# How to Get Leadership on Board with Neuroinclusion

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Claire Dibben -

Hello. Hi everyone. And welcome to Skill Sessions. Thank you very much for joining us for the final webinar, the final webinar of Um, some of you have started doing this already. Um, but please say hello in the chat and let me know where you're joining from.

Claire Dibben -

It's one of my favourite things to see just how far and wide our attendees are located. And also let me know if you're new to Skill Sessions or whether you've been with us before as well. So why have we got people joining from Caroline from Lancashire?

Claire Dibben -

Hi, Caroline. Rebecca from Wigan, James from Bristol. I'm also in Bristol, so hi, James. London, South east London. Oh my gosh. There's a flurry. Flurry of messages Stevie I think you joined the last event.

Claire Dibben -

Stevie. Hello again a happy returnee. We love to see it. Keep those messages coming into the chat, folks. Um, so today's session, we are welcoming back a very familiar face. Um, doctor Richard Purcell. So if you're a long time attendee of Skill Sessions, you will know that Rich used to host these webinars, and he's also the founder of CareScribe, and we are the organisation that hosts and puts these events together.

Claire Dibben -

Joining him will also be our Chappell and Jane McCall, and they form the people team at CareScribe. And they will all be joining us today as a collective to talk about how to get leadership, to support Neuroinclusion efforts within your organisation. But before I introduce the panel and they join me on screen today, I just want to welcome you all to to Skill Sessions and to let you know what to expect.

Claire Dibben -

So whether you are brand new to this webinar series or if you've been with us before, welcome and thank you so much for coming along so we've been running these free online events for over a year now, and there is now a community of over of you, which is amazing.

Claire Dibben -

So thank you so much for being a part of the Skill Sessions community that we've built up over the last months, and the objective of these events is to bring you experts and speakers on a range of topics around inclusion and neurodiversity in the workplace.

Claire Dibben -

You can always find the latest events on the CareScribe website or by following CareScribe on LinkedIn. And we also have all of our past event recordings available for you to watch back at your leisure. On the website where we have the transcript, summaries and additional resources for you to explore.

Claire Dibben -

So I think a member of the CareScribe team is going to pop a link to that in the chat, so that you can save it for later. So who are we? Who are CareScribe? Well, with the organisation that makes these events happen, we're an award winning software company based in Bristol, and we create assistive tech to help people who are neurodivergent or who have disabilities to be more productive and confident in their work or in their studies.

Claire Dibben -

So we have two products, Caption.Ed, which is note taking and captioning software, which helps people capture and comprehend just the piles of information which gets thrown at them, either at work or in education.

Claire Dibben -

And we have TalkType, which is incredibly accurate, lightning fast dictation software, which works across all platforms. So Mac, windows, Chromebook and mobile. So if you're joining this call today and you want to know any more about these products to find out how they can support your workforce or even your students, just drop a message in the chat and one of the team will reach out after the session.

Claire Dibben -

Okay, before I introduce you to our speakers, I need to do a little bit of housekeeping. So, um, towards the end of the session, there will be a feedback survey in the chat. And this is where you can let us know how you found the webinar.

Claire Dibben -

And you can also request a certificate of attendance to. As you will notice from the start of this call, I really do encourage you to join the chat and to talk with other people on the call. Like I said, we've been doing these events for months now and that's really where the magic happens.

Claire Dibben -

It's it's in that conversation within the chat panel. So I would encourage you to share your experiences in the chat. So I think you'll get more from the call. However, I do appreciate that sometimes that can be a bit distracting. So if you need to, you can turn off chat previews and you can mute your chat notifications.

Claire Dibben -

So just a reminder that functionality exists for you to make use of. Today we have a panel and if you have any questions for our panel, again I do encourage you to ask questions to our panel. Please put them in the Q&A section.

Claire Dibben -

I'm going to point, um at the bottom of the screen, put them in the Q&A section rather than than in the chat. And the reason for this is you will notice the chat gets quite busy and it means that I can keep track of the questions. If you put them in the Q&A section, it also means that questions can be upvoted so I know which ones to tackle as a priority and which ones to put to our lovely speakers.

Claire Dibben -

And then probably the question which we get asked the most, which is, is this webinar being recorded? And the answer is yes, you'll be sent a follow up email tomorrow with the recording and a full transcript, which has been generated by Caption.Ed, who?

Claire Dibben -

That's enough from me. It's time to introduce you to today's panel. So joining me today are some people that I'm very familiar with as they are friends and colleagues at CareScribe. So we have Doctor Richard Purcell aka Rich, and he's the co-founder of CareScribe and he himself is neurodivergent.

Claire Dibben -

We have CareScribe people director Elle Chappell and our senior people manager, Jane McCall. So I'm going to invite them to join me on screen, and then I'll give you a very brief introduction to them all. Hello, everyone. Hi. Um, so Rich Rich is an NHS doctor and an entrepreneur who spent his career developing assistive tech to help support disabled and neurodivergent people at work and in education.

Claire Dibben -

His experience includes several years of clinical practice in the NHS and overseas Australia, I believe, and he is also established and grown to successful tech companies, medical and CareScribe. Elle Elle is a senior business leader and our people director here at CareScribe, and she's spent several years working with a range of businesses, advising boards and executive teams through times of transition and growth to make really impactful business change.

Claire Dibben -

And she's responsible for the creation and delivery of the people strategy at CareScribe, ensuring that we're focusing on the right things at the right time for the organisation. And finally, we have our senior people manager, Jane McCall, who has worked in HR teams within Global organisations for over years.

Claire Dibben -

And Jane is incredibly passionate about changing the face of HR through thoughtful, kind and authentic people focussed initiatives. So hopefully what those little introductions have shown you is if anyone can talk to us and teach us today about how to get neuroinclusion a seat at the board table, it's these three.

Claire Dibben -

Um, so let's get stuck in. Hello. I'm going to ask all of you to introduce yourselves and to tell me a little bit more about why you're joining the panel today. Um, Rich, I'm going to go to you first.

Rich Purcell -

Yeah. Thanks. Cheers, Claire. I don't know how I can beat that introduction. Yeah. Yes. Yeah. I'm Rich I'm one of the founders and directors at CareScribe. And, um, I think my my sort of, uh, area of expertise is kind of multi multifaceted in lots of ways. So, um, I've got, got personal experience.

Rich Purcell -

I'm of neurodiversity, I suppose is a both being both dyslexic and having ADHD. And I've had to overcome lots of sort of challenges myself in both my career and my personal life relating to that. And, um, I have both leaned on assistive technology and built assistive technology in order to help myself.

Rich Purcell -

Um, I've, uh, had a medical career, so I'm a doctor by practice. Claire and and that comes with, uh, dealing with a wide variety of different people with different experiences at often vulnerable times of their life. And that brings with it a lot of learnings.

Rich Purcell -

And also, um, yeah, we built two assistive tech companies, so kind of know the assistive tech space and works with lots of people, individuals and companies to deliver assistive technology solutions across organisations. So yeah, that's kind of my background and my insights. And hopefully I can, uh, yeah, bring a lot to the panel.

Claire Dibben -

Definitely. Well, Rich. Thank you. Um, Elle, over to you

Elle Chappell -

Thanks, Claire. A lot to follow there. Um, hi, everyone. Um, really, really great to have so many of you join us today. I'm Elle I'm the people director here at CareScribe. Um, I have been in the people and talent space. I just counted this.

Elle Chappell -

I think it's coming on for years in total. Um, which is quite a long time. Um, but more latterly, in the last several years, I've spent my career working with a range of senior people, boards, execs, neds, start ups, right up to sort of larger organisations and I've interacted and observed these people and how they go around making decisions on what their priorities are for the New Years ahead or their company strategy.

Elle Chappell -

Um, so hopefully I'll be able to add some insight and, um, some considerations to everyone on the call today for how to bring this really, really important subject to the attention of senior business leaders and getting it where it needs to be on company strategies.

Elle Chappell -

So yeah, hope you enjoy. Thanks for joining

Claire Dibben -

Thanks, Jane.

Claire Dibben -

Finally, Jane. Um, tell us about why you're joining the panel today

Jane McColl -

Thanks, Claire. So, um, firstly, I'm going to share. This is my first webinar ever. So. Yay! Bear with me

Jane McColl -

Uh, so my experience with neurodiversity and your inclusion is really rooted in working closely with managers at all levels. So, um, I think you were kind to me with my years in your introduction of It's a little bit longer than that, but we'll stick with

Jane McColl -

Um, so it's, um, you know, a big part of my role is about embedding inclusion, sort of like into the employee experience and sort of like throughout the employee life cycle. So, you know, I'm experienced with helping managers better understand how they can support their teams by focusing on removing barriers and creating environments where everyone can thrive.

Jane McColl -

Um, this kind of includes providing guidance on workplace adjustments, also advocating for open conversations. And really just like helping managers to feel supported in fostering your inclusive spaces. So, um, yeah, so it's kind of pitied across my sort of my career, sort of liking how that I've been able to put those into place

Claire Dibben -

Thanks, Jane. So for people on the call, I guess, um, lots of unique perspectives there, which will sort of guide the conversation as we go through the questions for the next minutes. Um, just so that we're so everyone on the call is on a level playing field as well.

Claire Dibben -

Um, I'd like first to talk about what we mean when we say the word or the term neuroinclusion and Rich. I'm going to ask you to elaborate on that. What do we mean when we say neuroinclusion?

Rich Purcell -

Yeah, sure. I can elaborate on that. So yeah, before I kind of, uh, yeah, dive into that question. Just a bit of a just a general disclaimer when it comes to kind of terminology, I suppose, which is, um, um, when I think we talk about neurodiversity, Neuroinclusion there's kind of the preferred language and terminology can kind of vary wildly, let's say, between, you know, across personal preferences.

Rich Purcell -

And the consensus can evolve over time. So while we kind of discuss both this and lots of things today, I'll sort of I'll do my best to kind of cover these topic topics and navigate them kind of thoughtfully and use the most inclusive language possible.

Rich Purcell -

But, um, yeah, it sometimes can be challenging to find terms that resonate with everyone. So that does mean that if I kind of talk about, I don't know, ADHD and I use the term disorder, and in that context, you know, you don't agree with that, please know that I'm not making a statement about the term.

Rich Purcell -

I'm just trying to make sure everybody recognises the language. I'm, you know, the recognises the thing I'm referring to. Um, so yeah, bear with me and I'll do my best to be kind of inclusive, but I acknowledge that the language in this space can be sometimes a bit of a moving target. So, Claire, your question was kind of terminology related, and it was about neuroinclusion and what kind of that means.

Rich Purcell -

So, um, yeah, I think kind of fundamental to that is understanding, uh, neurodiversity, another kind of term that kind of goes along with it. And I'm sure most people are familiar with that. But just in case that essentially is described, used to describe the kind of natural variation in brains, um, that across a population.

Rich Purcell -

So everybody has a different brain, which means that we all. Um, have different thought processes and perceive the world kind of differently. And Neuroinclusion really relates to acknowledging that and embracing neurodiversity within our behaviours. So if you apply that to kind of the workplace and neurodivergent neuroinclusion, sorry, in the, in the workplace and it kind of refers to that intentional creation of environments, policies, practices that enable neurodivergent individuals to to kind of thrive within a workspace.

Rich Purcell -

Um, and really, it goes beyond just kind of acknowledging neurodiversity, but is about actively seeking to to embrace and celebrate those differences as valuable contributions within an organisation. So, um, in order to do that, you kind of need to understand that, um, traditional workspaces and workplaces and spaces and structures and expectations might not suit all minds equally.

Rich Purcell -

And then it involves making adjustments, whether that's kind of, uh, flexible work arrangements or assistive technologies or changing communication styles and alternative approaches to recruitment and career development, ultimately, to kind of ensure that neurodivergent individuals and the the kind of full range of brains and people that are working in your organisation can kind of fully participate and, and excel.

Rich Purcell -

Um, so, yeah, that's kind of what neuroinclusion kind of means or certainly means to me, especially when applied to kind of the workplace.

Claire Dibben -

Lovely. Thank you for that definition. Rich. Nicely summarised. Um, okay, we're just about to get into the meat of the conversation, but just a reminder for people joining the call. If you have any questions for our panel, do our best to sort of visit those at the end. So please use the Q&A button at the bottom of the screen to post your questions to the panellists.

Claire Dibben -

Um, and again, I just encourage you to to use the chat to join in the conversation as well. So the first question for our panellists and Elle, I'm going to direct this one to you. Um, why is creating Neuroinclusion spaces so important for organisations today?

Elle Chappell -

Yeah, great question. I think there's a number of reasons here and more recently in the last sort of to years, it's become more paramount that organisations do this. And I would say the reasons really span the sort of ethical, moral, societal and then commercial reasons.

Elle Chappell -

So there's several buckets, um, that it fits into. And I think organisations should actually see, uh, neurodivergent talent as a competitive advantage. Businesses spend a fortune and so much time trying to create that thing that puts them above all of their competition and takes a lot of time.

Elle Chappell -

And not all businesses manage to successfully do it. Um, and typically organisations have developed these practices that appeal to neurotypical people. Rich sort of just alluded to this in what he was just talking about. When it comes to hiring, for example, companies have typically cast the net wide and applied a kind of one size fits all approach to hiring, and he typically end up hiring or attracting the same kind of people.

Elle Chappell -

Um, and it's really widely known that this reduces the thing that money that businesses spend time and money on, um, to stay ahead of the competition, which is the word that we all love to use so much, is innovation. Businesses need to innovate, otherwise they stand still.

Elle Chappell -

Um, but by doing what you've always done, it's that classic phrase, um, you'll get the same result. So if we're if we're thinking about it from a sort of really commercial angle, um, obviously the others are highly important as well, and the sort of ethical, moral and societal angles by investing in that neurodivergent talent and adjusting those hiring practices and adjusting how we are, um, assessing talent and, you know, looking at performance and things, what you're actually doing is cultivating a really rich talent pool within your organisation.

Elle Chappell -

And that will very quickly start to show to your customer base. So if we're thinking about our customer bases, whether you're a sort of BB or BC organisation, um, your customers are not going to be one group of people. Your customers are highly likely to, um, you know, have have a really, really broad span of, um, people.

Elle Chappell -

And brains, to use Richard's term earlier in, in your customer base. So by investing in your business and in your people, in your organisation, you are you will only see results, um, commercially as well.

Elle Chappell -

So again, in market share, um, and again, pointing towards that sort of competitive advantage that all businesses are trying to create. So it's highly important. Um, and yeah, we could spend much longer than a few minutes talking about this, this particular question itself for sure

Claire Dibben -

I think that those things that you just discussed there, as I was making some some notes as you were talking, will crop up quite a lot throughout this conversation. You know, you talked about not only like the sort of, um, the ethics and the morality around it, but also like the commercial stuff and like the conversation today really is about getting buy in from leadership team.

Claire Dibben -

And I think using language like competitive advantage and commercial like those, that's what will sort of capture the attention of of the leadership team when you're advocating that within a larger business. So yeah, couldn't couldn't agree with you, couldn't agree with you more there.

Claire Dibben -

And the sort of follow up question I have for that then al, for you, al, is, you know, embracing neuroinclusion what you know, we've talked about all of these wonderful things that it can provide for businesses, you know, a rich talent pool, um, that sort of commercial advantage that you spoke about.

Claire Dibben -

What are the biggest barriers then, if those are the rewards, what's the biggest barriers for senior leadership in embracing Neuroinclusion?

Elle Chappell -

Yeah, another great question. I think there are there are multiple barriers. I think there's, um, a fear of saying or doing the wrong thing. Um, people don't want to upset or offend people.

Elle Chappell -

Um, I think there's also a fear of what what risk would we be at by doing or saying the wrong thing. So I think they're they're pretty big. I also think there's not enough understanding of the positive impact it can actually have on an organisation.

Elle Chappell -

So I think there's a huge educational piece, um, that that is missing as well. Um, from, you know, observations over the last several years, I think there's, um, some ROI concerns.

Elle Chappell -

So if you, if you, you know, you've got your New Year's agenda ahead of you and you're mapping out all of your budgets, um, investing in Neuroinclusion, it's not a quick win. Um, it's more of a long term commercial, um, investment. Um, and I think some senior leaders can often prioritise quick wins over long term cultural change in an organisation, um, especially in tougher climates.

Elle Chappell -

You know, we're in a one of those now and it's all around kind of ROI ROI. Now what can we get? Um, so I think those are some of the biggest, the biggest challenges. I also think staying with that kind of ROI, um, thread measuring the impact of EDI and Neuroinclusion isn't always as easy as measuring the impact of an investment in, say, lead generation software.

Elle Chappell -

And I'm just pulling that one out there because it's very, you know, very, very easy to measure the impact of that. So when the senior leaders have got all of these priorities that they're getting from their heads of department, and they're trying to weigh up, um, the ROI and the budget and what they focus on.

Elle Chappell -

Um, I think that is, um, that absolutely causes a barrier as well for businesses. So a range of a range of things, I think, um, are all contribute to it. I think education is is going to be really key.

Elle Chappell -

And as much, um, as much information as companies can absorb on this topic, the better for sure.

Claire Dibben -

Yeah. And you know, I am biased here, but that's one of the reasons why we created Skill Sessions to sort of to sort of advocate and to accelerate that, that education piece because it is it is so needed, um, for everyone that's watching as well on the call, I'm curious to know whether any of the points that al just made resonated with you, whether those are patterns or themes that you're noticing within your workplace as well.

Claire Dibben -

So do just let us know in the chat if that's something that you've observed as well, or likewise if there's any other sort of challenges that you have within your business or, um, gaining sort of leadership, buy in to Neuroinclusion. Um, final question, which I'm going to again pose to you, al, um, which is what's what is the risk then for businesses that fail to invest in those neuro inclusive practices

Elle Chappell -

Yeah, I probably covered a couple of these already, but the obvious ones really are stifled innovation. Um, which is the opposite of what any organisation wants when you come to thinking about restricting yourself to that sort of talent pool, it's that kind of very one way, one way thinking, um, which takes longer to get to the end goal if that's the way that you, that you operate and think within an organisation as that sort of groupthink risk, there.

Elle Chappell -

Um, and it's that phrase which is one of my pet hate phrases and it's, well, we've always done it like this, um, hire the same people, get the same results. So a huge risk is that sort of, um, commercial innovation risk. And then we've really got the moral, the, the morals and ethics side.

Elle Chappell -

I think businesses now, um, look at B-corp, for example, um, businesses are volunteering or opting to hold themselves to, um, a higher standard. And they also want to work with organisations that operate in the same way.

Elle Chappell -

And I think your businesses will struggle to recruit if they're not seen to be making these these changes. But I think it could also impact them in terms of, um, with their customer base as well, and how they're actually perceived externally in their marketplace.

Elle Chappell -

Um, so the two pretty big ones there, and then, you know, you've got everything that sort of pops it all up. You've got your legal risks, um, and, and things like that, that start getting pretty messy and complicated and possibly very costly for organisations.

Elle Chappell -

So I'll bucket it into the the commercial aspects, the innovation, your customer base, hiring and retention and then those, um, the sort of legal implications as well. So linking it back to what I was talking about earlier, the sort of competitive advantage, um, if you, if you make the right decisions around, around this and really embrace it, I think, you know, the possibilities are just really positive and possibly endless as well

Claire Dibben -

Thanks. Um, al, I know that you can't see comments in the chat, but we've had Kathleen say so. All of those, um, sort of blockers and challenges that you talked about, they've also seen in their workplace. Um, they have recent discussions about how accessible some of their offices are, um, which hasn't previously been discussed.

Claire Dibben -

But Kathleen does acknowledge that progress takes time as well. You know, I think that's true for most things, isn't it? They just don't happen overnight. Um, yeah, for sure. And that's about managing expectations as well. I think typically leaders of business, they want that quick like you said quick action, quick ROI.

Claire Dibben -

What do we get now. Yeah yeah it takes time. It takes time.

Elle Chappell -

Um, good things come to those who wait. That's there's the there's the phrase um, Rich.

Claire Dibben -

And Jane, I'd love to invite you to contribute contribute to that question as well, which I noticed you unmuted yourself. So.

Rich Purcell -

No, I was going to I was yeah, I was kind of, uh, yeah. Nodding along the um, yeah, I think one of the, the key bits which like, which links into a lot of what I was talking about is kind of trying to move away from the, um, the notion that, uh, neuroinclusion accessibility is all about kind of, uh, it's the nice thing to do.

Rich Purcell -

It's a nice to have. It's kind of getting that warm, fuzzy feeling and actually saying, no, no, this is like, this is a this can be a commercial decision. It's like got clear competitive advantage, advantages that are going to move you towards kind of achieving your business goals. Um, and um, yeah, I think when you look at kind of like the risks of not investing in your inclusive practices, um, for me it kind of boils down to like two things.

Rich Purcell -

One is, um, failing to unlock the full potential of your workforce. Um, and there is, you know, listen to anything in the news. It's all about productivity at the moment. Right? And as it should be, you know, we need to be more productive generally as a, as a workforce.

Rich Purcell -

And we want to unlock the potential that is already existing in our teams. And it's also about limiting access to incredible talent that's out there. So if you're not being neuro inclusive, you're you're you're limiting who's likely to come and want to work with you and all that incredible talent that those people bring and yeah, to kind of I guess, uh, yeah.

Rich Purcell -

Elaborate elaborate on that. You know, not not creating an inclusive environment. You're you're kind of, um, you've already invested so much in your workforce, and you're just limiting the returns of that investment. Um, essentially. So, um, yeah, I think I think the key thing is to try and move away from this kind of warm, fluffy feeling and more towards kind of the commercial aspects.

Rich Purcell -

I mean, there's loads and loads of data out there that show the, uh, the, the commercial output of neuroinclusion of businesses. So like, Deloitte did a really good study. Uh, not very long ago, I, I can't remember the date, but it wasn't very long ago and it showed, uh, twice.

Rich Purcell -

So two times increase in likelihood to exceed financial targets in neuroinclusion of organisations. Three times increase in performance and eight times, uh, increase in ability to achieve outcomes.

Rich Purcell -

And it's a huge study and it's really, really interesting. I will link it afterwards. Um, but it's yeah, it's super interesting, but it clearly shows neuroinclusion equals better performance, essentially

Claire Dibben -

Yeah. Nice. Um, yes. Please do share the link to that resource Rich, because that sounds great. And that's exactly the kind of stuff that I was just talking about around that ROI and those data points. Um, so again, just I know that you can't see the chat panellists on the call, but as someone else has also said, within their business, they just see these patterns of a lack of understanding or a lack of interest.

Claire Dibben -

Actually, regarding neuroinclusion and a reluctance to invest time or resources to accommodate different needs. So actually, I think that, um, Deloitte resource would be really useful to share with the people on this call. Rich just to help sort of advocate for the positive impact that it that it can have.

Rich Purcell -

Yeah, absolutely. I think, you know, there's all the sort of, uh, the legal ramifications of not embracing inclusion and accessibility and all of that is very true. But I think if, you know, we're focusing on sort of the the true impact of neuroinclusion, the positive impact, I think. Yeah. Um, and there's so much data out there about it as well

Claire Dibben -

And it's interesting to hear your input on that. Rich because you are the owner of a business. So like that's your like that's the that's speaking your language. Um, so yeah, really interesting to to have that insight from you. Um. Elle another one for you and, uh, this question is about how organisations can get buy in from leadership for neuroinclusion.

Claire Dibben -

So I know we sort of danced around the topic a little bit, um, over the last few minutes, but would love to hear from you. And then also again, Jane and Rich, if you have, um, any other contributions that you'd like to make to answering this question, it's how how do organisations get buy in from leadership for Neuroinclusion?

Claire Dibben -

How can you take that one first?

Elle Chappell -

Yeah. Um, I it's really similar to getting buy in from anything that you're trying to get your leadership team to embrace. And support. And, um, it's speaking the language of the people that you're operating with.

Elle Chappell -

So your board or your execs and finding out what is important to those different people. The language the CTO speaks is going to be totally different to the language your CFO speaks. They care about numbers. Typically, we would like to think they would um, margins the PNL, um, by by speaking the language of your CFO, for example, and talking about actually by not investing in Neuroinclusion, you're potentially hindering growth instead of actually you know, or hour performance based on this data, you could reference the Deloitte white paper that Richard's just talked about and talk about market share to them, you know, all these kinds of things that the CFO cares about.

Elle Chappell -

Um, talk to them about decreased talent costs. You know, replacing people just costs loads of money. But by actually changing our hiring practices and our processes to be inclusive, we're reducing wasted cost and actually getting a really diverse talent pool that will then spark innovative practice.

Elle Chappell -

Um, so it's about speaking the language. If we're speaking to the CEO, the things the CEOs typically care about. Um, obviously the numbers as well. Um, I would like to think so. Reputation, credibility lagging behind competitors, productivity and performance. These are just some some of the core things that CEOs care about.

Elle Chappell -

And again, find out what it is that really makes them tick and translate that to the thing that they care about. Um, and again, just keep on tying it back in with, this is what we could have in those areas that, that you really care about by us investing in this now, um, and of course, like I just said, share some data and share some numbers.

Elle Chappell -

Um, there is so much out there. Like Rich said, um, and organisations like Deloitte, you know, one of the big four known globally investing a lot of money into into white papers like this and these kinds of pieces of research. It only goes to show that it is it's true and it's real.

Elle Chappell -

Um, so yes, speak their language. Um, and yeah, talk, talk their talk and um, find out what they care about and start going in from that angle is probably what I would I would suggest wonderful practical tips.

Claire Dibben -

Al, thank you. Um, you mentioned you kept mentioning the word data there and Rich you you also talked about the Deloitte white paper. So, um, Rich maybe this is one that you can take initially, but like, why is data so important? How can data and how can metrics help make the business case for neuroinclusion.

Rich Purcell -

Yeah, I think I think yeah, exactly. What Elle said is, you know, you're talking the you need to talk the language of the, the board. You need to it's a sales process. Essentially you're trying to to sell. Uh, yeah. Sell neuroinclusion upstairs essentially.

Rich Purcell -

So you need to talk the language and then you need to build trust. And data helps to evidence, uh, evidence what you're saying and helps to build that trust that it is the right decision to go with. So, um, you know, really, really practical. I would try and be really practical.

Rich Purcell -

And again, you know, Neuroinclusion shouldn't be pitched as kind of the nice thing to do. It can be absolutely a data driven initiative. And the leadership and the board are, you know, are going to be much more interested if you come with, uh, clear data that links back to the KPIs that they're most interested in.

Rich Purcell -

You know, everybody wants to look good to their boss, everybody has, uh, something they, you know, that they're they're trying to meet a KPI that they're trying to meet, and you need to know what that is, and then you need to pitch towards it. And the great thing is, neuroinclusion is the most sellable. And, you know, uh, flexible thing that you can you can, you know, if you want to talk about improved, uh, reduced staff attrition or improved, um, productivity, you can you can flex it to, to any of these kind of KPIs.

Rich Purcell -

And so really kind of practically, I would always start with kind of trying to show the scale of the impact, you know, try and get rid of that assumption that, uh, neuroinclusion doesn't exist in our organisation or neurodiversity. Yes. That, that, that, that maybe we haven't hired anybody like that. You know, that sort of notion. You need to get rid of that.

Rich Purcell -

And ultimately, if you have if your organisation is more than one person, it is neurodiverse, right? Two brains, they're different. It's neurodiverse. So it's yeah, you have a neurodiverse organisation. As long as you're more than, uh, one person and, and then, um, you know, you can either use population data so, you know, googlable information to say, you know, to % of people in our organisation are likely to be neurodivergent.

Rich Purcell -

Um, or you can use, you know, um, uh, survey results and disclosure forms and things to sort of hone in on, on your specific organisation. Although we know, uh, you know, disclosure can be a challenge. And depending on the sort of state of your organisation and particularly around psychological safety. So I'd usually even if you've got survey and organisation specific information, I'd also lean on population data as well because, um, you're often unless you're doing absolutely fantastically, you're probably going to find it's underrepresented as uh, in your organisation as part of the whole population.

Rich Purcell -

Um, and then I would um, tie whatever Neuroinclusion initiative I'm wanting to drive to the metrics that the leadership cares about. So to those KPIs, you know, if it's productivity, how much more effective could your workforce be if neurodivergent employees had the tools and accommodations tailored to their needs?

Rich Purcell -

If it's retention, what is the cost of losing employees who feel unsupported? And how can your inclusive practices reduce that turnover? If it's satisfaction, how does Neuroinclusion impact engagement scores and NPS scores and things like that? For overall employee satisfaction?

Rich Purcell -

Um, and, you know, we we do this, you know, all the time with clients where, you know, they're interested in, um, uh, and neuroinclusion initiative. And it may involve the technology, accommodation for staff, and that might be one of our software's like Caption.Ed and or TalkType, and we will work with them in order to try and set out that kind of business case.

Rich Purcell -

So it might be to say, you know, X percentage of your workforce is neurodiverse. And again, that can be population data or disclosure figures or a combination of both. So you're demonstrating scale and you set out the challenge or the KPI that you're looking to meet. So it might be, you know, um, about you know, let's say Caption.Ed for example, it's about helping people to comprehend and retain information so you can show research to say, well, neurodivergent employees retain less information in traditional meeting formats and that can impact productivity.

Rich Purcell -

And then you can propose your solution. So you can say, uh Caption.Ed can improve comprehension and retention of information by %. And you can then translate that into the figures, whether that's pound signs, dollar signs, or reduced staff attrition rates or satisfaction scores, what have you to be able to say?

Rich Purcell -

Oh, look, and this is the impact. And then what's really good is if you then, uh, reassure you know, you can reassure further by saying, oh, and this is kind of my, uh, assertion as to the benefits, but let's plan to measure success. So like, let's come back and measure it afterwards and say, oh, what's been a success?

Rich Purcell -

So pre and post implementation and what success looks like. And so I'd really have that, kind of that, that that structure to yeah show scale of the impact link it to those kind of initiatives. They link the initiative to those kind of KPIs that most matter and be data driven.

Rich Purcell -

There's so much data out there. All you need to do is go into Google Scholar and, you know, start having a look around and there's there's almost always academic papers that tie into what you're what you're looking for. And then I'd always sort of add that level of reassurance that you want to go back and, and measure the success of your initiative, because that if nothing else, puts a bit more onus on on you, it's kind of you're taking a bit of the weight of the responsibility for the success.

Rich Purcell -

Um, so, yeah, um, that's kind of my approach

Claire Dibben -

Yeah. I think the point you make around, um, measuring success is so important. Um, it's a question that I ask, um, sort of my team quite a lot. So I think, like, as a leader, that's quite an important thing to sort of demonstrate if you're if you're the person going in asking for neuroinclusion of support, um, or to support an initiative like how you will demonstrate and measure success will, you know, go in with that, I think as a suggestion, because it will just, um, it would like from my own experience, that's a really lovely thing for people to be forthcoming with.

Claire Dibben -

Um, I'm really conscious, Jane, that we haven't heard from you yet. So I'm going to fire a question your way, if that's okay. Um, so, Jane, what role does the senior leadership team or the C-suite play in building a really neuro inclusive culture in the workplace?

Jane McColl -

Yeah, that's a great question, Claire. And going to be quite different, I think, from what's been discussed already. So the softer side, uh, so, yeah, building a neuroinclusion culture really starts with senior leadership role modelling inclusive behaviours, uh, which is really important to helping to like create the psychological safety across the organisation.

Jane McColl -

So when leaders like, openly share their own experiences, um, it sets the tone for an environment where others feel safe to do the same. And that's really sort of like sparkling, like the ripple effect of openness and trust. Um, so this can happen in a lot of ways.

Jane McColl -

Um, so that can either be through like one on one conversations, uh, sharing personal stories, sort of like in company wide comms such as all hands that we have or newsletters, um, or even using sort of like external platforms, like LinkedIn, um, you know, to advocate for change.

Jane McColl -

Um, so it's putting themselves kind of like out there. So sharing lived experiences can be powerful, uh, in ways to connect with others and highlight, like the need for inclusivity. So it doesn't stop there. Because I was thinking this through and and it's kind of like, that's kind of like the start.

Jane McColl -

Um, role modelling also means about like seeking feedback. So being really open to learning, we're not expecting everyone to know everything. And I think it was Elle mentioned earlier on, um, there's that fear factor. So if there's a fear factor, sometimes it's just easier just to pop it over there.

Jane McColl -

And you know, I'm not sure. I don't really understand it. I don't want to make a mistake. So I'm just not going to do anything about it. But it's about being open to learning and to learn from the people that you manage and to listen without judgement. So I've just said there, so being vulnerable and sort of saying, you know, I don't have all the answers, let's work together and let's find a way that works for you.

Jane McColl -

Um, so yeah, creating psychological safety is really important for leaders to also back up their words with action. So there's a lot about sort of talking about it. Um, but it's about making it sort of real as well. So that people can see things happening.

Jane McColl -

So really it's about moving away from the awareness to tangible actions that really do drive those changes in your culture

Claire Dibben -

Actions, rather than just words, sort of speaks volumes, doesn't it? And actually, psychological safety is a theme that's come up quite frequently. Um, when we host these Skill Sessions events, Jane. Um, so yes, I really agree with your, um, sort of angle there, um, role modelling that behaviour as a leadership team just invites and encourages people to take action to build that sort of neuro inclusive culture and talks a lot about like senior leaders during this conversation.

Claire Dibben -

But how can organisations equip people managers to better support neuroinclusion like on the front line? Jane.

Jane McColl -

Yeah, no, that's another good question. Um, the thing that I've seen a lot of really is around, like diagnosis and disclosure, those can be some of the biggest barriers that managers face in sort of knowing, you know, how can I support or even having the information to do that.

Jane McColl -

So, um, there's ways that you can kind of like support your managers to look at ways of breaking this down. Um, thinking about kind of like resources to support people through the employee life cycle. So some of the things that we've been doing here is if we look at our recruitment process, um, we provide everybody with like the interview structure and questions in advance.

Jane McColl -

So, um, I've seen a lot recently. I know we've had conversation with AXA, so it might just recently regarding this, um, where, um, there are times when people sort of like need to ask for that accommodation. So what we do there is we, you know, remove the need to even ask for the adjustment because we apply that to everybody.

Jane McColl -

Um, and as Rich said, you know, you've got more than one brain in an organisation. Then your neurodiverse. So, um, we found this created a really great space for people to share their experiences. So like enabling the managers to connect right from the very beginning, building that trust in the relationship right from the outset.

Jane McColl -

And we've had some great feedback from people who've recently gone through the recruitment process. Um, so that kind of like then rolls into onboarding. So we ask everyone sort of like who goes through the onboarding experience, uh, to share about how they work best. Um, so this is another resource that you can kind of give to your managers, where it's like a series of questions that cover things such as communication style meetings.

Jane McColl -

How do you like to give and receive feedback? Everyone's different. Um, so again, um, it started off sort of like where we were just using that for people who were neurodivergent, but now we sort of like give that to everybody because again, it's we all work differently and it's about getting the best out of everyone.

Jane McColl -

Um, so this we find this provides, like managers with an initial insight into how they can adjust, like their management style and consider sort of like different ways of working rather than imposing one way. Um, and I've seen myself in previous roles where I've had frustrations with sometimes, like trying to get that message across to a manager where it's like, but I treat everybody in the team like this, so why should I be treating this person in this way?

Jane McColl -

Surely that's not fair on the others. And there's a real kind of like education piece there where, um, you know, again, reaching out to your people, teams, your HR teams to support, to navigate through that because it is difficult. It is a minefield. Um, so there was something I wanted to share here that, um, that I, it actually came from our neurodiversity celebration week, um, which was back in March, I think, um, and this is an example of where a manager just adjusted their style completely.

Jane McColl -

So they had somebody in their team that would often not log in onto a meeting on time, or either completely forget or come in late. And that was part of that, sort of like, um, uh, you know, processing and, and planning and, and sorting those things out.

Jane McColl -

So that manager knew that was an issue for that person. So they actually, I don't know the technical side of things, but they actually found a way where they could just automatically get that person into the meeting and pop up on their screen, and then they're like, oh, hello. So they were there at their desk working. And then and then they go straight in.

Jane McColl -

And I just remember coming away from that thinking, amazing, because it was such a small, tiny thing. And we've been talking a lot about, you know, cost and ROI and all those sorts of things. But there's so many changes that you can make that don't cost anything that has such an impact because the person feels seen and heard.

Jane McColl -

Um, another way is signposting. So signposting is a great way to support your managers with access to work and making sure that they are aware and understand, like the resources and the funding that they can sort of seek from that, that again, Rich has talked through sort of like, you know, captioning and dictation tools.

Jane McColl -

Um, and those are the sorts of things that can really support where managers aren't going to be able to, to put that sort of in place. Um, so, you know, a key takeaway for me when I was looking, you know, putting this together is if you don't know, then ask and be curious and be open and operate with genuine intent

Claire Dibben -

What a lovely summary, Jane, that feels. That was a lovely, a lovely summary of the answer to your question. And we've actually got loads of questions coming in to the Q&A and I'm really conscious of time, so I'm actually going to use that as a lovely segue to jump us into straight into the Q and A's.

Claire Dibben -

Um, because I'm conscious of time. So we've got about five minutes. Um, what I'm going to do is I'm going to read out a question and then Elle Rich. Jane, if one of you would like to just sort of express an interest in answering it, then I'll fire it over to you. So the first question that we've had in is from Andrew, who has asked, how have you gone about bringing parity between neurodiversity and other protected characteristics?

Claire Dibben -

So they've said it often feels like when you're talking about inclusion in the workplace, resources and time still focuses on other protected characteristics like race or gender, with neurodiversity being seen as, in their words, the poor cousin.

Claire Dibben -

So I don't know if anyone has, um, would like to answer that. Someone needs to answer it.

Rich Purcell -

I'm happy to. I'm happy to jump in, I think. Yeah. Really important. Thanks, Rich really important question. I think. Yeah, speaks kind of to the heart of, um, building an inclusive kind of workspace. You're right. I think historically a lot of focus and resources around inclusion have been centred around kind of race or gender.

Rich Purcell -

And while those are kind of really important areas to address, I think sometimes that means that, yeah, neurodiversity and other characteristics haven't received maybe the same level of attention and investment and um, therefore have been treated kind of as you sort of say, as this kind of poor cousin, um, as you, as you put it.

Rich Purcell -

But, um, and I think that will, you know, that is already changing over time, I think, um, because there's growing awareness of neuroinclusion and neurodiversity as a relatively more modern, uh, sort of social movement. But I think in my experience, kind of creating parity starts with, um, acknowledging the gap and talking deliberately about kind of actions to close it.

Rich Purcell -

Um, so, yeah, basically doing exactly this, asking the question and, and addressing it kind of head on. And I think there's a couple of ways you can do that as an organisation. So build awareness and education. You know, do people neuroinclusion and neurodiversity are long, complex words.

Rich Purcell -

And if you, you know, you're not familiar with and they're in an area that can often be, you know, said at the start, you know, I often sort of have a bit of a kind of disclaimer around terminology because, you know, in the modern age, people are really worried to put their foot in it. And then in the middle of it, you've got a really some really complicated sounding words, and people just steer clear of it because they, you know, I don't want to I don't want to get this wrong.

Rich Purcell -

And it seems very sensitive. So actually building awareness and education and an environment, we talked about psychological safety where people can actually talk about, um, this stuff and, and question it and have meaningful debates and talks about it, I think is really important.

Rich Purcell -

And with that, from a leadership level, I think role modelling is is really important. And, you know, I talk about the impacts of dyslexia and ADHD on me. I talk about other things that impact me kind of personally and and try and reflect that in my kind of leadership style, which then again, um, puts people in a position where they feel they're able to kind of talk about the same things.

Rich Purcell -

You know, if you it's very hard, um, to, uh, expect somebody to open up and be vulnerable about something if you're not willing to do the same, the same back. So that kind of role modelling is really important. But build awareness and education and then, you know, embedding neurodiversity in the broader kind of inclusion strategies as a, as an um, as an organisation, you know, don't silo it as, oh, this is our, uh, just our sort of, uh, neurodiversity, inclusion strategy, embed it within the wider inclusion strategies, whether those are based on, um, you know, race or gender, but embed it as one as sort of an inclusion for all kind of, uh, sort of strategy and lead with that narrative.

Rich Purcell -

So it's kind of embedded in it and not seen as separate. And that would be kind of my advice. There

Claire Dibben -

That's great.

Claire Dibben -

And okay, we have a question here from Susie who's asked how would you best approach educating. So we've talked a lot about education. How would you best approach educating senior leaders or founders who have shown a lack of understanding and sometimes even a prejudice towards neurodiversity?

Claire Dibben -

Unfortunately, that's something that Susie has experienced, and for that one, um, Elle or Jane, I'm going to invite you to answer that one.

Elle Chappell -

Um, and we've talked about this a lot. Um, actually, throughout the call. And for me, it really goes back to that data piece, data and education. There's a theme, isn't there, with what we've been saying.

Elle Chappell -

And to Richard's point a moment ago, and to my point right at the start of the call, this is a relatively new thing for people. Um, other protected characteristics, right? Being around a lot longer, people have been focusing on a lot longer. And I think it really, really comes down to education and a desire to understand this topic.

Elle Chappell -

Um, I would go in with data and I would again talk about senior leaders. What do they care about? If it's numbers, if it's credibility, if it's what your competitors are up to, weave it into those things. Um, it won't it might not be a quick win.

Elle Chappell -

It might take time. But keep chipping away and and focus it back to what your business, what your senior leaders want to achieve and how they might be able to achieve it better through looking at things with a different lens

Claire Dibben -

Thanks, Elle.

Claire Dibben -

Um, right. One final question from the Q&A and then we'll need to wrap up. This is really flown by, by the way. And so this question is from Ellie. I hope I'm saying that right. Ellie, um, have you considered how the application process so before interview disadvantages many neurodivergent people and that there are rarely opportunities to ask for adjustments at that stage?

Claire Dibben -

So they've said CV writing is much harder for me as an ADHD compared to being interviewed, but without a good CV or the ability to articulate the skills and experience in a written format, they say they often miss out on the interview stage.

Claire Dibben -

Um, so I just wondered if you had any thoughts that you could share around that for Ellie

Jane McColl -

Yeah, no. First of all, Ellie, really sorry that that's been your experience. Um, because, yes, it's it's not something that, I mean, completely open, transparent. It's not something that we've looked into in detail here, but I'm aware of obviously different sort of ways.

Jane McColl -

Um, that we can change the way that we do that process by, you know, videos, um, sort of like having sort of async, um, and, you know, verbal sort of like, rather than just relying heavily on the written sort of forms.

Jane McColl -

So at least I think we've moved away from application forms, which, you know, were horrendous. I think for anybody to sort of navigate and, and to kind of pull together, um, you know, with CVS, I mean, I would always sort of advocate contacting the company, sort of like in advance to sort of say this is something that I struggle with.

Jane McColl -

Do you have any other, you know, sort of alternatives that we can sort of like that I can do in terms of getting my application across. But, you know, it's something that maybe I can take this away and provide a bit more of a concise, kind of like answer, because I understand it and I hear it, um, and, and it is very difficult to, to, to at that stage and I, and I hear what you're saying, but I think sort of like the advancements in sort of like, um, async and video, you know, sort of in terms of actually putting those applications in is the way forward, but it's actually getting into the companies to, to get those to be sort of seen and heard.

Jane McColl -

So yeah, I hope that helps. Ellie

Claire Dibben -

Valid point. You make Jane around, just like, you know, if there's nothing formal in place, just even putting the question to the hiring team, you know, you don't know if you don't ask, do you? Um, Alison, I've just seen your question in the chat about getting access to the webinar afterwards. Yes. This is recorded and we'll share the email tomorrow afternoon. So keep an eye on your inbox.

Claire Dibben -

We've got three minutes left. Elle Rich. Jane, you each have s to share with me. The one practical takeaway that you'd like the audience to remember from today's discussion? Um, Jane, I'm going to start with you because you're up on my screen

Jane McColl -

Um, I'm actually going to repeat what I said earlier because it was my kind of like, takeaway. Um, so if you don't know, then ask. Be curious, be open and operate with genuine intent

Claire Dibben -

Lovely. Elle over to you

Elle Chappell -

Mine would be to learn what is important to the people that you're trying to essentially pitch to, um, find out what they care about, speak their language, and link it in with the things that they care about in the business

Claire Dibben -

Perfect summary and Rich your final thoughts, your practical takeaway for people on the call, please.

Rich Purcell -

Yeah, I think mine would be very similar to Alison. Like move away from that. Kind of nice to have warm, fuzzy, um, sort of notion of neuroinclusion. Um, and yeah, see, see and believe in the commercial application and benefits for your, for your kind of company because they're enormous.

Rich Purcell -

And, um, yeah. And I think it does a huge amount for the movement as well. If you, you know, if we all think that way. Yeah.

Jane McColl -

I couldn't agree more.

Claire Dibben -

Um, well, Jane Rich and Elle, thank you so much for all of your contributions this afternoon. What a way to end the year. Um, and for everyone watching, please message in the chat and thank all of the panel for such a really insightful session. Um, in a moment, one of the team's going to post a link to the feedback survey, which I mentioned at the start, where you can request a certificate of attendance for the webinar if you would like one, and if you enjoyed today's session and you found it helpful and valuable, please help us spread the word and tell people about these events.

Claire Dibben -

As I said at the start, there's over people in this community now, which is awesome. So whether you're mentioning it to a colleague, forwarding an email, sharing it on LinkedIn, every bit of word of mouth helps build that community. And we're really eager to grow it, to create just this really valuable network for people.

Claire Dibben -

So whether you're neurodivergent yourself or you manage a team of people in an organisation and you want to better understand how to support them, please help us share it. Um, it really is helpful for us. Um, so this is the final webinar of the year. But before you go, don't dash off yet.

Claire Dibben -

I have a very exciting announcement for next year that I can finally share with you, which is the January Skill Sessions speaker. So Sarah Petherbridge will be joining us on the th of January, slightly later date than usual to allow you some time to get back into the swing of things after the Christmas break.

Claire Dibben -

And Sarah's session is going to be all about hearing loss awareness. So a slightly different topic than what we've covered in recent months. Um, so hearing loss awareness for your organisation and how to be a deaf friendly workplace. And that's not all.

Claire Dibben -

February session. We have the team from not on the high street joining us. And you can sign up for those events today. So keep an eye on your emails for all the updates. Take a peek at our events page on the CareScribe website to find out more information as well. And we're going to pop a link in the chat.

Claire Dibben -

So that is all for today. Everyone went super fast. Um, thank you once again. Have a lovely Christmas. If you choose to celebrate and I will look forward to seeing you all in January next year. Bye everyone. Thank you.

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