

Technical companion · September 2026

Not a Misfit — Misunderstood

Evidence, intellectual lineage, inquiry method and a testable research agenda

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A technical companion to the WEO Framework™ poster presented at the Stanford Neurodiversity Summit 2026.

**A conceptual framework should make a better question possible—
and make its own claims available for examination.**

A note on reading. This companion uses short sections, plain-language summaries and editable tables so readers can move between the argument, evidence and method. It is intended to reduce avoidable reading demands, including for readers who process best in short stretches. Preferences vary. The layout is informed by cognitive-accessibility guidance; it is not a formal accessibility certification. ([W3C, 2021](#))

Abstract

The WEO Framework™—Wiring × Environment → Outcome—is a practitioner-developed lens for investigating consequential judgments about human performance and participation. It directs attention to the relationship between a person’s characteristic processing patterns, the conditions encountered, and both visible results and internal experience. Its practical distinction is between capacity possessed and capacity accessible; its proposed vocabulary describes conditions as enabling, taxing or blocking access in a specified context. The Diagnostic Fallacy names a reasoning error in which an unverified person-level explanation becomes a consequential verdict. Conditions-First™ provides a six-move, collaborative inquiry and review procedure.

This selective narrative synthesis traces the framework’s inheritance, examines relevant workplace and educational evidence, and separates reported findings from conceptual claims and illustrative arithmetic. The multiplication sign is not a fitted predictive model. The complete procedure has not been evaluated as an intervention, and the proposed constructs have not been established as a measurement system. A research agenda specifies local hypotheses, competing explanations, implementation checks, participant-defined outcomes and comparisons with existing good practice. The intended contribution is an accessible synthesis for better inquiry and design—not a claim to have discovered person–environment interaction.

Keywords: neurodiversity; person–environment fit; access; psychological safety; attribution; participatory design; performance; conditions-first.

1. Purpose, scope and how to read the evidence

A missed deadline is observable. Its cause is not automatically observable with it. A quiet participant may lack interest, need more processing time, be missing information, fear a response, or prefer another mode of contribution. The signal warrants attention; it does not settle the explanation.

WEO addresses the decision between those possibilities. It asks whether a system has investigated enough of the situation before making a consequential judgment about the person. This is a question for employers, educators, service designers and researchers. It is not a license for informal clinical diagnosis.

A selective synthesis—not a validation study

Sources were selected for their relevance to the accompanying poster and the framework's central propositions: interpretation, person–environment relationships, access, lived cost, collaborative redesign and review. The source set combines original studies, research reviews, theoretical work, official guidance and a 2026 workplace survey report. Publication details and priority claims were checked against publisher records, author manuscripts, original reports or authoritative bibliographic records.

This is not a systematic review. There was no preregistered search strategy, exhaustive database search, formal risk-of-bias assessment or new participant dataset. Sources are not equally strong, and a citation's inclusion does not make it validation of WEO. The evidence review is current to 19 September 2026 within this selective scope.

Read these categories separately. A strong ethical commitment does not prove an intervention effect.

Kind of statement	How this companion treats it
Research finding	A result tied to a source, design, sample and outcome. Generalization is limited accordingly.
Conceptual synthesis	An interpretation or practice proposal that connects ideas. Its usefulness is not assumed to be established.
Illustration	A hypothetical situation, analogy or synthetic quantity used to explain a question. It is not outcome evidence.
Ethical commitment	A stated choice about dignity, participation and the use of information. It is not disguised as an empirical discovery.

Choose your reading route

For definitions · [Section 2: The framework and its terms](#)

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2. The framework and its terms

Wiring × Environment → Outcome

Definition. WEO is a conceptual and practice framework for examining how a person’s characteristic patterns and the conditions they encounter relate to access, participation, performance and experience. The × emphasizes the potential power of conditions over access and cost. The → marks a proposed relationship. Neither symbol establishes a measured law.

Wiring: patterns, not a fixed essence

Wiring refers to characteristic ways of sensing, feeling, processing information, thinking, learning, directing attention, communicating, responding and regulating. The term is accessible shorthand, not an anatomical measurement or a single biological variable. It encompasses individual variation in strengths and support needs without treating a diagnosis as a complete profile.

An inquiry must also consider learned skills, knowledge, health, fatigue, pain, current stress and available support. These cannot simply be inferred from a neurotype. Some change rapidly, some develop over time, and some require specialist assessment beyond a practitioner’s scope.

Environment: an ecology of conditions

Environment includes what surrounds a person, what is demanded, how they are treated, and which resources, options and supports are available. It extends beyond sensory space to information, timing, workload, tools, procedures, relationships, expectations, stigma, incentives and power.

A condition is a feature of that environment worth investigating because it may affect access, effort, safety, learning, participation or performance. “Relevant” is relational: a

condition's effect may depend on the person, task, moment and other conditions. This does not mean every condition helps someone or that harmful treatment is merely a matter of preference.

Outcome: results and experience

Outcome includes visible results and the person's internal experience. A deliverable, attendance record or test result captures only part of this. What someone thinks and feels, the processing effort required, their agency and the recovery they need also matter. Some outcomes are recorded directly; others are known through the person's account. These measurement routes should remain explicit.

A system's preferred outcome may not match the person's. Define and negotiate that difference rather than combining all measures into a single "success" score. Participation without consent, compliance through distress or output sustained by unmanageable after-hours work cannot be assumed to represent improvement.

Capacity, access and potential

Capacity possessed ≠ capacity accessible is a distinction for inquiry, not a claim that an observer can know an individual's total unused ability. "Accessible capacity" refers to what a person can draw on for a specified activity under present conditions. It is proposed practice language, not an independently validated latent variable.

Potential refers to possibilities that may not yet be demonstrated or developed. A blocked opportunity leaves those possibilities uncertain. We must avoid both errors: treating unseen ability as absent, and asserting that a particular hidden talent must exist. Performance across more usable conditions can provide additional evidence; it does not prove an unchanged store of ability was waiting intact.

The unit of inquiry: this person, doing this activity, in these conditions, at this time—with their account included. A diagnostic category, a room label or a single outcome is not a substitute.

3. An inheritance, not an invention of interaction

The lineage begins with the source that sparked WEO's development, not the earliest historical publication. Related precedents and supporting evidence follow. This ordering does not imply a succession in which later frameworks replace earlier ones.

Luke Beardon: the direct spark

Beardon's **autism + environment = outcome** directly inspired WEO. His "Autopia" chapter explicitly argues that autistic outcomes depend on the person's environment and emphasizes listening to autistic people. WEO retains that contextual commitment and broadens the inquiry beyond autism. The plus sign remains his original formulation; it should not be recast as a literal arithmetic theory that WEO has disproved. ([Beardon, 2017](#); [Beardon, 2022](#))

Lewin, fit research and the WHO: established contextual foundations

Lewin's field-theoretical tradition treats behavior in relation to person and environment together. Person–environment fit research subsequently examines multiple relationships between people and jobs, groups, supervisors and organizations. A large meta-analysis links forms of fit with work outcomes; van Vianen's review also reports mixed support for specific fit propositions. These traditions support joint inquiry, not a universal equation or a mandate for cultural sameness. ([Lewin, 1936](#); [Kristof-Brown et al., 2005](#); [van Vianen, 2018](#))

The WHO's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health treats functioning in context and recognizes environmental barriers and facilitators. Its capacity qualifier concerns functioning in a standardized environment; performance concerns functioning in the current environment. That distinction is a close precedent, but is not identical to WEO's unmeasured idea of accessible capacity and does not measure whole-person potential. ([World Health Organization, 2001](#); [World Health Organization, 2002](#))

Edmondson and work design: specific conditions, not a vague "context"

Edmondson's psychological safety construct concerns a shared belief that a team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. It places relationships and responses to questions, mistakes and disagreement within the study of learning at work. The Job Demands–Resources model similarly gives practical content to conditions by distinguishing demands and resources. WEO draws from these established lines rather than claiming that safety, support or work design were previously overlooked by all organizational research. ([Edmondson, 1999](#); [Frazier et al., 2017](#); [Bakker & Demerouti, 2007](#))

Fung: strengths and context together

Fung's strengths-based models integrate attention to strengths, interests, development and context. WEO is complementary: it emphasizes the questions surrounding access to a strength and the cost of using it in a particular setting. The distinction is one of emphasis, not an exclusive claim that strengths-based work identifies talents while only WEO considers conditions. ([Fung, 2021](#); [Fung, 2024](#))

Blume and Armstrong: variation and deliberate design

Blume used biodiversity to illuminate neurological variation. Armstrong developed botanical comparisons and positive niche construction: designing environments that support neurodivergent learners. That is a direct precedent for conditions-oriented practice, not merely a celebration of difference. WEO uses a wilting-plant analogy to make investigate-before-intervening memorable while acknowledging that people are not plants. ([Blume, 1998](#); [Armstrong, 2012](#); [Armstrong, 2015](#))

Relational and participatory approaches

Milton's double empathy problem frames misunderstanding as a relational question rather than automatically a one-sided deficit. Doyle's biopsychosocial account of neurodiversity at work resists a biology-versus-environment choice. Drader-Mazza and colleagues already examine mutual understanding and bidirectional adjustment in autistic talent acquisition. Their work is a particularly relevant organizational precedent. ([Milton, 2012](#); [Doyle, 2020](#); [Drader-Mazza et al., 2025](#))

Fletcher-Watson and colleagues' participatory framework emphasizes meaningful partnership, including influence over the questions and interpretation. WEO's "with the person" commitment belongs in that tradition. Consultation after decisions have been made is not an equivalent substitute. ([Fletcher-Watson et al., 2019](#))

Meadows: the assumption beneath the intervention

Meadows places the mindset from which a system arises among its important leverage points—and also invites the capacity to question any paradigm. Applied here, the proposed leverage point is the assumption that an unsatisfactory outcome sufficiently explains the person. This is an interpretive connection to systems thinking, not evidence that WEO constitutes an empirically established paradigm shift. ([Meadows, 1999](#))

What is claimed as the contribution: the particular practitioner synthesis, its accessible vocabulary, the link from premature judgment to restricted opportunity, and a named collaborative inquiry sequence. Person–environment interaction, environmental barriers, strengths-based support and participatory redesign are not claimed as inventions of WEO. No cited scholar or institution is presented as endorsing WEO.

4. What $\times$ can—and cannot—carry

The multiplication sign is a compact teaching device for access, conditionality and cost. It is not evidence that human outcomes follow a pure product of two numerical quantities.

Illustrative access at 100

100 is a reference value for one person and one task, held constant only for this thought experiment. These are not measured scores.

Condition description	Arithmetic	Interpretation within this illustration
Enabling / Amplifier	$100 \times 1 = 100$	Access is supported for the specified task. One is a reference condition, not a universally perfect environment.
Taxing / Tax	$100 \times 0.5 = 50$	Access is restricted. Neither the fraction nor its complement measures productivity, effort or recovery.
Blocking / Blocker	$100 \times 0 = 0$	This route does not permit access. The zero does not rate ability, potential or contribution through another route.

Holding the reference constant isolates the question the illustration is designed to teach: what can change when conditions change? Real capacity can also change through learning, health, fatigue, support and time. The illustration neither estimates the amount of capacity held nor establishes the amount currently accessible.

Four mathematical boundaries

A product is not generally non-compensatory. For positive numbers, increasing one factor can offset a reduction in another. Only a genuinely zero factor forces a simple product to zero. Therefore “multiplication means neither factor can compensate” is too broad a mathematical defense.

Interaction and main effects can coexist. A statistical model can contain person variables, environmental variables and interaction terms. Detecting an interaction does not prove a pure product model; failing to detect one does not make environment irrelevant.

A blocked route does not identify a unique equation. Threshold, gate, nonlinear and other models can describe exclusion. The arithmetic is useful because it makes an access barrier easy to see, not because addition or every alternative model is incapable of representing one.

Neither notation nor improvement proves causation. Changing a condition and observing improvement provides evidence to examine. Practice, concurrent support, selection, task differences and other changes can also explain a before-and-after difference.

Necessity is a local claim to test

Necessary-condition logic is relevant when a specific requirement must be present for a defined outcome through a defined route. Dul's methodological work formalizes that distinction. It does not establish that any condition in WEO is necessary, validate the illustrative coefficients, or remove the need for valid measurement and causal design. This companion does not prescribe NCA as a default analytic method. ([Dul, 2016](#))

For example, access to a required platform may be necessary to submit through that platform. That is narrower than claiming a person has no capacity, or that all routes to contribution are blocked. An alternative submission route changes the claim under examination.

The scientific question is not whether the symbol is persuasive. It is which conditions change which outcomes, for whom, and with what costs.

5. The Diagnostic Fallacy and its possible consequences

The Diagnostic Fallacy is not a claim that clinical diagnosis is a fallacy. In this framework it refers to treating an unverified person-level explanation as sufficient grounds for a consequential verdict before relevant alternatives have been examined.

The phrase predates WEO: Goodman used it in a different school-psychology critique in 1977. That historical use is acknowledged without treating it as the same framework or procedure. The historical terminology in the reference title is retained for bibliographic accuracy, not endorsed. ([Goodman, 1977](#))

The Assumption-to-Assertion Cascade: a conceptual account of a possible reasoning sequence, not a universal or validated stage model.

Stage	What is being added	Illustrative example
Observe	A recorded event	Asked three times for an agenda in writing.
Interpret	A possible meaning	“Difficult?”
Assume	A presumed explanation	“Doesn’t want to collaborate.”
Assert	A verdict about the person	“Not a team player.”
Act	A consequential decision	Left off the pitch team.

Interpretation itself is unavoidable. A working hypothesis is not a fallacy merely because it is provisional. The problem is the change in status from possible explanation to settled verdict without sufficient examination.

Related mechanisms and the limits of transfer

Correspondence bias concerns inferring dispositions from behavior that situational factors can explain. Confirmation bias concerns the ways existing beliefs affect the information sought and interpreted. Together they support caution about rapid person-level conclusions; they do not establish the prevalence or effect size of the full WEO cascade in organizations. ([Gilbert & Malone, 1995](#); [Nickerson, 1998](#))

In medicine, Graber and colleagues analyzed 100 diagnostic-error cases and identified multiple contributing factors, including premature closure. This supports an analogy about inquiry under uncertainty. It does not estimate managers’ error rates, establish that workplaces make more errors than clinicians, or confer clinical authority on an audit. ([Graber et al., 2005](#))

Opportunity is part of the outcome

A verdict may change access to information, meaningful assignments, interviews or promotions. Those changes can alter what the person subsequently has a chance to demonstrate. In this proposed feedback loop, the observer's interpretation becomes part of the next environment rather than remaining outside it.

The loop is a hypothesis to investigate. It should not be presented as an inevitable self-fulfilling prophecy. Records may contain accurate concerns, biased evaluations, changing skills and genuine resource constraints at the same time.

Selection creates an additional measurement problem. Outcomes among current employees do not describe people excluded by earlier procedures or those who left. An audit that only asks current high performers what works risks missing relevant experiences. This is a reason to examine access pathways—not to assume every rejected applicant would have succeeded.

6. The workplace findings carried on the final poster

The following four sources are the poster's current empirical anchors. They differ in design and should not be flattened into a single "evidence proves WEO" claim.

6.1 Adapted mock-interview questions

Maras and colleagues began with 50 adults, 25 autistic. Forty-two, including 21 autistic adults, returned for the adapted phase about six months later. Questions were made more explicit, broken into parts and supplied in writing during the interview. Ratings of answers improved, particularly for autistic participants. Raters evaluated anonymized transcripts. ([Maras et al., 2021](#))

What this supports: question design can affect the answers available for evaluation. **What it does not establish:** improved hiring or job performance; the separate effect of each adaptation; or the effect of providing questions days in advance. The fixed phase order and absence of an unchanged second-phase comparison limit causal attribution.

6.2 Support, psychological safety and turnover intention

McDowall, Doyle and Kiseleva analyzed survey responses from 985 UK neurodivergent employees. Support and psychological safety were associated with career satisfaction and intention to leave within their relational model. ([McDowall et al., 2025](#))

What this supports: relational and organizational conditions belong in an investigation of retention. **What it does not establish:** that changing a particular condition causes retention, that intention is an actual departure, or that adjustments are ineffective because some adjusted associations become non-significant. Cross-sectional self-report, recruitment and measurement choices limit inference.

6.3 Flexible working and homeworking are not interchangeable

Branicki and colleagues analyzed the UK Labour Force Survey for the fourth quarter of 2022, using an overall sample exceeding 25,000. The analysis used the dataset's condition categories, including autism and severe or specific learning difficulties. It did not separately represent every neurodivergent population. ([Branicki et al., 2024](#))

Associations depended on the arrangement, group and outcome. For example, flexible timing and homeworking did not show the same tenure pattern for autistic respondents.

What this supports: disaggregating arrangements and asking about fit. **What it does not establish:** a universal benefit of remote or flexible work, or a causal intervention effect. The overall sample size must not be described as the number of neurodivergent participants.

6.4 The 2026 report: what respondents say enables work

McDowall and Srinivasan's report includes 428 neurodivergent employees, 122 neurodivergent entrepreneurs and 55 employer representatives recruited through UK networks. In its employee support table, 72% selected work-structure support, including flexible or home working, as enabling their best work. Multiple supports could be selected; the table does not separately state that item's responding denominator. ([McDowall & Srinivasan, 2026](#))

The report also describes better manager support and lower turnover intention than in its 2024 comparison, alongside no reported psychological-safety improvement against 2023. These are comparisons between survey waves, not established within-person change. This non-representative report supplies participant priorities and context, not an intervention effect or a population estimate.

The inference for WEO: these sources make several conditions worth investigating. None evaluates the complete WEO framework, its arithmetic, its audit service or its six-step protocol.

7. Supporting evidence—and evidence that limits the story

7.1 Fit and psychological safety

Kristof-Brown and colleagues synthesized 172 usable studies and 836 effect sizes across several forms of fit. Associations with attitudes, performance, strain and withdrawal make fit consequential, while differences among measures and designs prevent a single universal interpretation. Between-person associations do not by themselves estimate what will happen when one person's conditions change. ([Kristof-Brown et al., 2005](#); [van Vianen, 2018](#))

Edmondson's foundational team research and Frazier and colleagues' meta-analysis support examining psychological safety and work outcomes. The latter synthesized 136 independent samples. WEO treats the practical cost of requesting or using support as a question within this wider domain. It does not establish "status safety" as a distinct validated construct. ([Edmondson, 1999](#); [Frazier et al., 2017](#))

7.2 Presentation and evaluation

Sasson and colleagues found less favorable first impressions of autistic adults in several presentation formats, with a different pattern for speech transcripts. A later systematic review and meta-analysis examined 21 articles and 221 effects and likewise found generally less favorable impressions outside the transcript condition. ([Sasson et al., 2017](#); [Wanigasekera et al., 2025](#))

The studies concern evaluations of presentation, not a complete explanation of hiring or competence. Treating observer responses as part of the environment is WEO's interpretation. A practical implication is to examine whether assessment formats elicit relevant work or merely reward familiarity with a presentation style.

7.3 Communication: the 2025 replication matters

The 2020 diffusion-chain study reported greater information loss in mixed-neurotype chains. The larger preregistered 2025 replication and extension, with 311 participants, did not reproduce an overall mixed-chain information-transfer disadvantage. Accuracy and rapport were measured separately and did not yield the same pattern. ([Crompton et al., 2020](#); [Crompton et al., 2025](#))

The appropriate conclusion is bounded by the tasks and design. Neither a universal mixed-neurotype deficit nor universal equivalence across real-world communication follows. Rapport findings do not justify requiring diagnostic disclosure. Milton's relational proposal

remains a framework for questions whose specific predictions require testing, not a substitute for the newer results. ([Milton, 2012](#))

7.4 Masking, burden and burnout

Pryke-Hobbes and colleagues examined workplace masking accounts among autistic, other neurodivergent and neurotypical adults. Raymaker and colleagues developed a community-informed account of autistic burnout. These sources make lived costs visible, including exhaustion and loss of functioning, without establishing a universal energy ratio or a causal explanation for every participant. ([Pryke-Hobbes et al., 2023](#); [Raymaker et al., 2020](#))

Masking may be experienced differently and may sometimes be chosen for safety or other reasons. A practitioner should not demand unmasking, infer burnout from a performance record, or assume that a person's appearance of coping reveals their needs. Ask about experience and respect the person's control over disclosure.

7.5 Adjustments, instruction and standards

Weber and colleagues' review of physical workplace adjustments included 20 eligible studies and found the evidence insufficient for confident conclusions about effectiveness across settings and individuals. Most studies concerned autism. The implication is to co-design and evaluate—not to dismiss a reported barrier or replace inquiry with a standard package. ([Weber et al., 2024](#))

A meta-analysis of Universal Design for Learning included 20 studies and 50 effects, reporting a positive average achievement effect, $g = 0.43$. This supports interest in instructional design but does not establish that every option helps every learner, or that the WEO procedure has been evaluated. Preserve the intended learning objective while examining access to both instruction and assessment. ([King-Sears et al., 2023](#))

7.6 Strengths without a compulsory advantage

Bury and colleagues found insufficient strong workplace evidence either to establish or negate a general autism advantage. WEO therefore treats strengths as individual possibilities to discover. It does not assign predictable talents by diagnosis, imply that intrinsic disability disappears in good conditions, or make exceptional contribution the price of inclusion. ([Bury et al., 2020](#); [Doyle, 2020](#))

8. Conditions-First™: the practice to be evaluated

The six moves below match the final poster. The practical commitment is to investigate with the person, not merely to inspect conditions on their behalf. The sequence is an inquiry structure; urgency may require simultaneous action and support.

The person participates throughout. Proposed practice protocol; not an evaluated intervention or diagnostic instrument.

Move	Minimum practice record
1 · Notice the signal	Event, activity, context and relevant requirement. Interpretation recorded separately.
2 · Get curious. Ask and listen.	What matters to the person; their account; what helps; a workable communication route.
3 · Investigate together	Relevant conditions, competing explanations, what already works, and evidence still missing.
4 · Agree and redesign	Desired outcomes, essential standards, feasible change, support, authority and a prediction.
5 · Try the change	Starting measures, implementation, owner, review date, feedback and other changes.
6 · Review and repeat	Results and experience; usefulness, costs and trade-offs; keep, adjust or stop. Return to step 2.

Enabling, taxing and blocking are provisional descriptions

An **Amplifier** makes a relevant capability easier to access or a task more workable relative to a constraining condition. A **Tax** adds demands or costs to participation. A **Blocker** removes a workable route to a specified activity or opportunity. These are neither mutually exclusive natural kinds nor an exhaustive taxonomy.

Five useful prompts for friction are sensory, cognitive, social, transition and navigation demands. Four prompts for choice are sensory, spatial, temporal and social control. They help begin a conversation; they should not become a checklist that decides someone's needs without them.

Review needs a real decision

Improvement calls for examination and, where appropriate, retention and continued monitoring. If there is no useful improvement despite adequate implementation and measurement, confidence in the specific prediction should decrease. New burden or harm

calls for prompt revision or stopping. A failed test must not automatically trigger an endless search for a condition that will make the framework appear right.

Where several changes are needed, record them as a bundle. A bundled intervention can be useful without identifying its active ingredient. Do not remove existing accommodations, therapy, medication, personal assistance or other necessary support simply to isolate a condition.

A Conditions-First™ Audit applies the same inquiry to a scoped process, beginning with selection and access. It produces descriptive findings, priorities and a test plan. There is no validated WEO environmental coefficient, diagnostic screen or human-potential score.

9. A research agenda that can learn it is wrong

The broad claim that context can matter is not enough to establish WEO's incremental value. The research question is whether this specific synthesis and procedure improve decisions or outcomes beyond available alternatives, with acceptable burdens and costs.

9.1 Separate commitments from empirical predictions

Including people in decisions that affect them is an ethical commitment. The claim that a six-step procedure improves a specified outcome is empirical. The claim that an access barrier exists through a particular route is locally testable. These should not be treated as interchangeable types of proof.

These are proposed research questions, not completed studies. Define meaningful differences before examining results.

Proposed test	What to compare or measure	What would count against the claim
Decision quality	WEO inquiry versus a credible collaborative problem-solving protocol, with matched time and information. Blind-code explanations and decisions where feasible.	No useful incremental improvement, worse decisions, or benefits explained by unequal attention.
A specified condition change	Repeated comparable tasks, documented implementation, baseline variation and concurrent changes.	The predicted outcome does not improve within the prespecified review window despite adequate implementation.
Person–condition differences	Predefined profiles and conditions, adequate repeated data, uncertainty around differential effects.	No meaningful differential effect in the population and task for which it was predicted.
Hidden cost beyond output	Person-chosen burden measures alongside quality and participation, assessed over time.	Measures add no useful information for the stated decision, or impose more harm or burden than benefit.
Usability of the method	Comprehension, participation, time required, fidelity and experience across varied support needs.	The procedure is too demanding, excludes intended users, or routinely transfers design labor to them.

9.2 Local falsification must not disappear into a universal story

“This authoritative brief will reduce clarification and late reports over the next agreed review period without reducing quality” can be examined. “The right conditions always unlock potential” can evade every result by redefining “right.” Use the first kind of claim.

Prespecify the task, targeted mechanism, outcomes, review window, implementation threshold, rival explanations and stopping or escalation rule. When findings conflict with the prediction, update the explanation. A lack of improvement in one test does not refute all contextual accounts, but neither does the breadth of contextual theory rescue that local prediction.

9.3 Compare against good practice, not only a caricature

A fair evaluation compares WEO with established, respectful inquiry—not only with a manager who blames the person and refuses to ask questions. A comparison protocol should include equivalent attention, reasonable collaboration and an opportunity to make changes. Otherwise the study may test the value of listening or extra resources rather than the added value of WEO.

Possible early studies include usability interviews, randomized vignette studies, repeated-measures field pilots and pragmatic comparisons across teams. The method, sampling, measures and analysis should be selected with research partners and people affected, not reverse-engineered to produce a favorable demonstration.

10. Measurement, ethics and boundaries

Measure the task—not the whole person

A work sample, assignment or service pathway should have a defined purpose. Record the essential standard and how the assessment represents it. Separate access to learning from knowledge acquired, and access to assessment from the skill being assessed.

For a technical analysis task, quality might mean error detection or reasoning against an agreed rubric. For a learning task, it might mean explanation of a concept. A measure of response speed is appropriate only when speed belongs to the purpose; it should not silently stand in for intelligence or commitment.

Measure experience without turning it into surveillance

The person may choose a brief account of effort, recovery, uncertainty, distress or agency. Record what the measure means to them. A simple local rating may help compare their own experience over time, but it is not a validated ranking of resilience or capacity. Avoid collecting sensitive information that is not needed for the decision.

Agree who can access records, how findings will be reported, how disagreement will be represented and when information will be deleted. Small-group reporting can expose identities even when names are removed. Participation and diagnostic disclosure should not be made conditions for respectful treatment.

Observe implementation and displaced burdens

A written policy is not proof that the change occurred. Was the agenda sent in time? Did the person have permission, access and the practical means to use the alternative? Did colleagues absorb unmanageable extra work? Did the revised arrangement preserve safety and the essential task?

A useful result can be unchanged output with less effort or more agency. Higher output with greater distress can be an unfavorable result. Report trade-offs rather than forcing them into an opaque index.

Broaden whose experience is represented

Much of the cited neurodiversity-specific evidence concerns autistic adults; several sources use UK, self-selected or verbally fluent samples. Transfer to ADHD, dyslexia, other neurodivergent populations, people with intellectual disability or high support needs, nonspeaking people, children and different labor markets needs direct investigation.

Research partnerships should include people with varied communication methods and support needs in defining questions and outcomes. Supporters can contribute when appropriate without displacing the person's preferences. Compensation, accessible materials, reasonable time and a genuine ability to influence decisions make participation more than an invitation. ([Fletcher-Watson et al., 2019](#))

Conditions-first, not conditions-only

Some difficulties remain substantial in supportive environments. Person-focused support, explicit teaching, skills development, clinical care and environmental redesign can coexist. The framework does not excuse harm, remove essential standards, supersede professional duties or replace clinical judgment within an appropriate scope. ([Doyle, 2020](#); [World Health Organization, 2001](#))

The ethical instruction is to investigate without reducing a person to a problem. The empirical task is to establish where this procedure is useful, how much it adds and when another approach is needed.

11. What would make this worth keeping?

WEO should earn its place by helping people notice what a decision would otherwise miss, choose a more useful intervention and learn from what follows. A memorable equation is not enough.

Its immediate value is a disciplined interruption: an outcome is not its own explanation. The person's account, the task, the conditions and the cost belong inside the inquiry. Its unproven value is whether packaging those commitments in this particular way improves practice beyond existing approaches.

That distinction leaves room for both action and research. Practitioners can investigate preventable barriers without promising a cure. Researchers can test clear propositions without treating the framework as a law. Neurodivergent people can help define success rather than being asked only to demonstrate adaptation.

A lens is worth keeping when it helps us see more—not when we learn to defend it against everything we see.

Collaboration, replication, disagreement and documented null results are welcome. The next step is to make a claim specific enough to examine, with the people whose lives and opportunities are affected.

About this companion

Jennifer Cole Cummings, M.S.Ed., is the creator of the WEO Framework™ and Conditions-First™. Her practitioner background spans entrepreneurship, business strategy and science teaching. The framework's applied origins are not presented as a controlled dataset.

Disclosure: the author offers services based on the framework. This is an independent technical synthesis, not a peer-reviewed validation report. No cited researcher or institution is presented as an endorser. Correspondence: jennifer@jennifercummings.com.

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Appendix A. A compact evidence-to-claim map

This map distinguishes the status of components from the status of the complete framework.

Claim or question	Evidence and status	Boundary for use
Observed behavior may be misinterpreted.	Correspondence and confirmation-bias reviews; related clinical error analysis. (Gilbert & Malone, 1995 ; Nickerson, 1998 ; Graber et al., 2005)	Does not establish the frequency or causal effect of the complete cascade in workplaces.
Conditions belong in an account of functioning.	Field theory, fit research and WHO contextual classification. (Lewin, 1936 ; van Vianen, 2018 ; World Health Organization, 2001)	Not validation of a pure product or a whole-person potential score.
Assessment format can affect evaluated answers.	Initial adapted mock-interview study. (Maras et al., 2021)	Ratings, not hiring or role performance; phase-order limitations.
Support and safety relate to work outcomes.	Team meta-analysis and cross-sectional neurodivergent employee analysis. (Frazier et al., 2017 ; McDowall et al., 2025)	Associations and intentions are not intervention effects or recorded departures.
The usefulness of flexibility depends on context.	UK population-data analysis and 2026 reported employee priorities. (Branicki et al., 2024 ; McDowall & Srinivasan, 2026)	Arrangements, categories and samples differ; no universal prescription.
Experience may differ from visible output.	Workplace masking accounts and community-informed burnout research. (Pryke-Hobbes et al., 2023 ; Raymaker et al., 2020)	No universal numerical “tax” and no individual diagnosis from the framework.
Instruction and physical adjustments warrant evaluation.	UDL meta-analysis; workplace-adjustment systematic review. (King-Sears et al., 2023 ; Weber et al., 2024)	Heterogeneous and uneven evidence; do not equate all design choices.
The WEO protocol adds practical value.	Proposed; no direct evaluation presented.	Requires comparisons, meaningful outcomes, feasibility and harm monitoring.

Appendix B. A research-ready local test record

Use this record to make an inquiry inspectable. It is not a clinical form or a validated instrument. A formal study requires appropriate research governance and a fuller protocol.

Return to step 2 after review: get curious, ask and listen again.

Record	What belongs here
Decision and purpose	The concrete decision, activity and essential standard; why this question matters to the person and the organization.
Signal and interpretation	Observed events and timing; the current explanation recorded separately.
The person's account	Their goals, experience, preferred communication route, what helps and what remains uncertain.
Competing explanations	The targeted condition, at least one serious alternative, and the evidence that would distinguish them.
Change and support	What will be implemented, who can authorize it, what supports remain, and whether changes are bundled.
Measures and starting point	Task outcome, person-chosen experience measure, baseline variation and any relevant comparison.
Review and stopping rules	Timing, meaningful change, implementation checks, unacceptable burden, escalation and a limit on repeated unsuccessful tests.
Findings and decision	Observed result, uncertainty, concurrent changes, effects on others, dissent, and the reason to keep, adjust or stop.

A worked-example boundary

Consider a hypothetical reporting task: a clearer brief does not improve timeliness, while a subsequent change to the handoff is followed by improvement. The first result would lower confidence in the initial prediction if implementation and measurement were adequate. The second would warrant examining the handoff alongside competing explanations. This invented example illustrates review logic; it is not pilot data, client evidence, measured WEO effectiveness or a predicted return.

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Sources support the specific claims identified in the text. Foundational and conceptual works provide lineage; they do not validate WEO as an intervention. Links lead to publisher, author or official records.

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