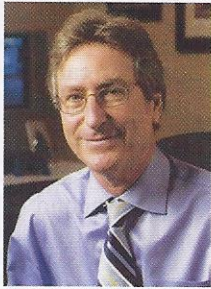


Think a Coworker Has ADD or ADHD?

Here's How to Cope



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WORKING WITH COWORKERS who never seem to complete a task? Can't stay focused?

Rather than getting mad, consider that they may have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Millions of adults are affected by it every day. Turn the situation around by trying these five easy tactics, you could significantly improve productivity and performance, while lessening your frustration.

Tailoring the Environment

Adults with ADD/ADHD are easily distracted, find it difficult to meet deadlines, and may complain of feeling restless and irritable if forced

to work on one task or in a cramped space for too long. Today's modern office environment, with its low-walled cubicles and lack of privacy, does not make it any easier to stay on task.

However, a few easy changes can make any office more ADD/ADHD friendly:

- Station the employee's workspace in a low-traffic area to minimize distractions.
- Institute a company-wide policy of using headsets when on the phone, and avoid the use of speakerphones outside of the conference room or meeting areas.
- Encourage employees to take short breaks. At least one five- to 15-minute break every two to three hours helps reenergize and refocus.
- Regular, frequent progress reports to supervisors can help keep workers on task and on deadline.
- If possible, have support staff on hand to help with paperwork.

Workplace Impact

ADD/ADHD is a neurological condition that impairs an individual's ability to focus, prioritize, plan and make decisions—all critical functions in a professional working environment.

For those who struggle daily with its symptoms, as well as the coworkers who share an office with them, ADD/ADHD can interfere with productivity, interpersonal relationships and overall employee morale.

A World Health Organization study found that employees with symptoms of ADD/ADHD lose nearly 22 more workdays a year than the average employee.

On the other hand, these employees also bring many positive attributes to the workplace that shouldn't be overlooked. They are typically high-energy individuals who excel in activities requiring creativity and out-of-the-box thinking. They tend to thrive in fast-paced environments where they're not chained to a desk for eight hours a day.

The key to maximizing their productivity lies in creating a suitable environment and assuring they are assigned tasks that align with their working style.

Sound Familiar?

If you are an individual with ADD/ADHD, even if you have never been formally diagnosed, it's important to understand your own working style and seek out jobs and projects that allow you to maximize your potential.

Another way to improve productivity and performance at work is by enlisting the help of an experienced mental health professional who specializes in ADD/ADHD.

One of the best-in-class methods of treatment is neurofeedback, also known as biofeedback. Neurofeedback creates new pathways in the brain that enhance the flow of information from one area to the next, thereby improving attention span, memory and focus.

If you are already seeing a professional, consider asking if it may help. When selecting a professional, be sure to use a board-certified neurofeedback provider. The brain is important, so using an expert in brain treatment is critical. A directory of certified professionals is available at <http://bcia.org>.

Think you might have symptoms of ADD/ADHD? Take the free online self-test at www.centerforadd-az.com/addrate.htm.

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