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| **Transcript of How to recognise and promote a neurodiverse workforce – December 2021 webinar**  SARAH: Hi everyone and welcome to |
| this lunch time webinar. |
| We're really delighted to welcome everyone. |
| You can see MyClearText, Judith is already topping stuff you have on |
| screen there. |
| Thank you for that. |
| Just while we're waiting I will just give it a couple of minutes for |
| everyone to join us, but we have an amazing panel today. |
| I will introduce you in more detail to the speakers in a short while. |
| But we have got Jane who is joining us from Evenbreak and her colleague |
| Rosa who battled sickness to be with us today so thank you very much to them |
| and we have Jess who has the wrong title but I did change. |
| We'll update that and get Jess to introduce we are self in a second. |
| We have got our own Rina who is an accessibility and usability consultant |
| for AbilityNet and my name is Sarah and I am the Marketing Manager for |
| AbilityNet and in the background we have Kelly helping me drive the slides |
| and answer any questions that you might have so |
| please do pop any questions for us in the chat. |
| Whether it's technical things or please do top in Q&As as well for our |
| panellists we're going to allow hopefully plenty of time for that. |
| I can see the participant numbers are still rising, so I am going to give it |
| another couple of minutes there. |
| Okay, so those numbers are slowing down now in terms of virtual |
| participants. |
| Welcome again to everybody to our webinar today, we have got brilliant |
| panel and a lot to get through. |
| So without any further ado I will just move on to a brief bit of |
| housekeeping, the live captions are popping up as we said. |
| Please do use the Q&A window for any questions and after the webinar we'll |
| be making slides, a transcript and a recording available, everyone will |
| receive an email about that. |
| And we'll also include a follow up email for any feedback on the webinar |
| and we really welcome that and act on it so please do send it through to us. |
| As I said we have got an amazing group of |
| panellists today so Jane welcome from Evenbreak if you would like to say hi. |
| I am founder of Evenbreak. |
| SARAH: Rosa has fought her illness to |
| be here today. |
| I am a careers coach at Evenbreak, |
| I specifically work very creatively and as a motivational coach and I just |
| wanted to share with everyone I have lived experience of dyslexia and ADHD |
| and I am thinking now dyspraxia so it's a pleasure to be here today. |
| SARAH: Jess over to you, apologies we |
| had an issue there. |
| Perhaps just introduce yourself. |
| by day that's the correct |
| title I work for, but I am not coming in in that capacity. |
| I am the UK Government Co-Chair of Civil Service Neurodiversity Network |
| which is a start led volunteering network across the civil service. |
| So I am coming into this conversation with that hat on. |
| So I am not talking government policy today mostly lived experience or as my |
| co-chair. |
| SARAH: Fantastic and also very |
| prolific on LinkedIn and last but not least welcome to our own Rina, Rina do |
| you want to say a quick hello and let everyone know about your role at |
| AbilityNet. |
| Hi, my name is Rina. |
| I am an accessibility and usability consultant. |
| So I test website and Apps to make them as accessible as possible to |
| various user groups, I am coming in with my lived experience hat on as |
| well. |
| From an autism/dyslexia point of view. |
| SARAH: Well pleased to have you. |
| Thanks. |
| So if you would like to move on from there. |
| We have a very brief poll because that's who we are and it would just be |
| fantastic to know who we have got with us today. |
| So I am just going launch a poll which hopefully you will see on the |
| screen. |
| Just be great to know whether you are here in a capacity as an employee, an |
| employer, you might be interested on behalf of a friend or a relative or |
| someone else you know or other, if it's other please do just pop something in |
| the chat for us and let us know. |
| Just watching the percentages go up. |
| Okay so, we hit if I just end the poll and share the results on screen. |
| Can somebody give me a hands up if they can see that okay? |
| Fantastic. |
| So you can see the majority of people who are here today are employees. |
| We have a good number of employers as well. |
| Which is fantastic. |
| Lots of people who are interested on behalf of someone else and quite a |
| lot of others. |
| So be really interesting to look at that in the chat and also get some |
| feedback from people after the event as well. |
| So thank you very much for taking part and I know that will guide our |
| panellists as well. |
| So if we could just move on from there. |
| So brief agenda today. |
| I am going to start by give you a brief overview of AbilityNet. |
| We're obviously host be the webinar. |
| So just be great to tell you a little bit about ourselves and then we're |
| going hand over to Jane and Rosa and they are going to tell us a little bit |
| about what they do in terms of coaching and career development. |
| Following on from that we have questions for a rich panel discussion |
| and I am really look forward to that would. |
| And then it would be fantastic while we're doing it, please do pop questions |
| in for the panellists and Kelly is keeping an eye on those and we'll |
| definitely save time to come to that and we're going to read out some |
| useful links and we'll close the webinar by 2:00 |
| o'clock. |
| Our services, so AbilityNet's mission is we believe in digital world |
| accessible to all. |
| So we have a range of pre services, we're fast approaching around 350 |
| volunteers who will provide one-to-one support remotely and community based |
| support in terms of adjusting computers, we have a range of free |
| service online, if you haven't found My Computer My Way I highly recommend you |
| take a look at it. |
| It's a vast data base which spans all devices and operating systems. |
| You can go in and you can look at lots of tips and tricks for adjusting |
| your computer and truly personalising it and we support any person any |
| ability and in education and I mentioned TechShare pro earlier, we |
| hosted that in November. |
| It's the UK largest accessibility meet up and we were delighted to have |
| the show sponsored by Microsoft and all of |
| those videos which maybe of interest on the website as well. |
| So this slide is just a showcase for the specific work place service and we |
| have lots of support with in terms of assistive technology and we have a |
| corporate advise line and lots of disability awareness training and E |
| learning modules available. |
| We run employee needs assessments. |
| A gap analysis, training courses and work place consultancy. |
| And there is a link there to a brand new brochure building a culture where |
| everyone belongs and that's got more details of those services in there. |
| So please do download and if any of that is useful we would be delighted |
| to hear from you. |
| So, I am going stop there. |
| And hand over to Jane and Rosa for a discussion of your coaching services. |
| I am going pop myself on mute and I might chip in because I have one eye |
| on the time. |
| But not just yet. |
| So please do tell us about some of the great work |
| that you do. |
| JANE: Thank you Sarah that's great. |
| Yes. |
| So just a brief introduction to Evenbreak we have three main services, |
| one is to employers to help employers become more inclusive and accessible |
| through online resources and training and consultancy and we have a career |
| hive which is a careers service specifically for disabled people who |
| are looking for new or better work. |
| And then we bring both of those stakeholders together through a job |
| board. |
| So that disabled candidates can find work opportunities with employers keen |
| to access us as a talent pool. |
| And Evenbreak is a social enterprise we have been going for ten years and |
| we only employ people with lived experience of disability and this is |
| so we have lived experience of the barriers our candidates face when they |
| are looking for work and the career hive is a careers service which is |
| designed specifically for disabled people look for new or |
| better work. |
| And it's designed and delivered by people who also have lived experience |
| of disability. |
| So there are for example, there is a signposting service so that you can go |
| on to the career hive, search for support organisations in your area |
| that might be able to support you. |
| You can also find lots of online resources which are around |
| employment, so it could be writing CVs it could be confidence building or |
| interview prep. |
| But through a disability lends. |
| So specifically creating for disabled candidates. |
| We also have the board that I mentioned early and employers pay to |
| advertise their jobs on the job board. |
| So we know they are very keen and pro actively trying reach out for |
| disabled talent and we have lots of workshops and employers come along and |
| talk about recruitment process and the kind of jobs they advertise and how to |
| shine in the recruitment process and how to ask for |
| adjustments and those kinds of things and. |
| And when we have the coaches sis with careers coaches who have lived |
| experience and it's that service I wanted to share with you today and |
| Rosa has come off her sick bed to join us today and she's one of our careers |
| coaches and does a lot of webinars and meet the employer programmes, so her |
| experience comes from familiarity with the candidates and with our employers |
| and the kinds of things they are looking for and so she's the ideal |
| person to join me today. |
| So Rosa, I know the benefits of employing disabled people and |
| particularly neurodiverse people because we have a number of |
| neurodiverse employees within our team at Evenbreak. |
| And for me that's priceless, you can't put a price on the benefit that |
| an employer gets from employing disable people and neurodiverse people but I |
| wonder if you want to share what you think employers benefit. |
| How do they benefit from employing neurodiverse people what is in it for |
| them. |
| Thank you Jane. |
| There is so much in it for everyone really. |
| We're all working towards a more diverse and inclusive work place where |
| everyone's differences, whether that comes to how they approach their work |
| or the problems that we solve, we're much more powerful as a diverse and |
| inclusive work space and workforce and so I think it's really, really |
| important that all types of diversity are welcomed and supported within the |
| work place. |
| It makes for a much more be enhanced productivity and creativity and I |
| think employers really do now get to see and understand the importance of |
| welcoming in all sorts of employees, regardless of their disability or |
| neurodiversity because it's just going to make for a much more stronger work |
| place in terms of the solutions and problems that we can solve |
| collectively as a group. |
| JANE: What I love about having |
| neurodiverse people on the team is literally people think differently and |
| sometimes one of our team will say something and I think it's ridiculous |
| and then I think about it a bit longer and I say no, it's genius and |
| everybody organisation that wants to be innovative and come up ahead of the |
| pack really need neurodiverse people in their workforce, so we know there are |
| benefits for employing neurodiverse people within the workforce but Rosa |
| you talked to a lot of candidates, what are the barriers they face when |
| looking for work? |
| That is a really great question. |
| The barriers are diverse and it's going to depend on the individual and |
| what their specific needs are. |
| I remember speaking to one candidate and they said there is diversity when |
| diversity and not everyone is going to be the same. |
| We're all actually built and designed a little differently even though we |
| may have autism or ADHD so certainly our needs are going to be different as |
| individuals. |
| So you have asked the question so, from my experience and observation and |