

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Adult ADHD and its Impact on the Workplace

Do you have trouble focusing at work? Feel disorganized? Worry that your inability to stay on task will cause you to lose your job? You are not alone. An estimated 10-12 million Americans have adult Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). For those adults who have ADHD, work can present a set of special challenges that can make it difficult to get through a workday. However, these challenges do not need to be your downfall. With awareness of your challenges, treatment if needed and coping strategies, you can be successful in the workplace.

Get Evaluated

If you suspect ADHD is an issue for you, talk to your doctor. A psychiatrist, or licensed counselor can make an assessment and recommend a plan for treatment.

Be Aware of Your Challenges

While ADHD varies in severity, many people with ADHD have more difficulty with attention, working memory, and sometimes communication. Some commonly affected work related areas include:

- Time Management
- Organization
- Listening
- Procrastination
- Attention to details
- Tardiness
- Controlling emotions

ADHD can have an emotional impact on an employee as well. It can lead to issues such as depression or low self-esteem for those who are unable to perform well at work due to these challenges.

Manage the Difficulties

There are steps an employee can take to ease the difficulties mentioned above. The following strategies can be used to help cope with ADHD.

- Re-arrange your workspace. Limit external distractions by sitting in low traffic areas, wearing a headset, and organizing your work area.
- Know your body clock. Figure out which times of the day you are more alert and focused. When possible, schedule important tasks during those times.
- Take frequent short breaks. Taking quick breaks at least once an hour has been proven to improve your ability to concentrate. Set an alarm as a reminder to stand up, take deep breaths, take a walk down the hall, or step outside for a couple minutes.
- Make daily to-do lists. Large to do lists can be overwhelming and sometimes ignored. Each day make a shorter list of the top priorities for that day.
- Meet with your supervisor. Ask if you can meet weekly with your supervisor to give them a progress report on your projects/tasks. This will help you avoid procrastination and keep you on target.

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