles (Lee et al., 2022).

Thus, diagnosis does more than label: it supports employees in accessing appropriate interventions, helps managers design effective workplace strategies, reduces misattribution of performance or behavior, and directly impacts business outcomes such as productivity, retention, and innovation. Industry training managers who understand and respond to diagnostic information are better positioned to implement strategies that address the business problem of ineffective support for neurodivergent employees.

Education and Intervention

Effective education and intervention strategies are essential for supporting neurodivergent employees and addressing the business problem that some industry training managers lack the knowledge and skills to implement strategies that enhance productivity, retention, and innovation. Research indicates that neurodiversity awareness training improves managers' and staff's understanding of employees' unique strengths and challenges, leading to more effective workplace interactions and higher job satisfaction (Lauder et al., 2022). In addition, tailored workplace adjustments, such as flexible scheduling, quiet workspaces, and structured routines, have been shown to

improve performance outcomes and reduce turnover among neurodivergent employees (Fong et al., 2021). Mentorship programs that pair neurodivergent employees with trained mentors further support engagement, skill development, and long-term retention (Zhou et al., 2024). These findings demonstrate that education and intervention are strategic tools rather than mere supportive measures, enabling managers to address the business problem directly by reducing workplace stress, optimizing employee performance, and leveraging the unique cognitive strengths of neurodivergent staff. Continuous feedback and iterative adjustments to interventions ensure that strategies remain responsive to evolving employee needs, further fostering sustainable organizational benefits (Braun & Clarke, 2022). By equipping managers with evidence-based education and interventions, organizations can enhance retention, promote innovation, and strengthen productivity while cultivating an inclusive and adaptive workplace culture that addresses the challenges identified in the business problem.

Typical Development for Neurodivergent Individuals

Typical development for neurodivergent individuals often diverges from conventional workplace expectations, which can create challenges for managers unfamiliar with their unique learning and working trajectories. Research highlights that neurodivergent individuals may require extended timeframes to acquire specific skills or adapt to social and organizational norms, yet they often demonstrate strengths such as heightened attention to detail, creativity, or pattern recognition once adequately supported (Wen et al., 2024). From a business perspective, understanding these developmental differences is essential for designing training approaches that maximize performance and

retention. Industry training managers who fail to account for these patterns may unintentionally create barriers that reduce productivity and increase turnover. Conversely, organizations that acknowledge and adapt to diverse developmental trajectories can better leverage neurodivergent employees' skills for innovation and problem-solving, aligning inclusivity with business competitiveness (Carlson et al., 2020).

Technologies to Assist Neurodivergent Individuals in Trainings

Technologies designed to support training processes play a critical role in addressing the business problem of managers lacking strategies for neurodivergent employees. Assistive tools such as digital organizers, interactive simulations, and flexible e-learning platforms allow individuals to engage with training content in ways that accommodate diverse processing and communication styles (Bishop & Bechkoum, 2022; Shahbudin & Jamil, 2024). These technologies not only enhance learning outcomes but also reduce the burden on managers by automating aspects of training and accommodation. For example, voice-to-text applications support employees with communication challenges, while adaptive pacing in e-learning ensures equitable access to content for those requiring more time to process information (Beirat et al., 2025). From a business perspective, integrating these technologies into training programs contributes to higher retention rates and improved performance outcomes, while also fostering environments that encourage innovation by enabling neurodivergent employees to contribute more effectively to organizational goals.

Business Problem Scholarship Evidence

The underutilization of neurodivergent employees reflects a persistent business challenge that impacts productivity, retention, and innovation across industries. Although many organizations acknowledge the potential contributions of neurodivergent workers, limited strategies to support them during training and integration restrict the realization of their value. A recent study showed that neurodivergent employees often face barriers in workplace adaptation, such as misaligned communication methods, inflexible training environments, and limited awareness of accommodations among managers (Doyle & McDowall, 2022). These barriers contribute to higher turnover rates and reduced performance, thereby reinforcing the urgency of exploring effective strategies that address the business problem. By situating neurodivergence within the framework of workforce development, this research aligns the business case for inclusivity with the broader goals of talent retention and organizational competitiveness.

Evidence further demonstrates that ineffective managerial practices can negatively affect the retention of neurodivergent employees. In a systematic review, employer misunderstanding of neurodivergent conditions was found to contribute to disengagement and voluntary exits, highlighting that retention is not solely an individual challenge but a managerial and organizational issue (Guastella et al., 2025).

Organizations with managers who lack awareness or training often unintentionally create environments that fail to support diverse cognitive needs. This directly relates to the business problem by emphasizing how industry training managers' strategies, or lack thereof, determine whether employees remain engaged and productive. Thus, the

challenge of retention in neurodivergent populations underscores the necessity of equipping industry training managers with evidence-based tools and perspectives.

Innovation represents another domain where the absence of effective strategies limits organizational growth. Neurodivergent employees frequently bring unique problem-solving skills and alternative perspectives that drive creative solutions, yet these contributions may remain underleveraged when training systems do not support diverse thinking styles (Austin & Pisano, 2021; Doyle & McDowall, 2022). When managers implement standardized training without adaptive methods, neurodivergent employees may experience exclusion, thereby reducing opportunities for organizations to benefit from their innovative capacities. The business problem is thus compounded, as organizations not only lose potential contributors but also fail to harness innovations critical for market competitiveness. Developing strategies that enable neurodivergent employees to contribute to innovation processes directly links inclusivity with measurable business value.

Research also highlights the economic consequences of neglecting effective strategies for neurodivergent employees. Estimates indicate that unemployment and underemployment among neurodivergent adults remain disproportionately high compared to neurotypical peers, with resulting productivity losses affecting both organizations and economies (Bury et al., 2024). From a business perspective, this represents a missed opportunity to cultivate talent pools that can mitigate skills shortages and drive organizational resilience. The lack of strategies by industry training managers contributes to this systemic underutilization, reinforcing the importance of the business

problem for both individual organizations and the broader labor market. Addressing this issue requires evidence-based approaches that integrate awareness, accommodations, and inclusive training practices.

The scholarship also demonstrates that workplace culture plays a pivotal role in either mitigating or exacerbating the business problem. Organizations with inclusive cultures that empower managers to tailor training approaches tend to report stronger employee engagement and lower turnover among neurodivergent employees (Szulc, 2024). In contrast, workplaces with rigid norms and limited leadership awareness exacerbate exclusion, which negatively impacts performance and innovation. This indicates that the business problem extends beyond technical training design to encompass the broader cultural frameworks within which managers operate. Therefore, preparing industry training managers with both knowledge and organizational support structures becomes critical for solving the identified problem.

Overall, the literature confirms the existence and significance of the business problem by showing that some industry training managers lack effective strategies to support neurodivergent employees. The consequences of this gap include reduced productivity, higher turnover, and diminished innovation, all of which undermine business performance. Evidence demonstrates that effective strategies depend not only on individual accommodations but also on organizational culture, leadership awareness, and training adaptation. By grounding this research in attribution theory and the scholarship on workforce inclusivity, this project addresses a gap in both theory and practice, aiming

to identify strategies that align neurodivergent support with organizational performance outcomes.

Business Topic Scholarship

Leadership Strategies

Effective leadership strategies are essential for addressing the business problem, as industry training managers play a critical role in fostering workplace inclusivity and optimizing performance outcomes. Research indicates that inclusive leadership approaches, including servant leadership and strengths-based management, enhance neurodivergent employees' capacity to contribute meaningfully and sustain engagement (Griep et al., 2025). Leaders who demonstrate empathy and flexibility are more likely to create environments where neurodivergent employees can thrive, reducing stigma while emphasizing individual strengths (Conroy & Vogus, 2025). Attribution theory provides a valuable framework, as managers who interpret employee challenges as stemming from stable and uncontrollable causes, such as neurological differences, are more inclined to implement supportive strategies rather than punitive measures (Weiner, 1985). From a business perspective, leadership practices that normalize neurodiversity within organizational culture contribute directly to improved innovation and retention outcomes (Austin & Pisano, 2021). Embracing neurodiversity might be a competitive advantage.

Despite these benefits, challenges remain in ensuring that leaders are adequately prepared. A recent study suggested that managers frequently lack formal training in neurodiversity awareness, often relying on traditional performance expectations that may disadvantage neurodivergent employees (Santuzzi et al., 2022). Without evidence-based

preparation, leadership decisions risk reinforcing systemic inequities in evaluation, promotion, and development opportunities. Research demonstrates that implementing practices such as clear communication, structured feedback, and participatory decision-making increases neurodivergent employees' performance while enhancing overall team effectiveness (van Rijswijk et al., 2025). Such practices allow neurodivergent individuals to better utilize their unique strengths. Consequently, leadership strategies rooted in inclusivity are both a moral responsibility and a business imperative.

Retention Practices

Retention of neurodivergent employees is both an ethical obligation and a strategic business concern, as high turnover incurs significant recruitment and training costs. Evidence suggests that neurodivergent employees frequently exit organizations due to unmet accommodation needs, limited career advancement opportunities, and experiences of workplace bias (Waisman & Simmons, 2021). Organizations that implement retention-focused strategies, including mentoring programs, peer support networks, and flexible work arrangements, report higher levels of employee satisfaction and lower turnover among neurodivergent professionals (Doyle & McDowall, 2022). These findings highlight the strong link between retention practices and organizational outcomes such as workforce stability and continuity. Retention practices also align with broader objectives of productivity and innovation, as demonstrated by a systematic review revealing that organizations adopting individualized career planning and employee resource groups experience increased engagement and decreased attrition (Nair et al., 2025). In contrast, the absence of structured retention initiatives can result in

underemployment and high exit rates among neurodivergent employees, depriving organizations of essential skills and reducing competitive advantage (Ali et al., 2024). Industry training managers play a pivotal role in retention because their support for accommodations and feedback mechanisms directly influences employees' decisions to remain within or leave an organization. Overall, the evidence underscores the business problem: without effective retention strategies, organizations risk losing talent critical for sustaining innovation and maintaining market competitiveness.

Innovation Practices

Innovation represents a key business outcome closely linked to the inclusion of neurodivergent employees. Studies have indicated that neurodivergent individuals frequently contribute distinct perspectives, advanced pattern recognition abilities, and creative problem-solving skills, which enhance organizational innovation (Austin & Pisano, 2021). When industry training managers implement targeted strategies to leverage these strengths, including structured brainstorming sessions and inclusive project designs, teams demonstrate greater adaptability and creativity (Santuzzi et al., 2022). Innovation practices that intentionally harness neurodiverse contributions serve as a competitive differentiator and drive organizational growth. Nevertheless, the benefits of innovation depend on environments that mitigate barriers. Research shows that neurodivergent employees are often excluded from innovation initiatives due to stereotypes regarding communication or collaboration capabilities (Antony et al., 2024). Inclusive innovation strategies, such as design thinking approaches that integrate diverse cognitive inputs, maximize contributions across teams and promote equitable

participation (Silver et al., 2023). Furthermore, the adoption of assistive technologies, including collaborative software platforms, organizational apps, and sensory-friendly tools, facilitates neurodivergent employees' ability to generate innovative ideas effectively (Wen et al., 2024). Organizations investing in these approaches demonstrate measurable improvements in creativity, problem-solving, and overall business performance, reinforcing the connection between innovation strategies and the resolution of the business problem.

Education and Intervention

Education and intervention strategies are fundamental for supporting neurodivergent employees in the workplace and directly address the business problem of industry training managers lacking effective strategies. Research has demonstrated that organizations implementing structured education programs for both employees and managers achieve higher levels of inclusion and retention among neurodivergent talent. Russo et al. (2023) found that training initiatives aimed at raising awareness of neurodivergent conditions improved workplace interactions and enhanced employee satisfaction. This evidence indicates that education equips managers with the necessary skills to implement accommodations effectively, while simultaneously fostering an inclusive organizational culture. Consequently, in the absence of targeted educational programs, industry training managers may inadvertently maintain environments that hinder retention and reduce productivity.

Tailored interventions further enhance organizational outcomes by addressing the specific needs of neurodivergent employees. Empirical studies have indicated that

individualized interventions, including job coaching, structured learning approaches, and clear communication protocols, result in measurable improvements in performance, engagement, and task completion (Zhou et al., 2024). These interventions mitigate barriers related to communication, task management, and social integration, which neurodivergent employees often identify as workplace challenges. From a business perspective, such interventions not only improve productivity but also strengthen retention by demonstrating organizational commitment to employee success. Organizations that fail to integrate evidence-based interventions risk losing valuable talent to turnover or underperformance, thereby limiting workforce capacity and innovation potential.

Sustained leadership commitment is critical to embedding effective interventions within organizational practice. Szulc (2024) emphasized that interventions are most successful when incorporated into long-term development strategies rather than implemented as isolated efforts. This evidence underscores the need for industry training managers to integrate intervention planning into organizational development frameworks, ensuring ongoing support for neurodivergent employees. In relation to the business problem, continuous and structured interventions provide pathways for long-term retention, productivity gains, and meaningful innovation contributions, reinforcing the strategic value of inclusive workplace practices.

Technology in Training

Technological tools have emerged as essential mechanisms for supporting neurodivergent employees in training environments and addressing gaps associated with

the business problem. Digital learning platforms that incorporate assistive technologies, such as captioning, flexible pacing, and multimodal content delivery, enhance accessibility and improve learning outcomes for employees with diverse cognitive needs. Sheejamol et al. (2025) demonstrated that e-learning technologies designed according to universal design principles foster inclusivity by enabling neurodivergent employees to engage with content at their own pace and in formats aligned with their learning preferences. These findings indicate that technology can directly support both productivity and knowledge retention by providing equitable access to training opportunities.

Adaptive technologies tailored to individual neurodivergent needs further enhance performance in workplace training contexts. Tools such as voice-to-text software, digital organizers, and interactive simulations allow employees to manage tasks efficiently and apply newly acquired skills in real time (Beirat et al., 2025). By automating certain accommodations, these technologies reduce the supervisory burden on industry training managers while improving learning outcomes for employees. From a business perspective, integrating adaptive technologies into training strategies strengthens productivity, reduces error rates, and facilitates more consistent skill development.

Technology also plays a strategic role in fostering innovation among neurodivergent employees. Research has indicated that platforms enabling idea sharing, collaborative problem-solving, and interactive feedback enhance engagement and encourage creative contributions (Alanazi et al., 2024). When managers implement technologies that actively support participation from all employees, innovation outcomes

improve across teams. This evidence underscores the importance of equipping industry training managers with knowledge of technological solutions, demonstrating that technology is not only a tool for accessibility but also a driver of organizational competitiveness and business growth.

Gaps in Literature

Despite the growth of scholarship on workplace neurodiversity, several limitations impede the practical application of research findings. First, much of the literature is concentrated in Western contexts, which limits our understanding of neurodivergent employment experiences in emerging economies and non-Western cultural settings (Santuzzi et al., 2022). This constrains the generalizability of recommendations for global organizations. Second, although research documents the advantages of neurodiversity inclusion, longitudinal studies examining the sustained impact of leadership strategies, retention practices, and innovation outcomes are scarce (Nair et al., 2025; Rollnik-Sadowska & Grabińska, 2024; Vargas-Salas et al., 2025,). Consequently, organizations often lack guidance on implementing evidence-based practices that endure. Third, certain neurodivergent conditions remain underrepresented in research. While ASD and ADHD dominate the literature, conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, and Tourette's syndrome are comparatively overlooked despite their prevalence in the workforce (Doyle & McDowall, 2022). Finally, few studies integrate multi-level analyses that examine individual, team, and organizational dynamics, limiting understanding of systemic interactions among leadership, HR policies, and employee outcomes. Addressing these gaps requires interdisciplinary approaches combining

organizational behavior, HR management, and disability studies. These limitations emphasize the need for further inquiry into evidence-based strategies for supporting neurodivergent employees and underscore the significance of the project.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry was to identify and explore effective strategies used by some industry training managers to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. Section 1 covered the background of the problem, business problem, focus and project purpose, research question, assumptions and limitations, the role of the researcher, participant criteria, and the evidenced-based integrative review. It includes a detailed analysis and synthesis of various sources of the literature (i.e., journals, scholarly seminal books, etc.). This evidence-based integrative review demonstrates the extent and seriousness of the business problem. It includes aspects that demonstrate that the development and implementation of strategies and programs to support neurodivergent employees is critical, important and needed. Organizations that have implemented such strategies are successful, innovative, and proficient in their markets. A review of the attribution theory is presented as the conceptual framework and foundation of the research project.

Section 2: Primary and Secondary Industry Data Analysis

Nature of the Project

Method and Design

Qualitative research helps understand how people use their experiences, intuition, interpretations and understanding to address a phenomenon (Ersan Gürsoy & Vatansever, 2025). Qualitative research is appropriate since it allowed to explore the needs of neurodiverse employees and effective strategies that some training manager use to support neurodiverse employees to increase productivity, support employee talent development and team innovation. A qualitative approach allowed further inquiry into the effective strategies used to support the needs or special requirements of neurodiverse employees to improve employee performance, talent retention and innovation. Qualitative research methods enable researchers to capture the depth of human experiences and organizational dynamics, while pragmatic inquiry approaches focus on generating practical strategies and addressing complex issues in applied contexts (Teti et al., 2020). A pragmatic inquiry is appropriate for research into practical solutions to business problems. To identify and explore effective strategies used by industry managers, industry HR managers or industry trainers I conducted a qualitative research project using a pragmatic design. Mior Ibrahim et al. (2023) found the qualitative approach to be appropriately flexible to enable a successful exploratory study on user experience with a system. This approach allowed me to focus on practical solutions and actionable insights that industry training managers can implement.

Reliability

Ensuring reliability in a qualitative research project using a pragmatic inquiry design requires a systematic approach that strengthens the credibility, dependability, and applicability of the findings. Triangulation is a key strategy that enhances reliability by incorporating multiple data sources, methods, or perspectives to cross-validate results. By analyzing interviews, observations, and organizational documents as a whole, researchers can develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon and reduce the risk of bias. This approach allows for corroboration of evidence across different data sources, increasing confidence in the findings. Research demonstrates that triangulation contributes to the rigor of qualitative studies by providing multiple lenses through which to examine complex issues, ensuring that conclusions are not based on a single perspective (McKim, 2023).

Member checking further strengthens reliability by engaging participants in validating the accuracy and interpretation of the data. Returning findings or thematic interpretations to participants ensures that their experiences are authentically represented, and that the researcher's analysis reflects participants' realities. Evidence indicates that member checking is a critical mechanism for enhancing credibility, as it allows participants to confirm, clarify, or challenge the findings, thereby reducing misrepresentation and increasing trust in the results (McKim, 2023). By integrating participant feedback, researchers can ensure that the study reflects an accurate portrayal of the phenomena under investigation, aligning the analysis with practical experiences in the field.

Maintaining an audit trail is another essential strategy for supporting reliability in pragmatic inquiry. Documenting every step of the research process, including decisions made during data collection, coding, and analysis, allows external reviewers to assess the dependability and confirmability of the research project. Audit trails provide transparency and demonstrate how conclusions were reached, enabling other researchers to understand and evaluate the consistency of methodological choices. Studies have indicated that detailed audit trails are fundamental in qualitative research for demonstrating rigor and allowing replication or secondary analysis within the context of pragmatic inquiry designs (Vu, 2021). This level of documentation ensures that the research process is systematic and verifiable, reinforcing the integrity of the findings.

Researchers strengthen the reliability of qualitative studies when they validate interpretations with participants, maintain transparency, and provide clear accounts of research processes (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Kullman & Chudyk, 2025). As part of the process, I employed member checking with participants to enhance transparency and verify that interpretations accurately represented their perspectives, thereby supporting dependability. To achieve consistency in data collection, I adhered to the interview protocol outlined in the Appendix, ensuring uniformity across all participants. To further support accuracy in data capture, three specific steps were taken. First, each interview audio recording was transcribed with precision. Interviews conducted in Spanish were revised multiple times to ensure accuracy of the translation. Second, detailed tables with the answers of the participants following chronological order of each interview were produced to capture central themes. Third, the audio recordings were replayed multiple

times to confirm that both transcriptions and detailed tables accurately reflected participant responses. These measures enhanced the trustworthiness of the study by aligning with established reliability practices in qualitative research.

I strengthened my research's validity by emphasizing credibility, transferability, confirmability, and data saturation as guiding principles for qualitative rigor. Credibility involves ensuring accurate representation of participants' perspectives through practices such as triangulation, member checking, and reflexivity, which are widely recommended for enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry (Abdalla et al., 2018). Transferability reflects the applicability of findings to other contexts and is achieved by offering thick descriptions and transparent documentation that allow readers to determine the relevance of results to different organizational settings (Kakar et al., 2023). Confirmability safeguards against researcher bias by maintaining audit trails, practicing reflexivity, and aligning interpretations with participant data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Data saturation occurs when new data cease to yield additional insights, demonstrating that the sample is sufficient to capture the studied phenomenon (Malterud et al., 2016). I strengthened credibility by applying member checking and triangulating interviews, documents, and artifacts.

I supported transferability by documenting every stage of the data collection process and providing a detailed account of data analysis procedures. I promoted confirmability by using probing questions and conducting follow-ups. I ensured data saturation by continuing interviews until no new themes emerged. By integrating these strategies, I reinforced the trustworthiness of the study while ensuring that credibility,

transferability, confirmability, and saturation were consistently addressed throughout the research process.

Population, Sampling, and Participants

The targeted population for the study consisted of industry training managers who have effective strategies to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. The sampling method will be purposeful sampling. Participants were working as industry training managers with more than two years of experience.

Professional associations and social media platforms serve as effective tools for participant recruitment in qualitative studies. Researchers increasingly report that digital and professional networks expand access to diverse participants and strengthen engagement in organizational and management research (Huang et al., 2024). I recruited participants through social media, professional associations, and personal connections to ensure representation of relevant perspectives. I connected with participants by initiating communication through social media platforms, email and maintaining open communication about the project's purpose, which helped build trust. I further reinforced these contacts by recognizing participants' contributions to the study and highlighting the importance of their input to the research field. This combination of recruitment and engagement strategies enhanced participation while supporting the reliability of the project.

Purposive sampling provides qualitative researchers with the ability to select participants who possess direct knowledge relevant to the research question, thereby

strengthening the depth and relevance of the data collected. Recent scholarship emphasizes that purposive sampling enhances the rigor of qualitative inquiry by ensuring participants represent the phenomenon under study (Palinkas et al., 2013). I applied purposive sampling to recruit nine industry managers who had direct experience with the focus of this project. Achieving data saturation requires the collection of responses until no new themes or information emerge, which signals that additional data will not enhance the study (Rahimi & Khatooni, 2024). I achieved saturation after seven interviews but conducted two additional interviews to confirm that no new information emerged, thereby strengthening the reliability of the findings.

Data Collection Activities

As the researcher, I served as the primary data collection instrument for this project and conducted semistructured interviews to obtain detailed accounts from participants. Semistructured interviews allow researchers to generate nuanced data while maintaining flexibility to probe for deeper insights aligned with the study objectives (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). I selected this method because it enabled me to explore the diverse perspectives and experiences that participants brought to the study. To complement the primary interview data, I also analyzed secondary sources such as organizational websites, reports, and other publicly available documents. I followed an interview protocol to ensure consistency across all sessions, which involved presenting the research purpose, asking predetermined questions, and offering closing reflections. Adhering to the protocol minimized bias and improved the trustworthiness of the findings. Reliability and validity in qualitative research are strengthened when

researchers incorporate strategies such as member checking, audio recording, and systematic data management (Kullman & Chudyk, 2025). I audio recorded each interview and conducted follow-up member-checking with participants to confirm the accuracy of my interpretations, which reinforced the credibility and dependability of the data.

Data Organization and Analysis Techniques

I designed a structured data management and analysis plan to monitor information and capture emerging insights throughout the research process. Scholars emphasize that rigorous qualitative research requires structured approaches to data organization and analysis to generate coherent explanations of complex issues (Huyler & McGill, 2019; Rahimi & Khatooni, 2024). I used password-protected audio and text files, labeled transcripts, research logs, and tables to organize and conceptualize the data. These processes allowed me to remain submerged and engaged in iterative reflection, to generate meaningful patterns that enhanced interpretation quality.

Thematic analysis provided the analytic lens for this study, as it supports the identification, examination, and reporting of patterns of meaning within qualitative datasets (Braun & Clarke, 2021, 2022). I organized all interview transcripts, audio recordings, coding and summary documents in a repository with pseudonyms to protect participant confidentiality. I transcribed each interview audio recordings in the language used during the interview, I transcribed interviews to English language and reviewed the transcripts several times carefully to confirm accuracy. I created codes to categorize the data, grouped similar codes into broader categories, consolidated overlapping concepts,

and refined themes to ensure clarity and coherence. This systematic coding process facilitated the organization of findings by major themes, interpretation of results, and the development of a detailed report aligned with the research purpose.

I conducted correlations between the emerged main themes from the interviews, the literature and conceptual framework using reflexivity within the analysis. Reflexivity further shaped my analysis, as it enabled me to account for the interaction between my experiences as the mother of a young men diagnosed with ADHD, the conceptual framework, and the data itself (Khuzaiyah et al., 2023). Documenting reflexive insights supported transparent decision-making in the identification of final themes. I also committed to secure data storage for five years following the study to protect the integrity of the research and maintain ethical compliance.

Summary

Section 2 covered the nature of the project, the method and design used and how reliability was ensured through the research process, the population, sampling methodology, participants, data collection activities, data organization and analysis techniques.

Section 3: Data and Professional Practice

Project Results

The purpose of this qualitative pragmatic inquiry was to identify and explore effective strategies used by some industry training managers to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. Thematic analysis of data collected from nine participants revealed five major themes: (a) make reasonable accommodations, (b) acknowledge the individual's condition, (c) communicate and build rapport, (d) change culture, and (e) measure effectiveness of strategy.

The overarching question was: What effective strategies do some industry training managers use to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent retention and innovation? Sources of data included semistructured interviews with nine participants and secondary corroborating evidence from websites available to the public and social media pages dedicated to support neurodivergent individuals. I transcribed data from interviewees using Microsoft Word and named them, according to the pseudonym I assigned to each participant. I used Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel to conduct manual data analysis. Table 1 highlights the major themes, the number of participants who referenced each theme, and the number of references made to each theme.

Table 1*Major Themes*

Major theme	Number of participants referenced theme	Number of references made to theme
Make Reasonable Accommodations	7	12
Acknowledge the Individual's Condition	5	12
Communicate and Build Rapport	7	19
Change Culture	3	10
Measure Effectiveness of Strategy	8	16

Attribution theory emphasizes that individuals' explanations for success or failure shape their motivation and workplace behavior, directly influencing organizational outcomes. Lin (2024) demonstrated that attributional processes affect employee engagement by determining whether employees perceive workplace conditions as fair and supportive. When managers attribute performance difficulties to controllable organizational factors, such as unclear task instructions or insufficient training resources, employees interpret feedback as fair and constructive. For instance, if a manager identifies that reduced task performance results from inadequate procedural guidance rather than a lack of ability, the employee perceives the challenge as solvable and responds with greater motivation and effort. This attributional shift from viewing performance challenges as internal and stable traits, such as low capability or motivation, to interpreting them as external and controllable factors, such as inadequate task structure, limited resources, or unclear communication, strengthens perceptions of fairness and inclusion among neurodivergent employees because it acknowledges that success can be improved through organizational adjustments and supportive management practices. As a result, they experience higher job satisfaction, increased trust in

management, and sustained commitment to organizational goals, reinforcing a culture that supports both equity and productivity.

Training managers can improve employee retention by applying attributional strategies that focus on effort, learning, and organizational support as the primary causes of performance outcomes. Branicki et al. (2024) found that adaptive workplace structures and flexible management approaches enhance retention by shaping how employees interpret success and challenges. When neurodivergent employees perceive that their performance depends on factors such as effective training, access to accommodations, and supportive leadership, they attribute outcomes to controllable and external conditions rather than to personal limitations. A managerial emphasis on environmental supports and opportunities for growth, fosters optimism and engagement. As a result, neurodivergent employees develop a stronger commitment and belonging, which reduces turnover and promotes organizational continuity. Attribution-informed practices, therefore, help organizations retain skilled employees while embedding inclusivity within their workforce development strategies.

Innovation outcomes also depend on how managers interpret and communicate the causes of employee performance, as supportive explanations promote confidence and openness to experimentation. Lauder et al. (2022) found that coaching and targeted interventions enhanced self-efficacy among neurodivergent employees, which in turn increased their engagement in creative tasks. When managers reframe performance challenges as opportunities for skill development and contextual learning rather than as indicators of fixed ability, employees experience a constructive change in causal

perspective. These reframing nurtures resilience and creative confidence, encouraging behaviors such as proactive problem solving, idea generation, and cross-team collaboration. The resulting innovation not only strengthens organizational adaptability and competitiveness but also demonstrates how attribution-informed management practices can simultaneously advance inclusion and performance excellence.

Thematic analysis of data collected from nine participants revealed five central themes: making reasonable accommodations, acknowledging the individual's condition, communicating and building rapport, changing culture, and measuring the effectiveness of strategy. These themes align with Weiner's (1972) attribution theory, which explains how managerial interpretations of performance outcomes influence employee attitudes and behaviors. In making reasonable accommodations, managers attributed performance challenges to external and modifiable factors, reflecting locus of control and stability dimensions, which led to equitable workplace adjustments that improved retention and engagement. Bury et al. (2024) found that organizations that implemented accommodations tailored to neurodivergent employees' needs enhanced both employee morale and sustained performance outcomes. Romualdez et al. (2021) similarly reported that providing structured workplace accommodations and support improved engagement and persistence among employees with autism. These findings indicate that when challenges are framed as situational rather than inherent, employees respond with greater motivation, demonstrating the practical value of attribution-informed strategies. Consequently, managers who implement external, controllable interventions foster

inclusive workplaces that reinforce retention, engagement, and organizational effectiveness.

Acknowledging the individual's condition corresponds to controllability, as recognizing neurodivergent employees' unique characteristics validates their lived experiences and enhances productivity. Szulc (2024) emphasized that positive relationships between neurodivergent employees and neurotypical leaders, grounded in understanding individual strengths and needs, contribute to higher job satisfaction and workplace inclusion. Zindell (2024) found that organizations that actively recognize neurodiverse identities and provide individualized support report improved psychological safety and employee commitment. These findings illustrate that acknowledging employees' distinct characteristics reduces frustration and promotes active participation, which aligns with attribution theory by framing performance outcomes as influenced by modifiable, external factors rather than fixed personal traits. Altogether, these studies reinforce that interpretation-based leadership strategies not only address performance barriers but also strengthen inclusion, engagement, and long-term organizational sustainability, highlighting the importance of attribution-informed managerial practices in optimizing outcomes for neurodivergent employees.

Communicating and building rapport reflected stable and internal attributions, as managers who prioritized trust, clarity, and consistent engagement fostered higher employee motivation and reduced turnover. Nair et al. (2025) and Santuzzi et al. (2022) demonstrated that leaders who maintain transparent communication, demonstrate empathy, and cultivate inclusive workplace cultures strengthen employees' sense of

belonging and commitment while lowering social barriers. These findings suggest that when employees perceive managerial behavior as supportive and reliable, they internalize positive attitudes, persist in their roles, and contribute to team cohesion, innovation, and overall performance. Changing culture represented locus of causality at the organizational level, illustrating that systemic interventions reduce stigma and enable neurodivergent employees to apply their skills creatively. Finally, measuring the effectiveness of strategy aligned with stability and controllability, as consistent evaluation reinforced accountability and demonstrated the benefits of inclusive practices over time. Rollnik-Sadowska and Grabińska (2024) noted that organizations conducting regular assessments of diversity initiatives sustain trust, innovation, and measurable performance improvements. Analysis of these findings shows that linking evaluation to outcomes strengthens managerial decision-making and signals to neurodivergent employees that their contributions are recognized and supported. On the whole, the evidence indicates that attribution-informed strategies allow managers to address performance challenges constructively, enhance retention, and embed inclusion and innovation into organizational systems, creating sustainable value for both employees and the business.

Theme 1: Making Reasonable Accommodations

Making reasonable accommodations involves deliberate organizational practices that address performance barriers without linking difficulties to fixed personal traits. Organizational research indicates that policies promoting flexible schedules, assistive technologies, and modified supervision structures enhance both productivity and

retention among neurodivergent employees. Hennekam and Follmer (2024) noted that inclusive adjustments that match employees' individual needs lead to measurable gains in job performance and satisfaction. Similarly, Ziemiański et al. (2023) reported that organizations implementing structured flexibility experience higher retention rates because such accommodations foster autonomy and reduce stress-related turnover. From the perspective of attribution theory, managers who attribute underperformance to controllable and external causes, such as environmental or task-related factors, engage in constructive and solution-focused management. Weiner (1991) explained that when performance is interpreted through controllable causes, leaders are more likely to invest in supportive interventions that encourage growth and persistence. Bury et al. (2024) further observed that this attributional framing promotes employees' belief that improvement depends on effort and effective strategies rather than innate limitations, which strengthens motivation and self-efficacy. Collectively, these perspectives demonstrate that structured and attribution-informed accommodations cultivate positive attitudes toward work, reduce withdrawal behaviors, and reinforce equitable participation across organizational settings.

Implementing reasonable accommodations requires continuous assessment and adaptation to ensure their effectiveness for neurodivergent employees. Research demonstrates that accommodations are most successful when managers monitor outcomes, seek feedback, and adjust support strategies based on individual performance and evolving needs. Hill (2025) and Alfes et al. (2021) explained that regular evaluation of accommodation effectiveness strengthens employee trust and ensures sustained job

satisfaction by demonstrating managerial responsiveness. Similarly, Santuzzi et al. (2022) observed that when managers maintain open dialogue with neurodivergent employees and adjust work practices accordingly, organizational inclusivity and productivity increase significantly. Managers who attribute workplace challenges to controllable organizational factors rather than personal deficits tend to refine accommodations in ways that reinforce fairness and accountability. Weiner (1985) noted that such attributions foster constructive managerial behavior focused on identifying and modifying environmental barriers that hinder employee success. Neurodivergent employees who perceive that their needs are acknowledged and addressed display higher engagement, creativity, and commitment to organizational goals. Rollnik-Sadowska and Grabińska (2024) and Nair et al. (2025) found that tailored support programs lead to improved innovation outcomes and reduced turnover intentions among neurodivergent workers. Moreover, integrating accommodation practices into formal training and standard operating procedures ensures consistency and promotes inclusivity across departments. Longmire et al. (2025) indicated that formalizing inclusive procedures enhances organizational equity and long-term sustainability. For instance, a company that implements structured job coaching and clear communication channels for employees with autism often reports reduced task ambiguity and improved performance outcomes. Similarly, providing sensory-friendly workspaces and flexible scheduling for employees with attention-deficit or sensory processing differences has been shown to reduce burnout and increase retention. In sum, these findings and examples demonstrate that the strategic implementation and iterative refinement of reasonable accommodations not only enhance

individual performance and satisfaction but also strengthen organizational capacity for productivity, innovation, and equitable workforce development.

From the participants, 78% confirmed the importance of making reasonable accommodations to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. One participant, PA, noted that “the supervisor identifies if his employees have areas of opportunity that can be address by making reasonable accommodations for them. A reasonable accommodation might be breaking a task into 10 steps and identify which ones that person can do.” PC stated, “Some individuals may struggle in some areas and other individuals may struggle in other areas. We need to modify and take care of that area that individual is struggling in.” PD expressed,

Ninety percentof accommodations are free, and they can be implemented by one person. A reasonable adjustments or accommodations is done through the individual person and how they respond to and work with different people. I think that’s kind of a very important point too, because people just have these assumed barriers, which is why sometimes it’s their excuse to not even start.

PE mentioned, “I believe the key is creating an environment where people feel value and heard. I maintain open communication to make reasonable accommodations that the company allows.” PF conveyed, “If the employee has an issue, we first ask how they feel about that task or area, then we look into reasonable accommodations or task adjustments to make it easier for them.” PG stated,

The term reasonable accommodation usually means providing the necessary tools so the employee can perform the essential functions of their job, in this case, since we are talking about behavioral conditions, an alternative is a transfer to another area where they might feel more comfortable, work and be productive.

PF explained, “We make sure to provide reasonable accommodations that are sustainable for the organization and, at the same time, allow the employee to continue and do their work successfully.” Participants trust in reasonable accommodations to support neurodivergent employees. These accommodations allow the employees to improve their job execution, performance, and improve their retention.

Practical examples illustrate how accommodations shape managerial practices and employee responses, reinforcing organizational effectiveness. Implementing structured work routines for employees with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder reduces task errors and improves goal completion, demonstrating that environmental modifications produce measurable outcomes. Lauder et al. (2022) reported that providing predictable schedules, task checklists, and step-by-step instructions enabled employees to complete tasks more efficiently and with fewer errors, highlighting the impact of structured routines as a concrete accommodation. Similarly, introducing flexible workstations and quiet areas for employees with sensory sensitivities improved focus and engagement, resulting in higher productivity and reduced stress, serving as a second concrete example of how environmental adjustments support neurodivergent employees. Branicki et al. (2024) noted that when managers attribute errors to organizational or task-related factors rather than personal incapacity, they consistently adopt such supportive strategies, which

fosters employee trust in leadership. Employees interpret these accommodations as evidence that success is achievable through structured planning and adaptive effort, strengthening motivation, commitment, and persistence. These reciprocal processes demonstrate that reasonable accommodations not only comply with legal inclusion frameworks but also cultivate a culture of adaptability and continuous improvement, resulting in enhanced performance, talent retention, and workplace innovation.

Subtheme: Personalize the Work and Training

Personalizing work and training to align with cognitive preferences enables neurodivergent employees to engage more effectively with job demands and achieve higher performance outcomes. Empirical studies indicate that customized training modules, adaptive learning platforms, and individualized coaching sessions significantly enhance knowledge transfer and task mastery. Lauder et al. (2022) reported that employees receiving tailored instructional content demonstrate faster skill acquisition and fewer errors when completing complex tasks. Similarly, Szulc et al. (2021) found that individualized coaching and targeted learning interventions increase confidence, engagement, and long-term retention of job-related competencies. Attribution theory provides explanatory value by highlighting that managers who interpret performance gaps as arising from specific, trainable skills are more likely to adopt personalized approaches. Weiner (1991) noted that this attributional perspective encourages managers to focus on actionable strategies that employees can control, rather than assuming innate limitations. Tomas et al. (2023) further observed that employees who perceive training as aligned with their cognitive strengths attribute success to their effort and strategy use,

which enhances motivation and persistence. By framing training in terms of controllable factors and individualized support, organizations enable neurodivergent employees to persist through challenges, strengthen skill acquisition, and engage meaningfully with work tasks.

Fifty-six percent of the participants reported implementing personalized work and training to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA explained,

You can't assign an asthmatic person to an area that uses adhesives or emits fumes that could trigger an asthma attack. Likewise, someone with poor vision shouldn't be assigned to a highly detailed or delicate task. Or a person who can't process information in a typical way they might still be capable, but you need to adjust the format personalizing the work depending on the work area.

PC reported,

When we teach them the things they need to know and give them what they need, there is something we call the exit ticket in order to us understand that they have all the tools necessary. It is all individualized even when it is in a group setting.

PD stated, "To understand what that person need to do better, you definitely go in with the individual approach. So, you know because every person is different." PE conveyed,

If a supervisor says, "This person isn't performing" I talk directly with the employee; "What's happening? What challenges are you facing?" That conversation makes them feel valued and gives them a chance to explain. If needed; I ask the supervisor to retrain them.

PF mentioned that he, in collaboration with a social worker, approached employees with challenges, whether neurodivergent or with other issues, to see how we can help them. Always individually, because the needs they encountered are very diverse and require individual approaches. By aligning tasks with individual abilities and needs, managers promote internal attributions of competence and self-efficacy among employees, which positively influences motivation, performance, and commitment (De Clercq et al., 2018; Weiner, 1991). These explanations illustrate how personalizing work and training fosters a more supportive and productive environment for neurodivergent employees.

Applied examples demonstrate the effectiveness of personalized training in enhancing employee performance and engagement. Programs in which managers provide structured social narratives and visual supports for employees on the autism spectrum have been shown to improve communication and reduce workplace misunderstandings. Waisman-Nitzan et al. (2021) reported that such targeted interventions enable employees to navigate social and task-related interactions more effectively, resulting in clearer communication and fewer errors. Employees receiving this tailored support perceive that their progress is directly linked to their persistence and the structured aids provided, which reinforces motivation and engagement. Managers in these contexts actively promote attributional beliefs that emphasize effort, strategy, and skill development rather than innate incapacity. Roux et al. (2020) noted that these approaches lead to measurable outcomes, including increased task accuracy, higher employee satisfaction, and lower turnover rates. By aligning personalized training with controllable and trainable performance factors, organizations create strategic accommodations that foster

productive behaviors, reinforce skill acquisition, and support sustainable workforce development.

Subtheme: Design Workstations

Designing sensory-friendly and ergonomic workstations enables neurodivergent employees to maintain higher levels of concentration and productivity. Empirical studies indicate that adjustments such as noise-reducing headsets, flexible lighting, and optimized spatial organization reduce sensory overload and support sustained focus. Ziemiański et al. (2023) noted that providing noise-control tools and adaptable workspace layouts significantly decreases distractions and improves task accuracy. Similarly, Waisman-Nitzan et al. (2021) reported that employees with spectrum conditions experience reduced stress and enhanced engagement when workstations are structured to accommodate sensory sensitivities. Applied examples further demonstrate the effectiveness of these strategies. For instance, allocating quiet zones or private cubicles for employees who are easily overstimulated has been shown to reduce task interruptions and increase completion rates. Providing adjustable desks and ergonomic chairs enables employees with varying physical or sensory needs to maintain comfort and sustain concentration throughout the workday. According to attribution theory, managerial behavior adapts when lapses in concentration are interpreted as arising from environmental factors rather than inherent employee limitations. Weiner (1985) highlighted that managers who recognize controllable environmental causes are more likely to implement proactive adjustments, fostering improved employee performance. Silver et al. (2023) further observed that employees perceive enhancements in

workstation design as directly contributing to their ability to focus and complete tasks, which increases persistence, reduces anxiety, and strengthens overall engagement. Taken together, these findings and examples demonstrate that designing workstations tailored to sensory and ergonomic needs functions as a strategic accommodation that improves performance, supports well-being, and reinforces organizational inclusivity.

From the participants, 33% expressed that designing workstations based on the needs of neurodivergent employees is important to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams, thereby increasing productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA stated,

In manufacturing, you use what is known as takt time. It is used to calculate output expectation. With this you can identify if employees have special needs if they don't meet this rubric. If they don't meet the rubric, you get to know your employee and determine whether they have a special need and simplify their tasks by designing their workstation or workspace.

PD mentioned that it is important to start being inclusive from the culture of the organization to the design of the office, workspace and how the neurodivergent employee wants to structure their work. PH noted, "We allow this group in particular to step outside the usual office structure and create their own design on how they want to work to improve creativity and provide flexibility." These insights highlight how strategic workstation design can remove unnecessary barriers and align job demands with individual capabilities, which supports sustained performance and engagement. By adapting the physical environment to the cognitive and sensory needs of neurodivergent

employees, managers create conditions that foster autonomy, motivation, and innovation while reducing the likelihood of misattributed performance issues. This approach reflects the principles of Weiner's attribution theory, as managers shift their focus from internal, stable causes of underperformance to external, controllable factors that can be modified to support success, ultimately enhancing productivity and talent retention.

Applied examples of workstation redesign demonstrate significant improvements in both performance and organizational culture. In an engineering firm, creating quiet zones for employees with autism was associated with a 25% reduction in error rates and increased collaboration, as employees experienced lower anxiety during shared projects. Branicki et al. (2024) noted that such environmental adjustments enable employees to focus more effectively and engage confidently in team tasks. These accommodations also serve as tangible signals that employees needs are recognized and supported, fostering loyalty, motivation, and sustained engagement. Managers reinforce positive attributional cycles by treating environmental changes as legitimate tools for enhancing productivity, which encourages employees to view improved performance as a result of controllable and modifiable factors rather than personal limitations. These findings illustrate that inclusive workstation design not only enhances individual outcomes but also strengthens organizational capacity for talent retention, innovation, and an equitable workplace culture.

Subtheme: Conduct Individual Evaluation and/or Training

Conducting individual evaluations and targeted training interventions allows managers to identify specific skills or contextual challenges faced by neurodivergent

employees, enabling precise and effective support. Empirical research demonstrates that structured assessments, including job-coaching evaluations and cognitive-behavioral readiness screenings, improve placement and training outcomes for employees on the autism spectrum. Roux et al. (2020) reported that individualized evaluations help managers align tasks and training approaches with employees' capabilities, reducing errors and increasing confidence. Similarly, Lauder et al. (2022) found that cognitive and performance assessments inform the development of tailored interventions that enhance skill acquisition, engagement, and long-term retention. Attribution theory posits that when managers interpret performance gaps as arising from specific, trainable skill deficits, they are more likely to implement corrective evaluation strategies. Weiner (1985) highlighted that this attributional perspective encourages actionable support, while Tomas et al. (2023) noted that employees perceive learning gains as directly resulting from their effort and the structured supports provided, which strengthens persistence, confidence, and motivation. Together, these findings demonstrate that individual evaluation and targeted training create a feedback loop that enhances performance, builds competence, and fosters sustained engagement among neurodivergent employees.

According to 67% of participants, conducting individual evaluations and training is key to supporting neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA mentioned that "as neurodivergent employees don't learn in the same way others do, you have to evaluate them individually to determine if they can be included in a subgroup to be trained, if not, you have to conduct the training individually." PC stated that "when employees have difficulties

executing a task or series of tasks, they need to be evaluated individually to address the specific difficulties through individual trainings.” PD conveyed, “The one-on-one coaching is what has the greatest impact with neurodivergent team members and employees.” PE stated that conducting individual evaluations when they tend to have low performance is critical to know how to conduct individual training and address their needs. PF mentioned the importance of individual evaluations because each employee demonstrates diverse needs in the work area to be able to execute their work. PI stated, “If it is seen that a person cannot do a certain exercise, a separate conversation is held to offer support outside the context of the full training session.” The participant explained that “addressing the situation individually can facilitate the training and learning process.” These perceptions emphasize that individualized evaluations and training allow managers to identify specific learning needs and provide tailored support that aligns with each employee’s strengths and challenges. This approach reflects the controllable and unstable attributions within Weiner’s attribution theory, as managers focus on adapting strategies rather than attributing difficulties to fixed personal traits. By personalizing evaluations and training methods, organizations enhance skill acquisition, build employee confidence, and create pathways for sustained productivity, talent retention, and innovation.

Practical applications of individual evaluation and targeted training further illustrate their effectiveness in supporting neurodivergent employees. In hospitality settings, targeted assessments enabled managers to identify specific communication gaps and implement coaching interventions that directly improved customer service

performance. van Rijswijk et al. (2025) found that individualized coaching based on assessment results enhanced employees' communication confidence, job satisfaction, and service consistency. Employees in these programs interpreted their improvements as outcomes of sustained effort supported by constructive managerial feedback rather than as reflections of inherent limitations. Managers reinforced this attributional framing by emphasizing that skill development is a controllable process that can be achieved through structured feedback and guided practice. This approach aligns with attribution theory, which posits that interpreting success as effort-based fosters persistence and motivation (Weiner, 1991). Over time, such targeted evaluation and training not only improve immediate task performance but also increase employee retention, as individuals perceive fairness, inclusivity, and genuine organizational investment in their professional development.

Subtheme: Rotate the Employee in Different Work Areas

Rotating employees across various work areas enables the discovery of optimal job fit and maximizes the utilization of underrecognized talents. Empirical research indicates that structured job rotation enhances adaptability, reduces monotony, and allows neurodivergent employees to identify positions that align with their individual strengths. Roux et al. (2020) observed that rotation experiences increase self-awareness and engagement by exposing employees to varied tasks and environments. Similarly, Rollnik-Sadowska and Grabińska (2024) found that systematic rotation contributes to stronger skill diversification and organizational commitment among employees with differing cognitive profiles. Attribution theory underscores the behavioral mechanisms underlying

these outcomes, including cognitive reframing, self-efficacy development, and learning-oriented motivation. Managers who attribute performance difficulties to contextual mismatches rather than fixed personal deficits are more likely to promote rotation as a strategy for growth. Employees, in turn, interpret these rotational opportunities as evidence that success is attainable through effort, adaptation, and environmental alignment (Bury et al., 2024; Weiner, 1991). This reframing fosters persistence, motivation, and openness to new challenges, ultimately creating a workplace culture that values flexibility, inclusion, and continuous development.

A total of 44% participants rotate neurodivergent employees in different work areas to support them on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA mentioned, “There’s also another strategy used in work environments, which is sliding positioning, though is often not implemented. I rotate my employees constantly.” PB stated, “New tasks can help. Some need to move around, do multiple things, or may fall sleep depending on their condition. we rotate the sections they worked in, which helps avoid monotony and it worked well.” PE stated that rotate or transfer neurodivergent employees to different areas of the organization has helped them. PG conveyed, “When an employee has difficulty adapting to their work area, maybe it causes anxiety, or they have issues with a direct supervisor or a coworker, we offer administrative transfer to another department.” These findings highlight that rotating neurodivergent employees across different work areas can reduce monotony, alleviate environmental stressors, and optimize person–task fit, which aligns with Weiner’s attribution theory by focusing on situational and controllable factors rather than fixed

personal limitations. Through strategic rotation, managers can identify environments where employees thrive, foster engagement, and promote adaptability, ultimately enhancing productivity, retention, and innovative contributions within the organization.

Applied findings reinforce the support of neurodivergent employees by demonstrating measurable improvements in retention, innovation, engagement, and organizational adaptability. In manufacturing organizations, rotation programs that included neurodivergent employees produced higher retention rates and increased innovation, as employees identified roles where their attention to detail and analytical problem-solving contributed directly to operational success. Branicki et al. (2024) found that when employees were rotated into positions that aligned with their cognitive strengths, both productivity and morale improved, reflecting the tangible benefits of inclusive placement strategies. Employees interpreted these rotations as evidence of managerial investment in their development and attributed their achievements to a combination of personal effort and a supportive organizational system that facilitated exploration across work areas. Attribution theory describes these dynamics through behavioral mechanisms such as enhanced expectancy of success, perceived controllability, and increased self-efficacy (Weiner, 1991). Managers demonstrated inclusive attributional practices by emphasizing task–fit rather than perceived deficits, which reinforced a learning-oriented mindset and trust in leadership. Altogether, these processes illustrate how job rotation strengthens innovation, deepens employee loyalty, and enhances long-term organizational commitment through attributions that promote growth and inclusion.

Subtheme: Include Family or Social Workers in the Work Program Development

Engaging family members or social workers in workplace program development establishes a holistic support network that strengthens employment sustainability for neurodivergent individuals. Empirical evidence demonstrates that collaboration between families, social service professionals, and employers enhances job retention and ensures continuity of workplace accommodations beyond the organizational setting. Roux et al. (2020) found that coordinated involvement of family members and external coaches improved transition-to-work outcomes and reinforced adaptive behaviors at home and in the community. Similarly, Rollnik-Sadowska and Grabińska (2024) reported that integrated social support systems promote long-term employment stability by addressing both personal and environmental challenges faced by neurodivergent workers. Attribution theory describes why this approach is effective by emphasizing behavioral mechanisms such as shared responsibility, social reinforcement, and enhanced self-efficacy. Managers who attribute performance challenges to external and modifiable contexts, such as a lack of coordinated support, are more likely to engage families and social workers to co-design interventions that address these factors. Employees, in turn, attribute their progress to this joint network of support, which increases confidence, motivation, and engagement (Weiner, 1991). This shared attribution fosters collaborative problem solving and creates a sustainable ecosystem of inclusion that bridges organizational and personal development contexts.

Thirty-three percent of the participants reported that they implemented the participation of family or social workers into the work program development to support

neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PC mentioned, “We use what we call parent university to teach how to cope with what they are dealing with and help building teaching mechanisms.” PF stated,

The family has been a helpful support system for retaining employees. If the person has a guardian or a mother who oversees the employee, we reach out to gather more information about them, tasks they can or cannot perform, and how we can improve their work experience.

PG conveyed,

We have a social worker, who specializes in this area, and we refer employees there. It’s not mandatory, rather, we let them know the service is available. The social worker investigates further and, if necessary, refers them to an external agency for behavioral support, while they continue working.

These findings indicate that involving family members and social workers in program development creates a supportive network that enhances understanding of individual needs and promotes tailored strategies, which aligns with Weiner’s attribution theory by emphasizing external and controllable factors that influence performance. This collaborative approach strengthens communication between employees and managers, improves accommodation planning, and fosters a stable environment that contributes to higher productivity, talent retention, and innovative capacity.

Case studies further illustrate the effectiveness of involving family members and social workers in workplace program development. In community-based employment initiatives, the active participation of social workers increased employee retention by

maintaining consistent communication between employers and employees' home environments. Tomas et al. (2023) reported that when social workers facilitated communication among organizations, families, and employees, participants experienced clearer expectations, more immediate feedback, and sustained emotional reinforcement, all of which improved job stability and satisfaction. Employees interpreted this integrated network of support as validation of their potential and attributed their workplace success to shared efforts with both organizational and external stakeholders. These attributions activated behavioral mechanisms such as increased self-efficacy, reduced anxiety, and greater persistence in task completion. Managers encouraged positive attributional cycles by framing performance progress as the result of controllable and modifiable factors such as skill development and environmental support rather than personal limitations. This reframing reduced stigma, promoted transparency about support needs, and strengthened fairness and inclusion within workplace relationships. In sum, these processes demonstrate that collaboration with families and social workers not only sustains employment for neurodivergent employees but also reinforces an organizational culture that values equity, belonging, and long-term inclusion.

Theme 2: Acknowledging the Individual's Condition

Acknowledging the individual's condition represents a foundational strategy for supporting neurodivergent employees in workplaces committed to equity and inclusion. Recognizing neurodiversity as a dimension of human difference allows managers to design practices that reduce barriers while enhancing individual strengths. Empirical evidence demonstrates that organizations that explicitly acknowledge neurological

differences report improvements in employee job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and overall engagement. Sreckovic et al. (2024) and McMahon et al. (2021) found that employees who experienced recognition of their neurodivergent needs demonstrated higher motivation and persistence in completing work tasks. Similarly, Ru and Jamil (2024) observed that acknowledgment of individual conditions was associated with increased participation in decision-making and stronger perceptions of organizational fairness. Attribution theory posits the psychological mechanisms underlying these outcomes by highlighting how managers who interpret performance challenges as stemming from controllable or external factors, such as inadequate workplace adjustments, are more likely to implement supportive strategies. Weiner (1985) noted that this attributional approach encourages managers to focus on actionable solutions, whereas Ziemiański et al. (2023) reported that employees attribute performance gains to their effort in conjunction with appropriate accommodations, thereby enhancing motivation and skill development. This reciprocal attribution fosters a collaborative environment in which employees feel valued for their contributions and supported in overcoming challenges, reinforcing inclusion and equity across the organization.

A total of 56% of participants indicated that acknowledging the individual's condition is crucial to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PB mentioned, "I believe this strategy acknowledging the individual's condition while integrating them fully into the teams helps both the employee and the team grow." PD conveyed, "I start all my sessions accepting that people in the room are different and have different ways of learning." PE

mentioned, “Is important to understand where someone’s tendencies lie, whether they are more directive, analytical, stable or sociable, and then tailor your approach.” PH reported, “We have to recognize that these employees exist and may have particular conditions.” PI stated,

One of the most basic things a trainer must do is identify the participant is in any training and make sure everyone can participate. Many of these individuals, neurodivergent, are reserved, so specific questions are asked to bring them into the conversation.

These insights demonstrate that acknowledging each employee’s condition establishes a foundation of respect and understanding that encourages active participation, strengthens team cohesion, and enhances performance outcomes. By recognizing individual differences as external but manageable factors, managers apply principles of Weiner’s attribution theory to shape supportive behaviors that foster inclusion, build trust, and create conditions that sustain productivity, talent retention, and innovation within diverse teams.

Practical applications reinforce the importance of acknowledging neurodivergent conditions in the workplace. Multinational organizations have implemented inclusive hiring initiatives in which disclosure of neurodivergence is met with proactive support rather than discrimination, leading to higher retention rates and increased innovation among neurodivergent employees. Silver et al. (2023) reported that when employees received structured accommodations following disclosure, their engagement and task performance improved significantly. Similarly, Tomas et al. (2023) observed that explicit

recognition of neurodivergent conditions fostered greater confidence and participation in collaborative projects. By formally acknowledging these conditions, managers promote attributional patterns in which challenges are understood as manageable through structured interventions rather than as fixed limitations. Employees internalize this perspective, interpreting their successes as the result of sustained effort combined with supportive contextual adaptations, which enhances motivation, persistence, and resilience. This approach moves beyond symbolic recognition, generating tangible organizational outcomes in productivity, trust, and long-term sustainability while reinforcing an inclusive and equitable workplace culture.

Subtheme: Integrate Them Fully into the Team

Full integration of neurodivergent employees into workplace teams promotes equity and strengthens organizational cohesion. Empirical research indicates that employees perform more effectively when embedded in collaborative teams where their contributions are explicitly recognized and valued. Austin and Pisano (2021) found that inclusive team structures enhance engagement and task performance for neurodivergent employees. Similarly, Sreckovic et al. (2024) and McMahon et al. (2021) reported that recognition within team contexts improves self-efficacy, motivation, and long-term retention. Attribution theory provides insight into the underlying behavioral mechanisms, as managers who interpret collaboration challenges as arising from structural or communicative barriers rather than fixed employee deficits are more likely to implement inclusive strategies, such as structured team-building activities, mentoring programs, and role clarification (Weiner, 1985). These strategies also shape peer attributions, leading

colleagues to perceive successful interactions as the result of shared responsibility, adaptive practices, and mutual effort rather than individual limitations (Szulc et al., 2021). For example, embedding neurodivergent employees within agile project teams with clearly defined roles has been shown to improve task productivity and interpersonal understanding, as team members recognize that success emerges from collective effort supported by managerial guidance and environmental adaptations. Full integration thus reinforces team cohesion, maximizes individual strengths, and fosters a workplace culture that values collaboration, inclusivity, and shared accountability.

The majority, 33% of the participants, indicated that the integration of these employees into the team is vital to support them on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PB posited, “It’s crucial for employers not to treat them differently, but to integrate them so they feel comfortable, at ease, and able to maintain long-term employment. PD stated,

In particular, I go a lot into the business benefit of diversity and inclusion at work. So, increase productivity if you create a place for everybody to thrive, then you’ll see increased productivity. People will not leave as much. You’ll attract more workers.

PH mentioned that “integration to the team is easier if a proper structure of work is provided to neurodivergent employees.” These perspectives illustrate that integrating neurodivergent employees into teams cultivates a sense of belonging and psychological safety, which strengthens their engagement, motivation, and long-term commitment. By attributing performance outcomes to supportive structures rather than individual deficits,

managers align with Weiner's attribution theory to foster inclusive team dynamics that enhance productivity, reduce turnover, and stimulate innovation.

Effective team integration also reduces stigma and fosters a sense of belonging, both of which are critical for employee retention and innovation. Research indicates that neurodivergent employees are more likely to disengage when excluded from informal networks or assigned peripheral roles within team operations. Szulc et al. (2021) found that exclusion from collaborative interactions undermines motivation and decreases long-term engagement, while Ru and Jamil (2024) reported that peripheral positioning limits opportunities for skill application and professional growth. Managers who proactively address these risks and cultivate inclusive team dynamics encourage attributional shifts in employee perceptions. Neurodivergent employees begin to associate performance improvements with their own abilities and persistence, supported by an inclusive environment, whereas managers attribute organizational successes to the implementation of effective diversity practices. These reciprocal attributions activate behavioral mechanisms such as increased self-efficacy, social learning, and persistence, which enhance motivation, promote organizational citizenship behaviors, and support sustainable business outcomes (Tomas et al., 2023). Applied examples include mentorship circles and cross-functional projects that encourage diverse problem-solving, allowing neurodivergent employees to participate fully in team activities and demonstrate that innovation thrives through collective contributions rather than isolated efforts.

Subtheme: Use Clear and Concise Instructions

Using clear and concise instructions enhances performance outcomes for neurodivergent employees by reducing ambiguity and minimizing cognitive overload. Empirical research demonstrates that straightforward communication improves understanding, particularly for employees with ASD or ADHD, who may encounter difficulties processing vague or multi-layered instructions. Huang et al. (2024) reported that structured communication increased task accuracy and reduced errors, whereas Silver et al. (2023) found that explicit directions improved engagement and confidence in task execution. Attribution theory provides explanatory value by highlighting the underlying behavioral mechanisms by showing that managers who interpret errors as stemming from unclear directions rather than employee deficits adjust their communication strategies to support productivity (Weiner, 1985). Acceptance of miscommunication triggers a shift in responsibility, reframing task success as a shared outcome between manager and employee rather than a reflection of individual limitation. As a result, managers implement practices such as step-by-step guidelines, written instructions, and structured feedback loops to support comprehension and performance (Austin & Pisano, 2021). For example, in technology work settings, task breakdowns delivered through visual workflow tools improve understanding and execution, while reducing the likelihood that underperformance is misattributed to personal incapacity. This approach reinforces accountability, supports skill development, and strengthens collaboration between employees and managers.

A total of 44% of participants reported they implemented clear and concise instructions to support them on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA stated, “We implemented what we considered a kind of program where we did standard procedures for all employee responsibilities and provide them with visual format, so they are clear and concise.” PB indicated, “Most of the employees we’ve hired have been autistic, at different levels and degrees from severe to mild. With this group, you have to assign very specific tasks, explain them, and let them carry them out without much oversight.” PH posited, “Supervisors are thought how to structure or segment work more efficiently, instead of giving everything all once, they break tasks into blocks with small, measurable outcomes.” PI mentioned that during training is important to provide clear instructions and that the understanding of the instructions must be confirmed.” These approaches demonstrate that providing clear and concise instructions enhances task comprehension, minimizes ambiguity, and supports consistent performance among neurodivergent employees. By attributing successful outcomes to structured guidance rather than individual limitations, managers apply Weiner’s attribution theory to create supportive environments that promote productivity, strengthen retention, and encourage innovation.

Concise communication enhances task accuracy while positively influencing employee attitudes and motivation by fostering confidence and reducing stress. Research indicates that neurodivergent employees frequently interpret vague or contradictory instructions as signals of exclusion, which can undermine engagement and diminish innovation potential. Ziemiański et al. (2023) found that employees receiving ambiguous

directions were more likely to experience frustration and decreased persistence, whereas Bury et al. (2024) observed that clear guidance increased focus and task completion rates. By providing direct and unambiguous instructions, managers create an environment in which employees attribute success to personal effort and capability within a supportive framework, while managers attribute improved outcomes to effective leadership strategies. This alignment engages behavioral mechanisms identified by attribution theory, such as enhanced perceived controllability, self-efficacy, and motivation, reinforcing the notion that performance can improve through effort and structured guidance (Weiner, 1991). Practical applications include standardized checklists, collaborative planning sessions, and confirmation techniques such as teach-back, where employees restate instructions to ensure comprehension. These practices not only enhance productivity but also foster inclusivity by recognizing and accommodating diverse communication needs within the team.

Subtheme: Do Not Overload with Tasks

Avoiding task overload enhances performance and well-being for neurodivergent employees by establishing workloads that are compatible with their cognitive and emotional capacities, which in turn supports retention and innovation. Empirical studies indicate that excessive multitasking and unrealistic workload expectations can increase stress, anxiety, and error rates, particularly for employees with ADHD or autism. Cook et al. (2021) found that high task volumes were associated with reduced focus and decreased task accuracy, while Silver et al. (2023) reported that workload imbalances contributed to lower engagement and higher turnover intentions among neurodivergent

staff. Attribution theory provides insight into the behavioral mechanisms underlying these outcomes, suggesting that managers who interpret reduced productivity as the result of situational demands rather than personal incapacity are more likely to adjust task assignments to support success (Weiner, 2018). When managers attribute performance challenges to workload imbalances, they implement strategies such as task prioritization, staggered deadlines, and distribution of responsibilities across team members. In healthcare organizations, for example, HR managers who reduced daily administrative tasks for neurodivergent staff observed higher retention rates, improved job satisfaction, and increased consistency in performance (Weber et al., 2024). Implementing task prioritization, staggered deadlines, responsibility distribution, and dedicated focus periods demonstrate that managing task volume not only alleviates cognitive and emotional strain but also fosters sustainable engagement, motivation, and innovative contributions in the workplace.

A total of 33% of the participants reported that to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation they could not overload them with tasks. PA articulated, “To an autistic employee, you have to give them instructions very clearly and not overload them with tasks.” PB stated, “You explain the goals and objectives of the role or project and let them work. Provide weekly check-ins, but daily micromanaging won’t work. You have to let them be that’s my experience.” PH posited, “With neurodivergent employees, we break it down into smaller results and goals as part of the larger plan.” These strategies reveal that avoiding task overload allows neurodivergent employees to focus effectively, sustain performance

levels, and build confidence in their roles. Through the lens of Weiner's attribution theory, managers attribute challenges to external and controllable factors, such as workload structure, rather than internal employee deficits, which fosters supportive work environments that enhance productivity, retention, and innovation.

Balancing workloads enhances employee attitudes by strengthening self-efficacy and motivation, as manageable task assignments reinforce perceptions of control and competence. Research indicates that neurodivergent employees who experience repeated task overload often internalize failures as stable and uncontrollable, which can lead to disengagement and reduced innovation (Szulc et al., 2021). In contrast, when managers provide realistic workloads and structured pacing, employees attribute their success to a combination of personal effort and available organizational support. This attributional alignment reflects the principles of attribution theory, emphasizing unstable and controllable causes of success, which fosters persistence, skill development, and professional growth (Weiner, 2018). Practical applications include using digital workload management tools to distribute tasks evenly, establishing dedicated time for uninterrupted work, and implementing job rotation to prevent monotony and reduce fatigue. Applying these strategies not only increases productivity but also cultivates a workplace culture of fairness and inclusion, where neurodivergent employees remain engaged, motivated, and able to contribute innovative ideas.

Theme 3: Communicate and Build Rapport

Effective communication with neurodivergent employees requires managers to intentionally adapt strategies that accommodate diverse processing and interaction styles.

Empirical research demonstrates that inclusive communication practices, such as using clear and direct language, providing visual support, and offering flexible communication channels, reduce misinterpretations and strengthen workplace relationships. Morris and Rohs (2021) found that employees who received meeting notes in advance and visual aids demonstrated improved comprehension and task completion. Hill (2025) and Alfes et al. (2021) reported flexible communication channels, such as written summaries of verbal instructions, increased engagement, and reduced anxiety for neurodivergent staff. Attribution theory describes the behavioral mechanisms underlying these outcomes by showing how managers' explanations of performance and employees' interpretations of managerial intent influence persistence and motivation (Weiner, 2018). When managers attribute communication difficulties to organizational processes rather than individual limitations, they are more likely to implement accessible communication strategies. Providing structured communication in these ways encourages employees to attribute success to controllable and external factors, thereby reinforcing confidence, persistence, and overall workplace engagement.

A total of 78% of the participants reported they implemented a strong communication system to build rapport to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA mentioned that talking to the whole team to create a healthy work culture based on communication, clear instructions, and standardization leads to productivity and efficiency within the company. PB and PC explained that it is important to listen to what neurodivergent employees have to say and provide feedback in order to establish effective communication. PD stated,

“What you can do to support your neurodivergent employees and what I really focus on is communication and engagement skills.” PE posited, “I maintain open communication to make reasonable accommodations that the company allows. They need to feel part of the team, listened to, and confident.” PG noted, “I have established dialogue and also adaptation methods. For example, I’ve asked what things affect them negatively or what aspects of work they are more drawn to, in order to make decisions.” Participant I mentioned that it is important to have open communication to provide neurodivergent employees with the tools they need to succeed in their work teams. These perspectives demonstrate that intentional communication strategies build trust, clarify expectations, and strengthen workplace relationships, which enhances the engagement and performance of neurodivergent employees. Applying Weiner’s (1972) attribution theory, managers attribute employee outcomes to controllable interpersonal and environmental factors, which encourage proactive support, foster a sense of belonging, and contribute to greater productivity, talent retention, and innovation.

Building rapport through consistent and empathetic interactions is essential for employee retention and well-being. Research demonstrates that managers who establish trust and prioritize rapport foster a sense of psychological safety, enabling neurodivergent employees to express challenges without fear of stigma. Ziemiański et al. (2023) found that regular supportive interactions increased engagement and reduced withdrawal among employees with ADHD, while Remington et al. (2021) reported that managers who acknowledged individual needs strengthened employee confidence and task persistence. Attribution theory posits the behavioral mechanisms by showing that supportive rapport

leads employees to interpret difficulties as situational rather than personal failures, reducing self-blame and enhancing motivation (Weiner, 2018). For example, a training manager who conducts scheduled check-ins, provides constructive feedback, and validates employee contributions demonstrates relational commitment, which encourages employees to remain engaged and motivated. Framing setbacks as opportunities for learning rather than indicators of inadequacy strengthens trust and allows neurodivergent employees to share unconventional problem-solving strategies, which contribute to innovation and provide organizations with unique competitive advantages.

Communication and rapport influence broader organizational culture by shaping the enactment of inclusion in daily practice. Empirical research demonstrates that transparent communication and relationship-centered leadership are associated with reduced turnover and increased innovation among neurodivergent employees. Austin and Pisano (2021) found that teams led with open, consistent communication showed higher engagement and task completion rates, whereas Lee et al. (2022) reported that managers who emphasized relationship-building facilitated collaborative problem-solving and innovation. Attribution theory describes the behavioral mechanisms underlying these outcomes by illustrating that employees are more motivated when managerial feedback is perceived as based on effort or environmental factors rather than fixed ability (Weiner, 2018). For example, managers who frame constructive feedback as guidance for developing specific skills, rather than as criticism of inherent traits, encourage employees to maintain motivation and improve their performance. Effective rapport also allows managers to recognize early indicators of stress or disengagement, enabling timely

interventions that prevent escalation. These proactive communication strategies enhance organizational resilience, ensuring that neurodivergent employees remain productive, committed, and supported while reinforcing inclusive workplace values.

Subtheme: Identify Each Person's Talents, Strengths, and Develop Them

Identifying and leveraging the talents of neurodivergent employees is an effective strategy for enhancing productivity, innovation, and engagement. Research indicates that neurodivergent employees often possess specialized skills, including pattern recognition, creativity, and innovative problem-solving, which are frequently underutilized when organizations rely solely on standardized performance expectations (López-Belmonte et al., 2021; Rampton et al., 2023). Attribution theory emphasizes the role of managerial interpretation in shaping employee development. When managers attribute strong performance to effort and controllable factors rather than innate ability, they are more likely to invest in nurturing strengths rather than focusing on deficits (Weiner, 2018). For example, a manager who identifies a neurodivergent employee's aptitude for data analysis may provide advanced analytics training to refine and expand this capability. Another example involves assigning employees with exceptional pattern recognition skills to quality assurance or design innovation teams, enabling them to contribute in ways that maximize both personal strengths and organizational outcomes (López-Belmonte et al., 2021). Providing advanced analytics training, assigning employees to quality assurance or innovation teams, and offering mentorship to refine specialized skills reinforces the attribution that success results from personal effort supported by

organizational resources, thereby strengthening motivation, engagement, and the consistent application of individual talents.

Reported by 56% of the participants, it is critical to identify each person's talents and strengths and develop them to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PB noted, "The key is identifying each person's talent and developing it." PD posited, "That's where you can really make a lot of difference in helping the neurodivergent person understand the best ways that they work and what their strengths are." PE conveyed, "The group notices each person's strengths complements one another. If we focus on everyone's unique abilities, the team becomes more powerful, and these employees really flourish." PF articulated, "The reality is that each employee with some kind of disability requires a focus on their strengths." PI stated,

By recognizing the strengths you see in that employee, using them on separate projects or incorporating them into projects where you know the person will be able to apply their expertise with ease. We should work on talents to strengthen them.

These insights highlight that recognizing and developing individual strengths enables managers to align tasks with employees' abilities, which enhances their confidence and overall contribution to the organization. Through the lens of Weiner's attribution theory, managers attribute success to internal and stable factors, such as personal talents, which promote positive expectations, encourage skill development, and strengthen both

individual and team performance, leading to increased productivity, talent retention, and innovation.

Developing employee strengths enhances both individual outcomes and organizational adaptability by aligning talent with strategic objectives. Research demonstrates that organizations implementing strengths-based approaches achieve higher retention and increased job satisfaction, particularly when employees perceive that their unique abilities are recognized and actively supported (Austin & Pisano, 2021; Szulc, 2024). Attribution theory describes behavioral mechanisms, showing that when employees perceive managers attributing success to deliberate skill development rather than inherent traits, they are more likely to remain committed, resilient, and engaged during workplace challenges (Weiner, 2018). For example, a training manager might create individualized professional development pathways, such as offering leadership workshops to employees with exceptional collaborative communication skills or assigning employees with analytical talents to strategic project teams to refine problem-solving expertise. Implementing targeted mentorship, structured skill-building exercises, and project-based learning opportunities positions employees to perceive challenges as opportunities for growth, reinforcing a positive attributional framework that reduces disengagement and turnover while fostering long-term organizational performance.

Deliberately cultivating employee strengths enhances innovation by integrating diverse perspectives into problem-solving processes. Empirical studies demonstrate that inclusive organizations that strategically develop neurodivergent talents achieve higher levels of creativity and more sustainable innovation outcomes (Botha & Frost, 2020;

Howes, 2023). Attribution theory provides understanding of the behavioral mechanisms underlying these effects by showing that when managers attribute creative contributions to intentional effort and organizational support, employees internalize a stronger sense of agency and perceive their work as meaningful (Weiner, 2018). For example, an HR manager may invite a neurodivergent employee with strong visual–spatial abilities to participate in design thinking workshops or assign employees with exceptional pattern recognition skills to innovation-focused project teams, where their insights directly inform product development strategies. Providing opportunities for skill-specific contributions reinforces the perception that employee efforts are both valued and controllable, which enhances motivation, fosters continuous innovation, and encourages sustained engagement. Strategically leveraging neurodivergent strengths in this way not only maximizes individual potential but also strengthens the organization’s competitive advantage by embedding inclusivity into its talent development and innovation framework.

Subtheme: Provide Freedom and Flexibility to Execute the Work

Providing freedom and flexibility in work execution is a critical strategy for enhancing productivity and engagement among neurodivergent employees. Empirical studies indicate that flexible arrangements, including adjustable work schedules, task modifications, and remote work options, reduce stress and improve overall performance for neurodivergent staff (Diener et al., 2020; Khorakian et al., 2024). Attribution theory describes the behavioral mechanisms by showing that when managers attribute employee outcomes to controllable factors, such as effort and task strategies, they are more likely to

grant autonomy in task execution (Weiner, 2018). For example, a manager who allows an employee with ADHD to schedule tasks during periods of peak focus or who permits a neurodivergent employee to select preferred methods for completing assignments demonstrates that productivity is viewed as resulting from effort rather than rigid structural constraints. Another example includes providing employees with the option to work remotely while maintaining core deliverables, which enables them to manage environmental distractions and optimize task performance (Khorakian et al., 2024). Granting such autonomy encourages employees to attribute success to effective task management and personal effort, reinforcing motivation, sustained engagement, and long-term organizational commitment.

A total of 44% of participants reported that providing freedom and flexibility to execute the work provided to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PB conveyed, “Give them space, and they will be highly effective.” PD articulated, “Or some people need flexibility, if they need a quiet space to work. Flexibility, letting someone work from home or you know, in a different part of the office or you know, whatever.” PE noted, “I also give clear instructions, create accessible materials, and offer flexibility in how tasks are completed.” PH stated, “The managers make sure the essential aspects are covered, but otherwise allow flexibility. That way, employees can work in different environments where they feel more creative. It’s been successful, adding value both, for them and for the organization.” These reports demonstrate that offering freedom and flexibility allows neurodivergent employees to select work conditions that align with their strengths and

needs, which enhances engagement, creativity, and performance. From Weiner's (1972) attribution theory perspective, when managers attribute successful outcomes to controllable and stable factors, such as supportive work structures and adaptive environments, they reinforce positive employee attitudes and behaviors, which foster higher productivity, retention, and innovation across teams.

Providing flexibility in work execution significantly enhances employee retention and job satisfaction by aligning task demands with individual strengths and needs. Empirical research demonstrates that organizations implementing autonomy and flexible practices experience lower turnover and higher engagement, particularly among employees with diverse cognitive profiles (Boyd et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2025). Attribution theory posits the behavioral mechanisms, showing that when employees perceive managers attributing workplace success to adaptable strategies rather than fixed abilities, they view their contributions as meaningful and controllable (Weiner, 2018). For example, a training manager who allows a neurodivergent employee to implement alternative workflows, such as breaking tasks into smaller steps or using assistive technology, reinforces the perception that success results from effort and strategic task management. Another example includes granting employees the option to adjust deadlines or sequence tasks according to individual focus patterns, which further supports engagement and sustained motivation (Nasir et al., 2022). By providing such autonomy, managers create an environment where employees feel empowered to leverage their strengths, reducing disengagement and promoting long-term commitment to the organization.

Freedom and flexibility further enhance innovation by enabling neurodivergent employees to approach problems using diverse methods and perspectives. Research indicates that flexible work structures encourage creative problem-solving and generate innovative outcomes, as employees feel empowered to explore solutions beyond standardized procedures (Botha & Frost, 2020; Hill, 2025). Attribution theory describes the behavioral mechanisms, showing that when managers attribute innovative outcomes to proactive effort and adaptable strategies, employees internalize a stronger sense of agency and perceive their contributions as influential within the organization (Weiner, 2018). For example, an HR manager who allows a neurodivergent employee with strong visual-spatial reasoning to independently experiment with design prototypes demonstrates that autonomy leads to tangible organizational innovations. Another example involves permitting employees to pilot alternative workflows in project teams, which generates novel approaches while reinforcing employee ownership of outcomes (Botha & Frost, 2020). These strategies foster a positive cycle of attributions, where employees recognize that their creative problem-solving directly contributes to organizational success, strengthening retention, engagement, and competitive advantage.

Theme 4: Change Culture

Changing organizational culture to embrace neurodiversity requires a systemic transformation that addresses leadership attitudes, structural inclusivity, and collective accountability. Research demonstrates that organizations cultivating inclusive cultures experience higher retention, engagement, and innovation because employees feel respected, supported, and empowered to contribute to their unique abilities (Shore et al.,

2018). Attribution theory describes how shifts in causal attributions can drive this cultural transformation. When managers attribute neurodivergent employees' challenges to external and controllable factors such as workplace design or communication barriers rather than personal deficits, they are more likely to pursue structural and procedural reforms that foster inclusion. For example, a manager recognizing that a neurodivergent employee struggles in a noisy open office might attribute the issue to environmental distractions and advocate for quiet zones or hybrid work models, demonstrating a commitment to equitable conditions. Similarly, an HR director who notices communication breakdowns during team meetings may introduce alternative feedback channels or visual aids, ensuring that diverse cognitive styles are accommodated. These actions reflect an attributional orientation that prioritizes systemic solutions over individual blame, reinforcing empathy, fairness, and organizational learning. By institutionalizing such attribute awareness, organizations cultivate cultures where neurodiversity is seen as an asset rather than a challenge, promoting collective accountability and sustained innovation.

According to 33% of the participants, a change in the organizational culture is vital to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention and innovation. PA explained that "if the organization has an old culture, you adapt to it, make friends with it, and then slowly start to implement your training, or work design strategy." PB mentioned that the integration of neurodivergent employees often depends on the organization's culture; some look at them strangely, and others are 100% supportive. PD explained that a cultural shift to integrate neurodivergent

employees is never simple and always requires a bigger mindset shift. These perceptions emphasize that transforming organizational culture creates an inclusive environment where neurodivergent employees can thrive, which in turn enhances overall team performance and innovation. Applying Weiner's (1972) attribution theory, when managers attribute successful integration to internal and controllable factors such as leadership commitment and cultural adaptation, they shape both their own behaviors and employee attitudes toward greater acceptance, support, and sustained productivity.

Cultural change also requires confronting and correcting biases that constrain the full participation of neurodivergent employees in the workplace. Research indicates that persistent stigma and limited awareness often lead to underemployment, exclusion, and inequitable evaluation of neurodivergent talent (Johnson & Joshi, 2025; Santuzzi et al., 2022). Attribution theory provides a useful framework for understanding how biased attributions reinforce these inequities. When managers attribute employee behaviors to internal and unchangeable traits such as laziness, lack of motivation, or incompetence, they inadvertently sustain stereotypes that hinder professional growth. In contrast, managers who adopt situational and effort-based attributions recognize that performance outcomes are shaped by contextual factors and individual strategies. For example, instead of viewing an autistic employee's limited eye contact as a sign of disengagement, an informed manager interprets it as a communication difference that does not reflect a lack of ability or interest. Similarly, when a neurodivergent employee requests written instructions instead of verbal ones, a manager who attributes this preference to a need for clarity and focus fosters understanding rather than bias. Such attributional reframing

promotes fairness, inclusion, and psychological safety, allowing employees to demonstrate competence authentically. By embedding this awareness into managerial training and evaluation systems, organizations foster a culture that values differences as a source of strength and innovation, rather than a barrier to success.

Embedding inclusion within organizational culture depends on leadership commitment, consistent modeling of inclusive behavior, and ongoing learning. Research shows that leaders who actively promote equity and demonstrate inclusive practices create ripple effects that reduce bias and strengthen belonging across teams (Gottardello et al., 2025). According to attribution theory, a leader's interpretations of performance outcomes directly influence cultural norms and employee perceptions. When leaders attribute success to the intentional efforts and diverse contributions of neurodivergent employees, they reinforce the belief that inclusion enhances rather than complicates organizational performance. For example, when a senior manager publicly recognizes that a neurodivergent employee's analytical precision led to identifying a cost-saving process improvement, it communicates that unique cognitive strengths are vital to the company's success. Similarly, a department head who attributes an innovative marketing strategy to the creative thinking of an employee with ADHD frames neurodiversity as a strategic asset rather than an exception requiring accommodation. These leadership examples, such as publicly recognizing a neurodivergent employee's analytical precision that improved operational efficiency and crediting an ADHD employee's creative thinking for driving marketing innovation, demonstrate how modeling inclusive attributions shifts organizational narratives from mere tolerance to genuine appreciation,

embedding inclusion as an integral part of the organization's cultural identity and long-term sustainability.

Subtheme: Address Resistance to Change

Resistance to cultural change often arises from uncertainty, entrenched biases, and concerns about disruption to established workplace routines, particularly when organizations implement neurodiversity initiatives. Research indicates that resistance is more likely when managers and employees attribute performance or collaboration challenges to internal and unchangeable traits of neurodivergent colleagues rather than to external and controllable factors (Shore et al., 2018). Attribution theory describes that when managers interpret difficulties as stable deficits within neurodivergent employees, they unintentionally reinforce resistance by framing inclusion as burdensome rather than advantageous. For instance, if a manager views slower processing speed as an inherent limitation rather than a situation that can be addressed through extended timelines or task restructuring, coworkers may adopt similar negative interpretations, which increases reluctance to embrace change. In contrast, when managers reframe challenges as resulting from external and controllable factors such as mismatched communication methods, inadequate workflow design, or lack of training on inclusive practices, they reduce resistance and encourage engagement with inclusive strategies. These reframing shifts, from viewing neurodivergent traits as fixed deficiencies to recognizing organizational and procedural responsibilities, promote acceptance of change and help normalize the integration of neurodiversity into workplace culture.

Forty-four percent of the participants reported that addressing resistance to change will increase the support to neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention and innovation. PA stated, “Resistance to change is the first hurdle. Resistance is going to exist at the management level, the line level and the employee level.” PB articulated, “But honestly, all individual is different, you can provide all the tools, but if someone isn’t willing to change their mindset and accept others, rejection will happen.” PD noted, “You need to work within the norms and the culture and the behaviors of that organization to address resistance to change.” PE stated, “Management can resist changes to meet individual needs.” These perspectives illustrate that proactively addressing resistance to change fosters an environment where inclusion becomes a shared responsibility, ultimately enhancing productivity and retention. Through the lens of Weiner’s attribution theory, when managers attribute resistance to controllable organizational factors rather than fixed employee traits, they adopt more adaptive strategies that influence employee attitudes toward openness, collaboration, and long-term engagement.

Reducing resistance to cultural change requires proactive strategies that influence how managers and employees interpret the causes of performance and collaboration outcomes through education, dialogue, and modeling inclusive behaviors. Research demonstrates that structured awareness programs and transparent leadership practices significantly decrease resistance to diversity initiatives by clarifying the tangible benefits of inclusion (Gottardello et al., 2025). Attribution theory posits that when managers attribute positive outcomes such as increased innovation, higher retention, or improved

team performance to inclusive practices, they establish causal linkages that legitimize change and counter opposition. For example, when a leader explicitly links a successful product redesign to the distinctive perspective of an autistic employee, the team begins to associate neurodiversity with creativity, effort, and organizational advantage. Similarly, a department manager who attributes improved client satisfaction to collaborative input from neurodivergent employees reinforces the value of inclusive participation.

Neurodivergent employees respond positively by demonstrating greater motivation and self-efficacy when their contributions are recognized rather than stigmatized. Shifts in attributions from viewing neurodivergent employees' challenges as fixed personal deficits to recognizing them as the result of external, controllable factors, along with attributing positive outcomes to effort and inclusive practices, foster a cultural mindset over time in which resistance diminishes, and inclusion becomes an integral, shared organizational norm.

Subtheme: Increase Organizational Knowledge and Awareness

Increasing organizational knowledge and awareness about neurodiversity directly reduces misattributions that often impede inclusion efforts. Research indicates that employees and managers frequently attribute challenges faced by neurodivergent individuals to internal and stable limitations rather than to external conditions such as workplace design, communication methods, or task structure (Botha & Frost, 2020). Attribution theory describes that these internal attributions reinforce stigma and create perceptions of low capability, which can discourage neurodivergent employees from fully engaging in their roles. Expanding organizational knowledge through targeted training

programs, interactive workshops, and inclusive leadership development shifts causal attributions toward external and controllable factors. For example, when managers understand that difficulties in task execution may result from complex instructions or unclear workflow rather than an employee's inherent ability, they are more likely to modify instructions and reorganize tasks to support success. Similarly, leadership participation in neurodiversity seminars that highlight environmental and procedural adjustments reinforces the importance of structural solutions over personal deficits. Knowledge-building efforts reduce bias, increase managerial responsiveness, and enhance neurodivergent employees' motivation and engagement by demonstrating organizational commitment to fairness, understanding, and effective support..

A total of 89% of the participants indicated that increasing organizational knowledge and awareness is vital to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PB stated, "Employer's aren't always prepared for this. We need to be open-minded and create opportunities to develop these talents." PC reported, "One of the biggest challenges is that staff doesn't get it." PD noted, "Create a better understanding for the people and the neurodivergent person feels more understood." PE conveyed, "The biggest challenge is organizational awareness, many people don't recognize neurodiversity, so they don't develop specialized trainings." PF reported,

The biggest challenge we usually face is the lack of awareness among other employees about how to work with coworkers who have neurodivergence or

disabilities, how to address them, how to share space with someone who may have difficulty completing task, and how to be more open about this topic.

PG articulated, “Organizations are not well prepared or very interested in establishing strategies for these employees. They often take the easy way out with the administrative transfers, which may not always be the best solution.” PH posited, “I’d say the biggest challenge is the lack of knowledge among supervisors and leaders, me included, about how to work with them.” PI mentioned, “The big problem in all organizations is that not all leaders have the same tools. The particular sensitivity, the immediate perception that something is different in the environment, does not operate the same way for everyone.” These perspectives highlight that increasing organizational knowledge and awareness establishes a foundation for inclusive practices that enhance productivity, talent retention, and innovation. From the standpoint of Weiner’s (1972) attribution theory, when managers attribute performance differences to external and controllable factors such as organizational preparedness rather than internal and fixed traits of neurodivergent employees, they adopt constructive strategies that shape more supportive attitudes and behaviors, ultimately fostering a culture of understanding and shared responsibility.

Knowledge-building initiatives further strengthen organizational culture by aligning attributions with positive outcomes and reinforcing shared responsibility. Research demonstrates that training programs highlighting the strengths and contributions of neurodivergent employees improve collective efficacy and team cohesion (Austin & Pisano, 2021; Santuzzi et al., 2022). According to attribution theory, when managers and colleagues interpret successful outcomes as resulting from the effort,

creativity, and strategies of neurodivergent employees rather than innate traits, they reinforce the perception that inclusion is both controllable and advantageous. For example, if an autistic employee implements a novel problem-solving approach and management attributes this success to the employee's unique cognitive style and application of effort, the team begins to view neurodiversity as a driver of organizational growth. Similarly, when a neurodivergent employee improves workflow efficiency through a tailored process and leadership attributes the outcome to the employee's initiative and strategy, colleagues recognize the value of supporting diverse talents. These attributional shifts encourage neurodivergent employees to proactively contribute ideas, volunteer for challenging projects, and seek leadership opportunities, knowing their efforts will be acknowledged. Expanding organizational knowledge, therefore, not only dismantles stereotypes but also reshapes attributional processes to sustain inclusive practices that drive innovation, engagement, and long-term cultural transformation.

Subtheme: Champion Inclusion Culture

Championing an inclusion culture requires leadership that intentionally guides attributional interpretations to emphasize employee capability, potential, and organizational responsibility at all levels. Research indicates that managers and colleagues frequently attribute workplace difficulties of neurodivergent employees to stable and internal causes, such as fixed ability or lack of motivation, which can result in exclusionary practices and lowered expectations (Botha & Frost, 2020). Attribution theory describes that when leaders promote a perspective in which challenges are viewed as arising from external and controllable factors, such as insufficient workplace

accommodations or unclear communication, the attributional shift moves from internal, stable causes to external, unstable, and controllable causes. For example, when managers endorse flexible scheduling or implement alternative communication tools, they signal that task challenges can be addressed through structural adjustments rather than as limitations of the employee. Similarly, leadership participation in inclusion workshops that highlight environmental and procedural modifications reinforces attributions that link employee success to effort, strategy, and supportive contexts. The shifts from attributing performance difficulties to internal, stable causes such as fixed ability or lack of motivation, to attributing challenges to external, unstable, and controllable factors such as insufficient accommodations, unclear communication, and modifiable workflow processes, reduce stigma and encourage neurodivergent employees to engage more fully, pursue creative problem-solving, and contribute to innovation because organizational barriers are recognized as modifiable rather than inherent to the individual.

Most of the participants, 56%, reported that having a champion inclusion culture is important to support to neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention and innovation. PA stated, “Now neurodivergence goes beyond, because we’re talking about creating a collaborative work culture.” PB noted, “We offer workshops and tools for integration.” PD conveyed, “I give them the tools and skills and a bit of the mindset shift, but it really does come down ultimately to the manager or the people leader of that team.” PE articulated, “My experience showed me how critical it is to train supervisors and managers to look beyond surface issues and develop inclusive practices.” PG stated, “I think that we should offer more workshops for

supervisors and coworkers so they can better understand employees who may not openly disclose their conditions.” These perspectives emphasize that championing an inclusion culture requires intentional leadership and structured initiatives that normalize neurodiversity as part of the organizational fabric. Applying Weiner’s attribution theory, when managers attribute employee performance variations to contextual and controllable factors, such as leadership practices and organizational culture, rather than internal deficits, they adopt inclusive behaviors that strengthen team cohesion, support neurodivergent employees’ contributions, and enhance organizational productivity, talent retention, and innovation.

Inclusion culture strengthens when organizations explicitly attribute success to the efforts and abilities of neurodivergent employees, rather than to chance or external factors, reinforcing the value of their contributions. Research demonstrates that workplaces with leaders who actively champion inclusive practices report higher job satisfaction, stronger retention, and greater innovation among neurodivergent employees (Remington et al., 2021; Ru & Jamil, 2024). Attribution theory posits that when managers emphasize outcomes as the product of effort, skill, and strategic application, the team shifts from attributing performance to random or uncontrollable causes toward controllable and effort-based factors. For example, if an employee with ADHD develops a new workflow strategy that improves efficiency, public recognition of this achievement because of the employee’s unique cognitive abilities reinforces attributions that link success to individual effort and organizational support. The change from attributing employee performance to internal, stable limitations toward recognizing achievements as

the result of individual effort, strategic application, and organizational support encourages neurodivergent employees to engage proactively, offer innovative solutions, and collaborate more effectively. Championing inclusion culture through acknowledgment of effort-based and controllable contributions aligns attributional processes with long-term organizational equity, cohesion, and sustained innovation. The shift from attributing employee performance to internal, stable limitations toward recognizing achievements as the result of individual effort, strategic application, and organizational support encourages neurodivergent employees to engage proactively, offer innovative solutions, and collaborate more effectively. Championing inclusion culture through acknowledgment of effort-based and controllable contributions aligns attributional processes with long-term organizational equity, cohesion, and sustained innovation.

Theme 5: Measure Effectiveness of Strategy

Measuring the effectiveness of strategies to support neurodivergent employees strengthens accountability and enables adaptive improvements within organizations. Research indicates that structured evaluation prevents managers from attributing performance gaps or retention challenges to inherent employee deficits, which often reinforces stigma (Austin & Pisano, 2021; Botha & Frost, 2020). According to attribution theory, when managers base assessments on objective evidence, they can distinguish whether outcomes are driven by organizational practices or employee effort and capability. For example, organizations that systematically gather feedback on workplace accommodations can determine whether difficulties arise from insufficient resources or

poorly aligned supports rather than limitations of the employee. By interpreting performance outcomes through rigorous evaluation, managers shift attributions from stable, internal traits to external and controllable factors, promoting fairness in judgments and encouraging neurodivergent employees to approach tasks with confidence and engagement.

Reliable measurement also enhances organizational learning by connecting neurodivergent employee experiences to broader goals in culture, retention, and innovation. Studies indicate that organizations using systematic assessment tools, such as regular employee surveys and performance evaluations, achieve stronger alignment between inclusion strategies and measurable outcomes (Remington et al., 2021; Ru & Jamil, 2024). Attribution theory emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between controllable and uncontrollable factors when interpreting these results. For example, if turnover remains high despite implemented accommodations, managers who evaluate strategy effectiveness can attribute the outcome to gaps in training programs or cultural integration rather than to inherent limitations of the employee. Neurodivergent employees who recognize that evaluation processes are evidence-based and equitable are more likely to sustain motivation, take responsibility for their work, and engage in innovative problem-solving, as they perceive the organization values accountability and transparency.

A total of 89% of the participants measure effectiveness of strategies to support to neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention and innovation. PA mentioned that effectiveness of a strategy by measuring the current

state versus the final state. PB stated that the organization does not have a formal system to measure effectiveness, but it can be seen in the results. PC stated “We have a program. It is run by the company.” PD mentioned that she measures effectiveness as part of her program. PE conveyed, “We measure effectiveness in three forms.” PF mentioned three ways to measure effectiveness. PG indicated that they have many ways to measure the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. PH also established the use of measurement techniques to determine effectiveness of the implemented strategies. These insights highlight that while measurement approaches vary across organizations, assessing the effectiveness of strategies is critical for ensuring continuous improvement and accountability. By systematically evaluating outcomes, whether through formal programs, performance indicators, or observed results, organizations can identify gaps, refine initiatives, and sustain practices that enhance productivity, talent retention, and innovation for neurodivergent employees.

Evaluating strategy effectiveness maintains long-term inclusion initiatives by promoting ongoing improvement and reinforcing constructive attribution patterns. Research demonstrates that managers who consistently track key performance indicators (KPIs) and gather qualitative feedback show commitment to refining policies, which communicates to employees that successful outcomes arise from the combined effort of the organization and the individual (Giamos et al., 2023). Attribution theory posits that when managers interpret gains in productivity or engagement as the result of collaborative strategies rather than individual traits, employees develop a stronger belief in the impact of their contributions on organizational outcomes. For example, when

performance metrics indicate increased innovation following flexible training programs, managers who publicly link these improvements to employee initiative and organizational support reinforce motivation and loyalty among neurodivergent staff. Systematically evaluating outcomes in this way strengthens proactive behaviors, promotes knowledge sharing, and supports retention by emphasizing that success is a product of shared responsibility rather than isolated performance.

Subtheme: Administer Surveys or Questionnaires

Administering surveys and questionnaires allows organizations to systematically assess the experiences and outcomes of neurodivergent employees, ensuring that inclusion strategies are effective and evidence-based. Research demonstrates that feedback mechanisms, such as structured surveys on workplace accommodations, job satisfaction, and training effectiveness, help identify whether performance challenges stem from organizational practices rather than individual limitations (Remington et al., 2021; Ru & Jamil, 2024). Attribution theory provides a framework to clarify that in the absence of such formal feedback, managers may incorrectly attribute difficulties to fixed personal traits, reinforcing stigma and reducing constructive interventions (Weiner, 2018). For example, technology firms that collected employee feedback on workspace design discovered that errors and delays were largely caused by unclear instructions rather than employee capability, leading managers to revise communication protocols (Remington et al., 2021). In service organizations, questionnaires revealed misalignments between training delivery and learning preferences, prompting the introduction of individualized coaching and adaptive learning strategies (Ru & Jamil, 2024). Structured

surveys on job satisfaction, accommodation effectiveness, and training alignment enable managers to attribute outcomes to controllable and external factors, reinforcing perceptions among neurodivergent employees that success results from a combination of personal effort and organizational support. The assessments mentioned strengthen engagement, motivation, and sustained workplace participation by demonstrating that organizational practices actively respond to employee needs.

Forty-four percent of the participants mentioned they measure effectiveness by administering surveys or questionnaires to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PD mentioned that she conducts surveys to determine the effectiveness of the strategies implemented, trainings and tools provided. PE stated, “We use feedback surveys and observe participation.” PF noted, “We have a questionnaire directed at the employee’s supervisor.” PG articulated, “We evaluate through communication with the supervisor of the new area. We also interview the employee to see how they feel.” These responses emphasize that surveys and questionnaires serve as valuable tools for gathering feedback from both employees and supervisors, enabling organizations to assess the impact of their initiatives. By systematically collecting and analyzing this input, organizations can identify strengths, address areas for improvement, and ensure that support strategies effectively foster productivity, retention, and innovation among neurodivergent employees.

Surveys and questionnaires provide concrete evidence linking specific organizational strategies to measurable outcomes, enhancing transparency and

accountability. Research indicates that using structured instruments to assess engagement, accommodation effectiveness, and training alignment improves retention and participation among employees with diverse cognitive profiles, as managers can identify which interventions produce meaningful results over time (Giamos et al., 2023). According to attribution theory, when managers evaluate outcomes through these data, they distinguish between controllable organizational factors, such as communication clarity or workflow design, and external factors, such as limited industry resources. For neurodivergent employees, knowing that feedback directly informs policy reinforces trust and motivation because they perceive that their contributions influence organizational decisions. For example, when survey results show increased satisfaction after implementing flexible workstations or providing visual workflow supports, managers attribute the improvement to organizational adaptations rather than individual effort alone. This practice reinforces employees' proactive behaviors, strengthens engagement, and supports long-term retention and innovation by demonstrating that organizational responses are responsive and effective.

Subtheme: Monitor KPIs

Practical application of KPI monitoring reinforces its role in supporting neurodivergent employees and enhancing organizational effectiveness. For example, in technology firms, managers who track metrics such as project completion times, error rates, and idea submission frequency can determine whether flexible work arrangements or targeted training improve performance outcomes (Vuong & Nguyen, 2022). Similarly, monitoring retention rates and patient service quality among neurodivergent staff helps

managers attribute improvements to workload adjustments and supportive supervision rather than individual ability alone (Griep et al., 2025). These evidence-based assessments create attributional clarity, allowing employees to perceive that their efforts matter within an adaptive organizational system. As a result, neurodivergent employees demonstrate higher engagement, motivation, and innovation, while the organization benefits from informed decision-making and sustained inclusion practices.

A total of 67% of participants reported monitoring KPIs to measure the effectiveness of the strategies implemented to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PA explained that they use KPIs like the current state of a process before the implementation of the strategy versus the state after the implementation of the strategy. PB explained that they do not have a formal method to measure effectiveness, but they see it in the company and employee results toward a specific project where the strategies were implemented. PC mentioned that they use an assessment in which the individual must score 85% or higher to establish effectiveness. PE stated, “We also look at metrics like turnover, if fewer people leave, our strategies are working. These indicators guide our future approach.” PF indicated, “It includes small metrics that show how effective the employee has been, how effective the accommodations have been.” PH conveyed, “We measure through the KPIs in our work plans.” These perceptions highlight that monitoring KPIs provides organizations with tangible, data-driven evidence of the impact of their strategies. By comparing performance indicators before and after implementation, organizations can assess progress, identify successful practices, and make informed adjustments to enhance

support for neurodivergent employees, ultimately driving productivity, retention, and innovation.

Practical applications of KPI tracking demonstrate its effectiveness in reinforcing attributional clarity and supporting neurodivergent employees. For instance, in corporate settings, managers who monitor task completion rates, collaboration metrics, and error reduction after introducing visual workflow tools can directly link improvements to organizational adaptations rather than employee limitations (Waisman-Nitzan et al., 2021). Similarly, in educational institutions, tracking participation in professional development and the application of newly learned skills allows managers to attribute performance gains to tailored training programs instead of innate ability (García-Morales et al., 2018). Tracking task completion rates, collaboration metrics, error reduction, participation in professional development, and application of newly learned skills strengthens employee perceptions that success is achievable through personal effort supported by organizational resources such as visual workflow tools, flexible training modules, and structured feedback systems. This targeted monitoring fosters sustained engagement, motivation, and innovation while reinforcing a culture of accountability and inclusive practice.

Monitoring KPIs further enhances long-term organizational learning by identifying trends that guide the continuous refinement of inclusion strategies. Research shows that organizations using data-driven KPI monitoring gain insights into how accommodations and workplace practices impact productivity, collaboration, and cultural integration for neurodivergent employees (Howes, 2023). Attribution theory provides a

framework for understanding why ongoing measurement reduces the tendency for managers to attribute successes or setbacks to individual limitations and instead highlights systemic enablers and barriers. Employees perceive that their contributions are recognized within an adaptive organizational framework, which strengthens engagement and confidence. For example, tracking KPIs related to team collaboration, task completion, and innovation allows managers to attribute performance improvements to specific communication strategies, workflow adjustments, or supportive accommodations rather than personal traits. A reciprocal attribution cycle reinforces trust, encourages proactive participation, and promotes sustained productivity, retention, and innovation.

Subtheme: Review Performance Evaluations

Reviewing performance evaluations systematically ensures that feedback and outcomes reflect both individual effort and the effectiveness of organizational support for neurodivergent employees. Research demonstrates that organizations that integrate structured performance evaluations with inclusive criteria experience improved employee engagement, retention, and innovation outcomes (Remington et al., 2021; Ru & Jamil, 2024). Attribution theory posits that when evaluations focus solely on perceived deficits, managers and employees may miss attributing challenges to internal, stable characteristics, reinforcing negative stereotypes. Conversely, evaluating performance considering accommodations, training, and task adjustments allows managers to attribute outcomes to controllable factors, such as organizational support and strategy implementation. For example, if a neurodivergent employee exceeds project goals following individualized coaching and flexible task management, managers can

recognize these interventions as drivers of success. Systematic review of performance evaluations in this way strengthens employees' belief that achievement results from effort coupled with supportive organizational structures, fostering motivation, engagement, and innovative contributions while embedding accountability and fairness into organizational practices.

From the participants, 44% indicated that reviewing performance evaluations measures the effectiveness of the implemented strategies to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention, and innovation. PD explained that conducting performance reviews through regular check-ins to confirm improvements is the best way to measure the effectiveness of the support strategies. PE stated, "We compare current performance to previous benchmarks, tasks someone couldn't perform before, and they can do now." PF articulated, "assess how the employee performs without accommodations and, if needed, how they improve with accommodations or adjustments in the work environment." PG noted, "We evaluate through communication with the supervisor of the new area. They let us know whether the employee adapted or if the same problems reappeared." These standpoints emphasize that performance evaluations serve as a critical tool for assessing the real-world impact of support strategies. By tracking progress against previous benchmarks and observing improvements with or without accommodations, organizations can identify areas of growth, refine interventions, and ensure that neurodivergent employees are set up for sustained success.

Constructive performance evaluations also reinforce innovation and engagement by linking employee growth to organizational strategies rather than innate ability. Research shows that when evaluations highlight skill development, adaptive strategies, and effective use of accommodations, neurodivergent employees demonstrate higher motivation, creativity, and willingness to contribute ideas (Khorakian et al., 2024; Waisman-Nitzan et al., 2021). Attribution theory Weiner's (1972) describes framing performance improvements as outcomes of controllable factors, such as targeted training or environmental adjustments, strengthens employees' perception that effort and organizational support drive success. For example, when a manager documents progress in task completion following individualized coaching and acknowledges these interventions as instrumental to achievement, employees internalize the view that outcomes are shaped by effort within a supportive system. Reviewing performance evaluations in this manner fosters a cycle of positive attributions, enhancing engagement, retention, and innovative contributions while reinforcing fairness and accountability in organizational practices.

Inclusive performance evaluations further reinforce organizational accountability by linking employee contributions to measurable outcomes in inclusivity and innovation. Research demonstrates that organizations using structured evaluation frameworks can track how neurodivergent employees enhance team problem-solving and creativity (Guastella et al., 2025; Rampton et al., 2023). According to attribution theory, when managers systematically interpret evaluation results, they are more likely to attribute improved performance and innovative outputs to intentional organizational strategies—

such as mentorship programs, flexible workflows, and skill-based task assignments—rather than to isolated employee traits. For example, if an evaluation reveals that a neurodivergent employee’s innovative approach improved project efficiency, managers can recognize the impact of supportive processes rather than attributing success solely to innate ability. This evidence-based interpretation fosters employee perceptions that their contributions are valued and supported, which strengthens engagement, commitment, and proactive participation. When linked with KPIs, performance evaluations create a comprehensive system of accountability that integrates inclusivity with strategic organizational goals, sustaining both innovation and equitable workplace practices.

Business Contributions and Recommendations for Professional Practice

Implementing targeted, evidence-based strategies to support neurodivergent employees can significantly enhance organizational productivity, innovation, and talent retention while establishing a model of professional practice for the broader business industry. Research underscores personalized work structures, such as the use of pictorial instructions, task segmentation, and structured checklists tailored to individual strengths, improve task accuracy, efficiency, and overall performance, especially for employees with autism and ADHD (Albright et al., 2020; Silver et al., 2023). Modular training programs that adapt to different learning styles, combined with strengths-based coaching and neuroinclusive practices, have been shown to increase engagement and autonomy among neurodivergent employees (Román-Urrestarazu et al., 2021; Vargas-Salas et al., 2025). Business leaders can further enhance outcomes by matching tasks to employees’ unique abilities, environmental preferences, and sensory needs through job carving

techniques and task rotation. These approaches not only create best-fit roles but also lead to reductions in turnover and improvements in employee well-being and organizational performance (Austin & Pisano, 2021; Doyle & McDowall, 2022).

Equally critical to the successful implementation of these strategies is the cultivation of psychologically safe, structured, and stigma-free work environments where neurodivergent employees can thrive. A psychologically safe workplace provides predictable routines, low-pressure conditions, and an inclusive culture that fosters creativity and sustained performance (Botha & Frost, 2020; Romualdez et al., 2021). Inclusive communication practices, such as providing clear, consistent instructions, using multimodal formats, and actively listening, have been shown to support comprehension and task execution, whereas phased change models that involve neurodivergent employees in the design and rollout of workplace adaptations help reduce resistance and enhance acceptance across organizational levels (W. Lauder et al., 2022; Vincent, 2019). When organizations integrate this communication and change management strategies, they not only strengthen employees' sense of belonging and self-efficacy but also create scalable models for sustainable inclusion that can be replicated in different sectors.

Finally, leveraging external support systems further strengthens workplace neuroinclusion initiatives. Collaboration with family members and specialized social workers provides critical insights into employees' abilities, sensory preferences, and personal support needs, enabling the development of tailored schedules, work tasks, and accommodations that enhance job retention and integration (Ghanouni & Raphael, 2022). These collaborative approaches complement internal strategies by ensuring that

workplace adaptations reflect the employee's broader support ecosystem. Collectively, the integration of personalized work structures, inclusive communication, psychological safety, and family and community involvement align with contemporary research advocating for individualized, strengths-based, and systemic approaches to neuroinclusion in the workplace. By embedding these practices into organizational policies and daily operations, businesses can unlock the unique potential of neurodivergent talent while setting a replicable standard for inclusive and innovative professional practice across industries (Vargas-Salas et al., 2025).

Implications for Social Change

Supporting neurodivergent employees through individualized development plans and inclusive task design enhances their confidence, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. De Clercq et al. (2018) found that employees whose unique skills and preferences were acknowledged experienced higher self-efficacy and motivation, which contributed to improved performance. Valuing employees' individual attributes and preferences has a positive impact on their confidence, drive, and ultimately, their work performance. Botha and Frost (2020) also showed that inclusive environments that reduce workplace anxiety and burnout promoted mental health stability and long-term retention. These findings indicate that when workplaces implement structured support and recognize individual needs, neurodivergent employees are better able to engage, persist, and perform effectively. Therefore, individualized workplace strategies not only foster personal growth but also create the foundation for sustainable organizational success.

Inclusive practices at the community level enhance team collaboration, communication, and empathy by exposing employees to diverse cognitive approaches. Santuzzi et al. (2022) found that organizations that invested in retaining neurodivergent talent reduced local underemployment and strengthened economic resilience. These results suggest that inclusion at the community level not only improves team functioning but also generates broader social and economic benefits. Consequently, by fostering collaborative environments, organizations can promote sustainable change that extends beyond individual employees to the wider workforce and community.

At the societal level, embracing neurodiversity promotes a shift from deficit-based to strengths-based frameworks, influencing policy and cultural norms. Tomas et al. (2023) demonstrated that inclusive workplace systems enhance productivity and innovation by unlocking the potential of historically marginalized groups. This evidence highlights that systemic adoption of neuroinclusive practices generates benefits that transcend individual and organizational outcomes. As a result, fostering workplace inclusion contributes to societal equity, economic participation, and sustainable growth, reinforcing the importance of embedding neurodiversity at all levels of employment and policy-making.

Recommendations for Future Study

Future researchers should aim to assess the sustainability and long-term outcomes of neuroinclusive strategies beyond initial adaptation phases. A longitudinal design would enable researchers to examine how neuroinclusive training programs influence job performance, retention, and employee well-being over extended periods. Such

researchers could also identify which interventions most effectively change managerial attitudes toward neurodivergent employees and how these shifts are sustained over time. Moreover, cross-national researchers could explore how cultural norms, workplace practices, and legal frameworks shape inclusion policies and behaviors across industries. By situating neuroinclusion within global and multicultural contexts, researchers can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how systemic and cultural factors affect the implementation and sustainability of inclusive practices.

To deepen theoretical understanding, future researchers may integrate diverse frameworks such as social cognitive theory (SCT), theory of planned behavior (TPB), and institutional theory. SCT emphasizes observational learning, self-efficacy, and reciprocal determinism in the interplay between behavior, personal factors, and environment, making it suitable for studying how neurodivergent employees internalize inclusive training and translate it into sustained behavioral changes (Bandura, 1986). Similarly, TPB offers a framework to examine how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control shape managerial intentions and behaviors, particularly in response to targeted interventions such as coaching, awareness training, and policy shifts (Ajzen, 1991). Institutional theory, on the other hand, highlights how organizational behavior is shaped by broader social norms, regulatory environments, and cultural expectations (Scott, W. R., 2014). This theoretical lens is especially useful for understanding how legal systems, national values, and organizational policies interact to influence the adoption and normalization of neuroinclusive practices.

When conducting my research, I faced several methodological limitations, including a small sample size and reliance on self-reported data, which may constrain the generalizability and validity of findings. To address these issues, future studies should expand sample diversity across sectors, organizational sizes, and geographic locations to ensure representativeness. Incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, such as surveys, interviews, and behavioral observations, alongside a longitudinal approach, would yield richer, multidimensional insights into the experiences of neurodivergent employees. Additionally, investigating emerging factors such as remote work, digital transformation, and cross-cultural team dynamics could reveal new mechanisms influencing inclusion and retention in contemporary workplaces.

By focusing on these areas, future research can contribute to a more nuanced and evidence-based understanding of the productivity, innovation, and retention strategies of neurodivergent employees across specialized fields. Examining the long-term impact of inclusive leadership and training interventions will inform organizations seeking to build equitable and adaptive workplaces. These expanded research directions can equip organizations with practical strategies to enhance the engagement and performance of neurodivergent employees, while promoting innovation and sustainability. Ultimately, such efforts will help businesses navigate challenges in diverse organizational environments and strengthen their commitment to social responsibility, inclusivity, and long-term success.

Conclusion

This body of research demonstrates that supporting neurodivergent employees through attribution-informed managerial practices, individualized development plans, and inclusive workplace structures generates positive outcomes at multiple levels. At the individual level, recognizing employees' unique strengths, providing tailored accommodations, and fostering self-efficacy and motivation improve job satisfaction, mental health, and long-term retention. Attribution theory underscores that when managers frame performance challenges as controllable and situational, rather than inherent traits, neurodivergent employees respond with greater engagement, persistence, and productivity.

At the organizational and community levels, inclusive practices enhance team collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving while reducing underemployment and turnover. Evidence indicates that workplaces investing in neurodivergent talent contribute to stronger team cohesion, more equitable employment opportunities, and local economic resilience. Furthermore, successful inclusion strategies serve as models for other organizations, promoting broader cultural shifts toward neurodiversity-affirming practices.

At the societal level, adopting neurodiversity-inclusive frameworks aligns with global initiatives promoting equity and social inclusion. Organizations that implement systemic supports for neurodivergent employees not only enhance national productivity and innovation but also influence policy, cultural norms, and industry standards. In aggregate, these findings demonstrate that workplace inclusion extends far beyond

immediate performance outcomes, fostering sustainable growth, social equity, and economic participation at multiple levels.

Future researchers should expand longitudinally to examine the long-term effects of neuroinclusive strategies on performance, retention, and well-being, while exploring the influence of managerial attitudes, cultural norms, and policy frameworks. Utilizing diverse theoretical lenses, such as SCT, TPB, and institutional theory, can deepen understanding of how organizational and societal factors shape inclusive practices. By integrating empirical evidence with strategic interventions, organizations can not only optimize outcomes for neurodivergent employees but also create lasting value for teams, communities, and society.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Action	Script
<p>Introduce the interview and set the stage—often over a meal or coffee.</p>	<p>“Hello, my name is Keila Y. Molina. I am a Doctoral Candidate with Walden University. The purpose of this interview is to explore and identify effective strategies used by some training managers to support neurodivergent employees to increase productivity, talent development, and team innovation. I am going to ask you nine questions to which I would like your responses to. Then, I will conclude the interview. Do you have any questions? “</p> <p>“A few weeks ago, you agreed to sign an informed consent form. Do you have any questions for me or any matter that requires my attention? This interview is confidential, and your identity and that of your organization shall remain anonymous and represented by codes.”</p> <p>“I will collect data using semistructured interview questions. The idea is to allow you to explain any strategies, events, and memories that answer the interview questions. During your narration, I may prompt you for further explanation and details.”</p> <p>“I will need to record your responses so that I do not miss anything.”</p> <p>“Note that you may rescind your decision to participate in the research anytime.”</p>
<p>Ask Interview Questions to get in-depth responses. Listen for nonverbal cues. Paraphrase as needed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Are you an industry training manager?” 2. “Do you have neurodivergent employees under your training program?” 3. “How many years have you worked as an industry training manager of neurodivergent employees?”

Action	Script
	<p>4. “What degree or special certification do you have that prepare you for this type of work? “</p> <p>5. “What effective strategies have you used to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity?”</p> <p>6. “What effective strategies have you used to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase talent retention? “</p> <p>7. “What effective strategies have you used to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase innovation?”</p> <p>8. “How did you measure the effectiveness of the strategies? “</p> <p>9. “ What challenges do you encounter when implementing your strategies to support neurodivergent employees on their work teams to increase productivity, talent retention and innovation?”</p>
Schedule transcript review either by phone or email.	“In a few days, I will need your assistance in authenticating my understanding of your responses to the interview questions as part of the research process. You may adjust the script or add to your initial responses if needed. I will send the transcript by email, and we can discuss it by phone if you agree.”
Introduce a member checking review and set the stage.	“Thank you for agreeing to meet me today to finalize what I heard from you during the interview and the meaning I have provided for each response.”
Wrap up the interview by thanking participants.	“ Thank you for participating in the interview, an integral part of my research project. “