

## Kelly Groh's

### • TIPS FOR NAVIGATING WORKPLACE DYNAMICS with ASD •

**Disclaimer:** These tips are the opinions of Kelly Groh, based on his own personal experiences. The points below are meant to serve as suggestions rather than rules or guidelines. You have the freedom to decide which of these suggestions are appropriate for you, in your situation.

1. **Find a job that fits.** Nobody is good at everything, but everybody is good at something. Find your 'something', and don't be discouraged if it takes a few tries.
2. **Look at your ASD as a gift.** People with ASD see the world in a different way. This gives us unique perspectives and skills that are a great asset to the work that we choose to do.
3. **Consider being upfront about your diagnosis.** Consider letting your employer or an HR representative know that you are on the spectrum as early as the first interview. Sharing this information prevents people from making assumptions about you. When/ if you do choose to tell them, bring written information about your diagnosis to help them understand what kind of considerations or accommodations you might need. \*Note: You have no legal obligation to disclose any information about your diagnosis if you are not comfortable to do so. Consider this suggestion carefully.
4. **Be open to informing and educating those around you.** The more people know, the less they tend to judge. It's easy to get frustrated or upset at someone because they don't understand you. But, give people the benefit of the doubt and look for those 'teaching moments'. Be an advocate.
5. **Don't be discouraged if it takes people some time to understand you and what you need.** There might be a lot of back and forth when it comes to figuring out the best accommodations in a workplace. Be patient.
6. **Understand workplace bullies.** Be aware that people who say and do mean things, often do so because they don't understand, or because they feel intimidated or inadequate. It's rarely, if ever, about you.
7. **Be nice to everyone.** It's very hard to bully someone that is always nice back. Sometimes people are just looking to get a reaction out of you. If you don't give them a reaction, they will likely lose their motivation to say or do mean things.
8. **Don't dwell on making friends.** There is nothing wrong with wanting to make friends, but try not to dwell on it. Just like they say about making a certain amount of money, don't dwell on it, because it shouldn't be your main reason for doing the work that you do. Focus on enjoying the work that you do, and doing it well. Dwelling will just make you unhappy.
9. **Have a sense of humour.** Be able to laugh at yourself sometimes.
10. **Know that there is nothing wrong with you.** There is nothing wrong with being on the spectrum. It does not make you any less worthy of a job than anyone else.

As stated by Kelly Groh, adapted by Kathleen Pauloff