



5 Ways to Win

Guidance on welcoming autistic and anxious people back into the social environment of work, school or study.

This advice will come into its own for schools in September, but for those with autistic and anxious staff members or colleagues, take a moment to reflect on how you might put these tips into practice:

1. Ditch the handshake.

Physical proximity, let alone contact, may feel uncomfortable. Empower others in their first tentative steps back into the workspace with the freedom to choose their own greeting style. A wave is fine.

2. Limit the chat stream.

It can be tempting to shower others with questions and chat in an effort to put them at ease, but processing a multitude of sensory inputs, social cues and language is a tall order. Keep it short, simple and direct, yet warm and patient.



3. Keep demands low.

The process of adjustment is huge. To promote success, demands need to be achievable and account for the extra processing time needed for this adjustment. The availability of calm space to retreat to for breaks is welcome too.

4. Provide structure.

Limit surprises and unpredictability by offering some anticipation of the nature or format of the day. This could be in the form of a chart or timetable which can be shared discreetly in an email.

5. Check in at the end.

Provide some positive feedback and demonstrate your concern for their experience. It may also be useful or necessary to identify some actions to support ongoing progress in the coming days.

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