

## Creating a tip sheet for colleagues

Sharing autism with colleagues is a personal decision. When approaching the professional workplace, you may wish to share with co-workers to introduce yourself and help them learn how you like to approach your work and how you like to work with colleagues. Creating a tip sheet for colleagues is a way of doing this by creating and giving them a document, which they can keep and refer to.

When creating a tip sheet, you do not need to go into personal or medical detail but can just discuss your autism in terms of its relevance to the job and working environment. It may consist of a list of bullet points that each cover an element of how you like to work. For example:

### Beth's Tip Sheet

- In common with a lot of autistic people, when being given work, I like clear and specific information and instructions about what is expected of me, ideally by email, and including relevant times and dates. This can help me to organise my time and makes life a lot easier.
- Please communicate any changes to any work requirements as soon as possible (24 hours or more notice is ideal).
- My eye contact, speech, and body language may not be the same as other co-workers. This does not mean I am unengaged with a conversation or a meeting but am more likely focusing on absorbing the content of the discussion.
- I would be happy to answer or discuss any questions you may have about these points.

What you put on your tip sheet is up to you. As well as the things listed in the above example, here is a list of areas other autistic people have put in their tip sheets:

- I prefer to receive work via email or text chat.
- I find hypothetical or abstract questions difficult and may also interpret language quite literally.
- I occasionally talk too much or focus on one particular topic at length. If this happens it is okay to let me know.
- I may take regular breaks from the office.
- I may wear noise-cancelling headphones whilst sat at my desk to avoid distraction.
- Feel free to make me aware of any unwritten rules of the workplace, for example tea-rotas or similar.

This is not an exhaustive list and the things you put on your tip sheet may be different. On the Careers Service website there are handouts on [Disclosure](#) and [Adjustments](#) which can give more ideas on what you could put.

As well as helping colleagues to find out more about how you like to work, some people like to mention strengths that they may have, which are connected to their autism. If you are interested in doing this, the handout on [Disclosure](#) shows how you could introduce your autism, and contains examples of strengths, from which you can select ones that apply to you.



You may like to give your colleagues further information about autism. You could choose to add the following text and image to your tip sheet.

Autism affects the way a person communicates and how they experience the world around them. It is considered a spectrum condition. While autistic people share some similar characteristics, they are also all different from each other. The autism spectrum isn't linear from high to low but varies, just as one person might vary from another.

Individual characteristics may vary, but the main areas of difference are the following:



Image ref: [www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/understanding-autism/what-is-autism](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/understanding-autism/what-is-autism)

For more information on these go to the [Ambitious about Autism - What is autism?](http://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/information-about-autism/understanding-autism/what-is-autism) Webpage.

To help construct your tip sheet, you may wish to talk it through with your Personal Tutor or can [make an appointment with a Careers Consultant](#). Once you have created it, you could choose to give your tip sheet to colleagues directly in-person, by email or you can ask your manager to do this on your behalf.

