



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 termination¹. 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.”

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