

Appendix 1: Interview guide

Name respondent :

Fake name (pseudonym) :

Age and gender :

Type of neurodivergence :

Type of work/Work description :

Family status (living situation, married, single, kids?) :

Date, time and place :

Duration interview :

Introduction:

Hello, my name is Jean-Baptiste Hendrickx and I am a last year student in the Master of Management, at the Louvain Management School. For the purpose of my master thesis, I plan on interviewing at least 10 neurodivergent entrepreneurs in order to explore the topic of *“Motivations, barriers and facilitators for neurodivergent people in entrepreneurship”*.

It is important that I stress that the respondents that I interview will remain anonymous, as will any other information if they ask for it. For instance, I will change respondents' names and leave out any information that could potentially lead to identification.

The questions I ask will have to do with: your own career and experience as a neurodivergent person, as well as your motivations, barriers and facilitators for becoming an entrepreneur. I will ask you a number of questions and later on type out the interview. No one, except my promotor, will be able to see this entire transcript. However, what I will do is take out some quotes from the interview to illustrate a common theme, expressed by multiple of the respondents. The end result, my thesis, will be shared with all respondents of this study who are interested in receiving a digital copy, but will only contain aggregated results, to not disclose the identity of individuals.

I want to ask you for permission to record this interview. The recording will be deleted, once the interview has been transcribed and the thesis has been written and successfully defended. Is the purpose clear to you, of the recording and in general, of the thesis? May I start recording now? Do you have any questions for me before we start? Lastly, I will just point out that you can, at any time, choose to skip a question if you don't feel like answering it. And also, there are no right or wrong answers, I am just here to explore your views about this topic. Finally, the interview should last about an hour/hour and half.

Your education, career and overall experience as a neurodivergent person:

- What type of neurodivergence do you have?
 - o At what age have you been diagnosed? And how?
 - o Could you describe how the evolution and intensity of your symptoms have been through your life?
 - o Could you describe how your neurodivergence has influenced your personal life in any aspect before and after the diagnosis?

- (What) did you study?
 - o Why did you make these studies?
 - o Did you have educational challenges? Which ones? And can you tell me more about them?

- How has your neurodivergence influenced your education?
- Could you tell me a bit about your career?
 - Why did you make these career choices?
 - How do you feel about your professional experience as of now?
 - How has your neurodivergence influenced your professional life?
 - What are the challenges that you faced in traditional workplaces?
 - Did you experience discrimination in traditional workplace? If yes, how did you feel about that?
 - Did you experience boredom and repetitive work in traditional workplace? And how did you feel about that?
 - Did you have issues with the type of management in traditional workplace?
 - Did you have conflicts with colleagues and superiors in traditional workplace? Where did they come from?
 - Did you have difficulties with hiring processes? Which ones? And can you tell me more about them?

Experience as a neurodivergent entrepreneur :

- Can you share with me the story of how and when you ventured into entrepreneurship? What prompted you to pursue this path, and could you describe your journey as an entrepreneur thus far?
- Why did you choose entrepreneurship over traditional employment? What were the driving forces behind your decision to embark on the entrepreneurial journey?
- What factors primarily motivate you in your entrepreneurial endeavours, particularly considering your neurodivergent characteristics?

- How important is flexibility in your work environment? Can you tell me more about that?
- Could you compare your time management in entrepreneurship and in a traditional workplace?
- How do you perceive risk-taking in general, and particularly in the context of starting your own business?
- How do you experience opportunities for expressing your creativity within the realm of entrepreneurship and in a traditional workplace?
- Can you describe how your interactions with others differ between entrepreneurship and traditional workplace settings?
- As a neurodivergent individual, what challenges did you encounter when considering or initiating your entrepreneurial endeavours?
- How do you perceive the challenges of entrepreneurship in relation to your neurodivergence compared to neurotypical individuals?
- How do you navigate unpredictability, both in your personal and entrepreneurial life?
- Would you describe yourself as a self-confident individual? What factors or life experiences do you believe have shaped your level of confidence?
 - o How do you think your educational background has influenced your confidence levels?
 - o To what extent do you feel supported by your family and friends in your pursuits?
- Currently, what obstacles do you face in your entrepreneurial pursuits? Are there specific challenges related to neurodivergence that you encounter?
- Reflecting on your journey as a neurodivergent entrepreneur, what factors or characteristics do you believe have facilitated your success?

- Are there particular leadership traits associated with entrepreneurship (e.g. transparency, empathy, optimism, curiosity, good communication, etc) that have benefited you? Which ones?
- Do you find that traits commonly associated with your neurodivergence play a role in your entrepreneurial endeavours? Which ones?
- Did you experience mental fatigue in entrepreneurship and/or in traditional workplace? Could you tell me more about that?
- Are there any other factors or experiences that you believe have played a significant role in supporting you as a neurodivergent entrepreneur?
- In what ways do you believe your neurodivergent characteristics align with the entrepreneurial profile?

Ending the interview:

We have now discussed many different topics. I want to ask you before we end, is there anything that you think is important for me to know, that we have not discussed in this interview?

I would like to thank you for your valuable time.