

THE TOP 10 MYTHS ABOUT AUTISM and EMPLOYMENT

MYTH #1: Repetitive, task-based jobs are best for individuals with autism.

FACT: While jobs with few variations that are repetitive in nature may be a good fit for some individuals with autism, others may thrive in a more challenging role.

MYTH #2: If an individual with autism does not maintain relationships easily in their personal lives, they will not be able to form good relationships at work.

FACT: There is a significant difference between expectations of social and working relationships. If communication expectations for working relationships are articulated, then successful working relationships are possible.

MYTH #3: People with autism will never be comfortable or effective in customer service careers.

FACT: People who have autism can be successful in almost any field of employment. Customer service jobs include a mix of communication and support tasks. Some occupations mainly require use of a phone, while others rely on email, social-media platforms, or face-to-face interactions. The job seeker should know their strengths and preferences, and research jobs and employers carefully before ruling out something of interest.

MYTH #4: When autism comes with sensory- or auditory-processing challenges, finding a full-time job is impossible.

FACT: There are plenty of jobs with suitable environments for individuals with sensory sensitivities. The working environment or culture may require only simple accommodations, including use of noise-limiting headphones or teleworking.

MYTH #5: People who have autism are all tech wizards and savants.

FACT: While it is true many people with autism do have highly specialized talents and skill sets, they do not all excel in tech-related activities.

MYTH #6: People who have autism need a job coach with them during their shift.

FACT: It depends on the person. While some people with autism might find a job coach helpful, few would need one present all day, and others would not need one at all. Some individuals might benefit from a job coach while interviewing, training, and onboarding.

MYTH #7: People who have autism require high-cost accommodations for job success.

FACT: Most accommodations are either free, inexpensive, one-time expenditures, or available through no-cost state services. For example, many workers simply require a quiet workspace in a less busy area of the office. Others may need alternative interview options to highlight their knowledge, skills, and abilities better during the selection process. Many individuals with autism do not require any accommodations.

MYTH #8: All individuals with autism are the same.

FACT: Just like people without autism, people on the spectrum differ vastly and are highly capable and desire a variety of things.

MYTH #9: There are no benefits to hiring workers with autism.

FACT: There are multiple reasons why it is a good idea to hire workers with autism. They generally have low absenteeism, offer a different perspective, and many customers would prefer to give their business to companies who hire people with disabilities. Companies who hire people with disabilities may also qualify for federal tax credits.

MYTH #10: There are not adequate supports available to help me employ a worker with autism successfully.

FACT: There are multiple resources in Washington State to support businesses, including the DSHS/Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Business Relations Team, [Job Accommodation Network](#) and [Northwest ADA Center](#).

For more information about hiring job seekers with Autism, please contact your local DSHS/DVR Business Relations Specialist at [DVR Business Services Team](#) or by calling Toll Free 888-468-9763.

