Autistic Inertia

Fact Sheet

what you should know

‘Autistic inertia’ is the term used to describe autistic difficulties associated with starting, stopping or shifting tasks. In the workplace this can be misinterpreted as reluctance or laziness; but it should be respected as a difference in processing.

Autistic adults tend to have the ability to focus strongly on a particular task or activity; but that ability can take time to ‘launch’, and interruptions once it **has** launched can be very unwelcome. It’s important for managers to understand this autistic trait, in order to support their autistic staff properly.

support you can give

Allow flexible working
An autistic employee may work best with an unusual working pattern, because blocks of intense activity are often more suited to autistic processing than a standard work day.

Focus on the task, not the hours
Autistic ways of working can be extraordinarily productive in short bursts. So an autistic employee may start a task very late, and still complete it before everyone else.

Watch for burnout
Autistic hyperfocus can be great for productivity, but burnout is a danger. Monitor autistic staff to make sure they aren’t putting their health at risk.

things to avoid

- Avoid judging autistic inertia
- Avoid micromanaging autistic staff
- Avoid sudden changes of plan

Find out more at fraut.co.uk.