



"Tapping The Hidden Talent Pool"

What is ADHD?

ADHD known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder has particular neurological traits such as inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness but it is important to remember ADHD impacts individuals in different ways and no two people with ADHD are the same. Once you have met one person with ADHD you have met one person with ADHD. There are three different types of ADHD. These are inattentive ADHD, hyperactivity ADHD and combined type ADHD where individuals have both inattentive and hyperactivity ADHD. Some people with ADHD may manage their ADHD with medication. It is important to remember that an individual with ADHD does not grow out of having ADHD. If you have ADHD you have ADHD for life. Many individuals with ADHD have learnt coping mechanisms and strategies to make the most of their strengths in the workplace.

However, some people with ADHD are moving away from the medical definition of ADHD and are switching to social model language around ADHD. Some people with ADHD prefer terms such as VAST which stands for variable attention stimulation trait and advocates of this term argue that VAST focuses on the cognitive strengths and abilities of a person with ADHD instead of focusing on the overly negative medical language of ADHD which places a heavy emphasis on the ideas of deficit and disorder.

Key Statistics

- 7 Million US children (11.4%) have been diagnosed with ADHD.
- Adults with ADHD are 60% more likely to be fired compared to other colleagues.
- 65% of employees with ADHD worry about disclosure for fear of workplace bullying and discrimination.
- 1.9 million adults in the UK have a medical diagnosis of ADHD.

- 60% of employees with ADHD attribute have either changed jobs or being dismissed because of having ADHD.
- 30% of people with ADHD are considered long term unemployed.

Workplace Challenges

- Employees with ADHD might be easily bored and distracted in the workplace. This might be the case if the work is seen as easy and lacks stimulation for that employee.
- Difficulties with transitioning, prioritisation time management can be difficult for some employees with ADHD.
- Working memory, executive functioning can be challenges in the workplace and this can cause friction with other employees in the workplace.
- Employees with ADHD might frustrate and unintentionally annoy other colleagues in the workplace. This can be attributed to hyperactivity, perhaps they might get easily distracted or perhaps they frequently interrupt in meetings or they may struggle to process information from a conversation. This can be frustrating for other colleagues in the workplace.
- Some employees with ADHD might struggle with sensory overload. This might present itself in the form of a noisy open plan office. Perhaps fluorescent lighting in the building. Noisy meetings or external noise can also cause sensory overload. Strong perfume smells and strong food smells from the canteen can also cause sensory overload for some employees with ADHD.

Workplace Accommodations

- Quiet workspace with fixed desk space and access to noise-cancelling headphones can help reduce workplace stress and distractions.
- Tech apps such as Asana can help an employee with ADHD with prioritisation and transitioning during the working day.
- Flexible working such as the option to work from home can help employees with ADHD thrive in the workplace.
- Use of rag (red, amber, green) status trackers and colour coded folders can help an employee with ADHD prioritise tasks during the working day.
- Screen reading software and alt text can help employees with ADHD navigate reports and other written documents.

- Replace fluorescent lighting with incandescent lighting benefits ADHD employees but will also benefit all employees in your organisation.

Further Reading

- ADHD AUTISM, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia (Understanding) (Family Doctor Books) – Colin Terrell & Terri Passenger
- How to Parent Children with ADHD: 48 Techniques & Strategies to Understand and Support Your Neurodivergent Child. Manage and Improve Your Kid’s emotional regulation, focus and self-control – Krissa Laine
- Dirty Laundry: Why Adults with ADHD Are so Ashamed and What We Can to Help – Richard Pink, Roxanne Pink et al.
- How to ADHD – Jessica McCabe and Souvenir Audio
- UNMASKED: The Ultimate Guide to ADHD, Autism and Neurodivergence
- [Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder \(ADHD\) - Symptoms - NHS](#)
- [What is ADHD - About ADHD](#)
- [What Is ADHD? Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Symptoms, Causes, Treatments](#)
- [Home - ADHD Foundation : ADHD Foundation](#)