



# 10 Rules for ADHD-Proof Productivity

**ADHD can be a workplace liability, it's true. Lost productivity can cost \$209 to \$6,699 per person depending on the severity of symptoms — and it can increase your likelihood of termination<sup>1</sup>. But it can also mean unparalleled innovation, dynamic interpersonal skills, and creative leadership. The trick is learning to get things done when you must.**

## 1. Tackle your inbox at set times.

Don't waste time by checking your e-mail too frequently — then falling down the Internet black hole. Set an alarm, and dive into your unread folder each time it goes off. Add each task to your to-do list, reply to confirm you will take care of it, and archive the message.

## 2. Get physically active before tackling a boring task.

Walking up and down a few flights of stairs, doing a crossword puzzle, or playing Candy Crush for 15 minutes enhances your executive functioning — priming you for the work ahead.

## 3. Boost your reading with color.

When sifting through a long report, cover the page with a sheet of transparent colored plastic to boost your comprehension. When reading digitally, use the highlighting tool.

## 4. Set a timer for each task.

People with ADHD often have a poor sense of time. Instead of giving yourself all day to finish that memo, allot two hours. Set a computer or phone alert.

## 5. List your top 10 daily to-dos.

Write them on a white board or use an app like [2Do](#). If your priorities shift, alter the list with a swipe.

## 6. Reserve 15 minutes each day to clear your desk and organize your paperwork.

Avoid “buried desk” syndrome this way. If you wait to get organized “later,” it will never happen.

## 7. Log deadlines in Google Calendar.

Count backward from each project's due date, and set email reminders when intermediate stages must be completed.

## 8. Take copious notes in meetings.

This not only helps you focus, but also provides an outlet for restlessness. If your handwriting is messy, ask to bring your laptop.

## 9. Keep a record of all requests.

People with ADHD don't always remember spoken instructions. Write it down, or log it in your phone, where the “sticky note” can't get lost.

## 10. Limit your availability.

Make it clear to co-workers that you can't be disturbed outside of your prearranged “office hours.”

<sup>1</sup> “Cost of ADHD.” CHADD. (2017). Web. <http://www.chadd.org/Understanding-ADHD/About-ADHD/Data-and-Statistics/Cost-of-ADHD.aspx>