

SPOTLIGHT

on...occupational psychologist



Q&A with Nancy Doyle, occupational psychologist

Tourettes Action interviewed Nancy Doyle to find out how an occupational psychologist can be of support to someone with Tourette Syndrome.

What is an occupational psychologist?

An occupational Psychology is a specialist in adult learning and training, work performance, well-being at work, selection and assessment, career counselling and more.

How might an occupational psychologist support somebody with TS who is looking for employment?

An occupational psychologist may be delivering specialist support as part of an employability program. We can conduct tests and assessments to help you discover your strengths (as in 'Employable Me') and then translate these into marketable workplace skills. We can help you work out a career trajectory.

How might an occupational psychologist support somebody with TS who is already employed?

We can support with workplace performance coaching around issues like memory, attention, concentration,

time management and planning, organisation, stress management and communicating. We can conduct workplace needs assessments to help you and your employer know what kind of disability adjustments are needed. We can mediate in conflict and provide awareness training for your employer.

Do occupational psychologists work within a multi-disciplinary team?

Occ Psychs tend to work independently or with consultancies. We tend to work with professional workplace coaches and trainers, Work advisors, Human Resources and Occupational Health professionals. We might be within your company, part of an employability provider team, or consulting for you or your company.

How do people access occupational psychologists?

If you are in work, you can ask for an Access to Work assessment from the DWP. This is a free assessment, after which you might be recommended coaching support for issues like memory, stress management and organisation. If so, you can make sure your coach is an occupational psychologist or professional occupational coach when you follow up the order. Google the companies recommended, call them and ensure your coach is well-trained and qualified.

If you are not in work, you can ask your employability provider if they have any specialist support from an occupational psychology service. If they do, you can request this.

If you are able to self-fund you can pay privately for a talent assessment or coaching. Make sure when you do this that you are discerning! Ask for an example assessment report or a 'chemistry session' in coaching. Prices range from a few hundred pounds to around a thousand.

Is there an age limit to people who want to access the support of an occupational psychologist?

Not really. We tend to work with adults but are often involved in career planning and vocational choice support for younger people.

Can occupational psychologists support young people who are considering their career prospects? If so, how could they help and would this help be available at school?

It's unusual to see Occupational Psychologists as part of a school project, but more common for this to happen privately. And yes, this is a very good idea! Occupational Psychologists are less limited by the education system's insistence on literacy and sitting down being the only route to success. We are likely to provide hope and motivation that there are jobs out there which can accommodate a wider variety of talents.

Is funding available for individuals or companies to access occupational psychologist services?

As above, Access to Work is the best service for accessing support. Some DWP-funded programs also employ Occupational Psychologists, but you need to ask.

About Nancy Doyle

Nancy is a Registered Occupational Psychologist with 20 years' experience in neurodiversity, professional management coaching and welfare to work. She is the CEO and Founder of 'Genius Within' - a social enterprise established to help people with neurodiversity to fulfil their potential in employment and their careers. Nancy has worked with thousands of clients from Access to Work, to blue chip boards and within the prison service. Nancy volunteers for the British Psychological Society (BPS) where she sits on the Committee for Testing Standards and contributes to Professional Practice Guidelines. Nancy is also a non-executive Board member for ERSAs and SASC. Nancy won Public Policy impact of the year at the BPS division of Occupational Psychology in 2019 for her working lobbying the DWP and several APPGs to take an evidence based approach to neurodiversity inclusion.

USEFUL ORGANISATIONS

British Psychological Society –the representative body for psychology and psychologists in the UK
<https://www.bps.org.uk/>

Genius Within - a social enterprise established to help people with neurodiversity to fulfil their potential in employment and their careers.
<https://www.geniuswithin.co.uk/>

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