Neurodiversity: Untapped Talent That Can Help Meet the Cyber Skills Shortage Webcast

July 30, 2020

Webcast Protocol

:: Mute your phone/mic when listening

:: Questions during the webcast?

About the NCC Webcast Series

:: Last Thrs. each month, 1 hour long, 2pm ET

:: Recorder & archived on NCC YouTube Channel

:: Next one: August 27th, *Navigating IT Policies and Documentation*

Neurodiversity: Untapped Talent That Can Help Meet the Cyber Skills Shortage Webcast

:: Produced July 30, 2020

:: 2pm ET

Moderator

:: Casey W. O'Brien

:: Executive Director/PI
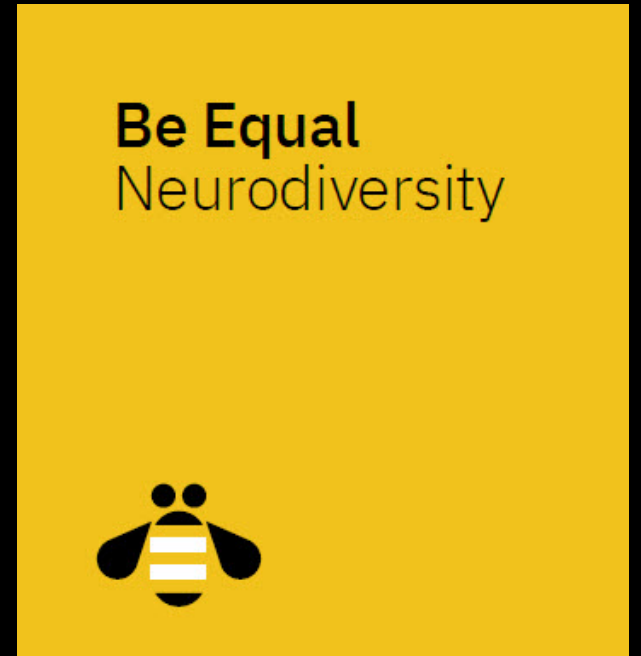
:: National CyberWatch Center

Neurodiversity @IBM

Diane Delaney is the Program Manager for IBM's neurodiversity initiatives. She leads the global program that focuses on education, advocacy and neurodivergent hiring. Having started her career in coding and systems engineering and eventually switching to program management, Diane has a unique perspective on the importance of building diverse and inclusive programs. Today, she applies her vast knowledge and leadership experience to build IBM's neurodivergent-friendly hiring program around the globe.

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Megan Roddie is a Cyber Threat Researcher with IBM's X-Force IRIS team and co-founded IBM's Actually Autistic Task Force. Megan has a bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Sam Houston State University where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. She holds a Master's degree in Digital Forensics and is currently working on a second Master's degree, in Information Security Engineering. As a 23-year old with Asperger's Syndrome (High Functioning Autism), Megan offers a unique perspective on her experience as a neurodivergent person in the workplace. In sharing her story and her struggles, Megan hopes to help others understand neurodivergent people, as well as encourage neurodivergent people to consider a career in cybersecurity.
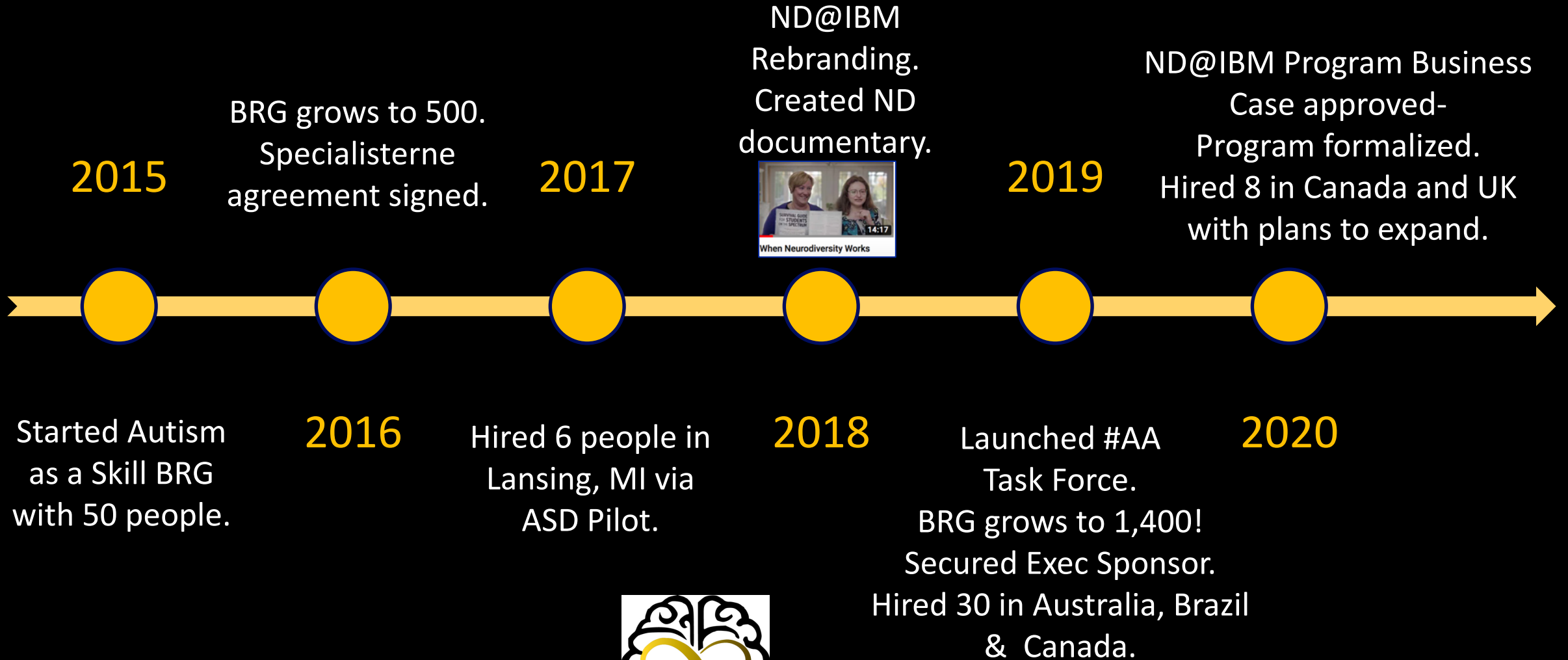
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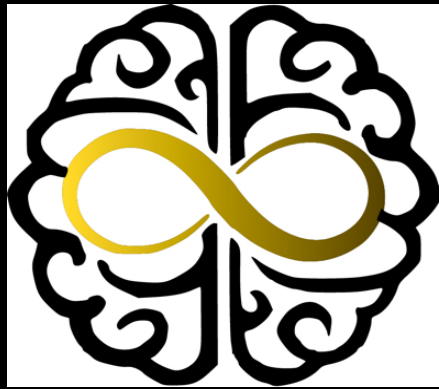
Neurodiversity (ND)

is a concept where neurological differences are to be recognized and respected as any other human variation.

These differences can include Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia, Tourette's Syndrome, and many other neurological differences.

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IBM's Neurodiversity Journey

2015

BRG grows to 500. Specialisterne agreement signed.

2017

ND@IBM Rebranding. Created ND documentary.

When Neurodiversity Works 14:17

2019

ND@IBM Program Business Case approved- Program formalized. Hired 8 in Canada and UK with plans to expand.

Started Autism as a Skill BRG with 50 people.

2016

Hired 6 people in Lansing, MI via ASD Pilot.

2018

Launched #AA Task Force. BRG grows to 1,400! Secured Exec Sponsor. Hired 30 in Australia, Brazil & Canada.

2020

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ND@IBM Program

New Collar Programs:
Focus on skills to build a competitively differentiated workforce.

Mission:
To establish a global Neurodiversity Program with a defined strategy, set standards and desired outcomes and goals,
and one which includes neurodivergent friendly hiring,
development opportunities and ND training for all employees.

Vision:
Incorporate neurodivergent friendly hiring strategies into the mainstream so that it becomes the way we hire everyone,
not a specific talent pool.

Statistics

- **Large population**: 85 percent unemployment rate among college-educated autistic adults

- **Low turnover rate:** 33% of employers believe employees with disabilities are less likely than employees without disabilities to search for and find another job (Kessler Foundation)

- **New skill sets:** 32% of employers report new creative and different skills brought to the workplace (NIST)

- **Shorter training time**: JPMorgan, for example, reports that *'after three to six months [...], autistic workers were doing the work of people who took three years to ramp up – and were even 50 percent more productive'*

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Why hire neurodivergent people?

STRENGTHS

Sorting skill

Attention to detail

Problem solving

Pattern Recognition

Spot deviations

Value process and rules

Endurance for repetitive tasks

Passionate , Honest, Loyal

Intense Focus

Deep interest and skills

CHALLENGES

Social interactions

Day to day communications

Change in work environment

Eye contact

Challenged by interview process

BENEFITS

Social good, corporate reputation

Autistic hires achieve

independence

Loyal employees

Innovation

Improved managers

Employee morale and pride

With reasonable accommodations,
these individuals can become productive members of the
workforce – and they have...Shalini Pahwa, IBM

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Working with Neurodiverse Employees

EMPLOYERS

Promote neurodiversity

Look into neurodiverse hiring initiatives

Support managers and employees

Mental health benefits

MANAGERS

Accommodate & adjust

Advocate

Practice patience & understanding

COWORKERS

Awareness

Learn / Ask Questions

Patience / Understanding

"56% of employers report positive adaptations in work culture [with] no significant additional costs to employers" - NIST

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Our recommendations for a successful Neurodiversity Program

1. Secure an Executive Sponsor
2. Prepare a Business Case
3. Provide ND training to all managers and employees
4. Utilize an NGO like Specialisterne for initial hiring efforts
5. Create a ND Business Resource Group for ND employees and allies
6. Create an actually autistic task force to advise -   "Nothing about us, without us"

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Additional Resources

IBM Diversity & Inclusion: https://www.ibm.com/blogs/jobs/?s=neurodiversity

IBM Neurodiversity Business Case by Andrew Williams, IBM
https://ibm.ent.box.com/s/scjuwrsvyp2wlefwot7arudvsaeetw2k

IBM/Wired Magazine "When Neurodiversity Works" documentary: https://youtu.be/JCADByL6UEI

Strengthen your SECOPS Team by Leveraging Neurodiversity by Megan Roddie, IBM
https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/embed_code/key/sTqGoYcQvjdib9

IBM Security Learning Academy: https://www.securitylearningacademy.com/

An Employer's Guide to Managing Professionals on the Autism Spectrum by Marcia Scheiner:
https://www.amazon.com/Employers-Managing-Professionals-Autism-Spectrum/dp/1785927450

Autism@Work (AAW) Playbook: https://disabilityin.org/resource/autism-work-playbook

Specialisterne: https://specialisterne.com/

Questions & Answers

Be Equal
Neurodiversity

IBM

Thanks!

:: Check your inbox for future webcast invitations and links to today's recording and presentation slide deck

:: …and thank you for all you are doing to keep yourself, your family, and others safe and healthy

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