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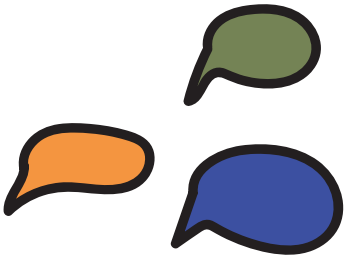
Helping workplaces support employees with ADHD



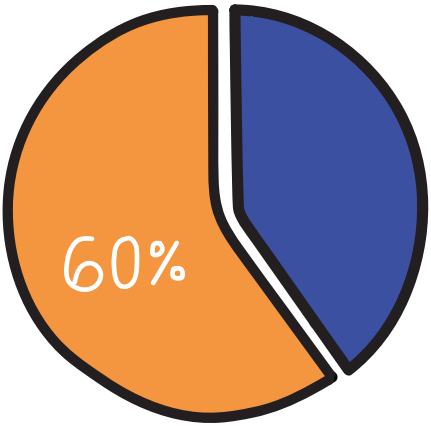
WHAT IS ADHD?

Understanding Your Employees' Brains

ADHD, also known as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, is a common neurodevelopmental disorder that can be found in all age ranges. They experience symptoms such as hyperactivity, impulsivity, short attention span, fidgeting, etc. Those with ADHD have difficulty with executive functioning skills. There are many different methods to manage their symptoms.

"...more than 60% of children with ADHD still have it as adults."

Michele Jordan, *Adult ADHD: Statistics and Facts,* WebMD



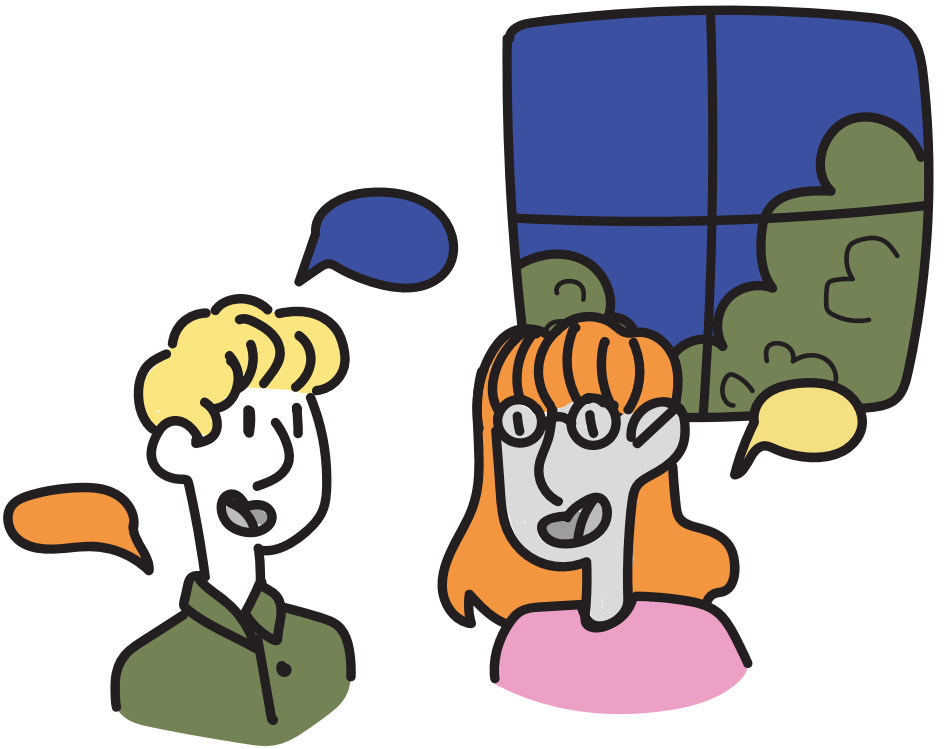
WHAT IS THEIR SUPERPOWER?

"...an employee with ADHD may be the quintessential 'diamond in the rough'..."

Randal Robbins, *The Untapped Potential of the ADHD Employee in the Workplace*

Their Outstanding Potential

People with ADHD are smart and capable. There have been many successful people with ADHD, for example, Bill Gates and Michael Phelps. Those with ADHD have the ability to hyper-focus. They work hard and when they focus on a task they can work fast. They are able to focus on topics they are passionate about and are able to create and learn in mass amounts. They can reach a type of flow in that hyper-focus that makes them even more productive. With this hyper-focus comes grand amounts of energy, the energy they put towards their work. People with ADHD prefer variety. They move from task to task, no two tasks being the same. This keeps them moving and their minds stimulated.

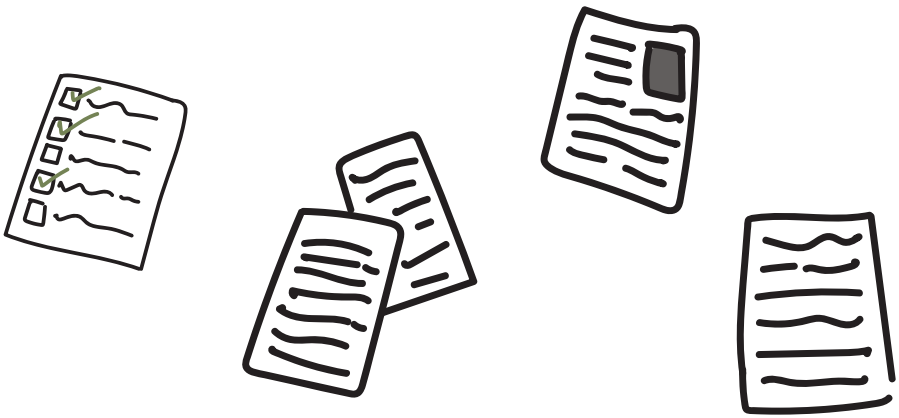


Their Innovative Minds

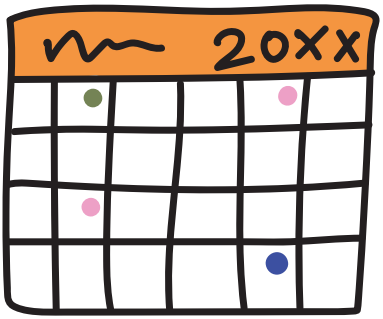
They are very social. Their ability to connect with others is very important for the workplace's social environment and the collaborative side of office work, the teamwork. They can work with others and work on their own successfully. They tend to be imaginative and creative thinkers. This allows them to brainstorm amazing ideas. Their neurodiverse brains give them a different perspective, which means they approach their tasks differently. They are very creative people who tend to gravitate towards creative fields, for example, Graphic Design. Having creative, dedicated, and energetic employees on staff will help improve the productivity of the office. They have so much potential and can do so much good.

"...ADHD employees have a special propensity to outperform other employees when managed properly."

Randal Robbins, *The Untapped Potential of the ADHD Employee in the Workplace*



WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Help and Support

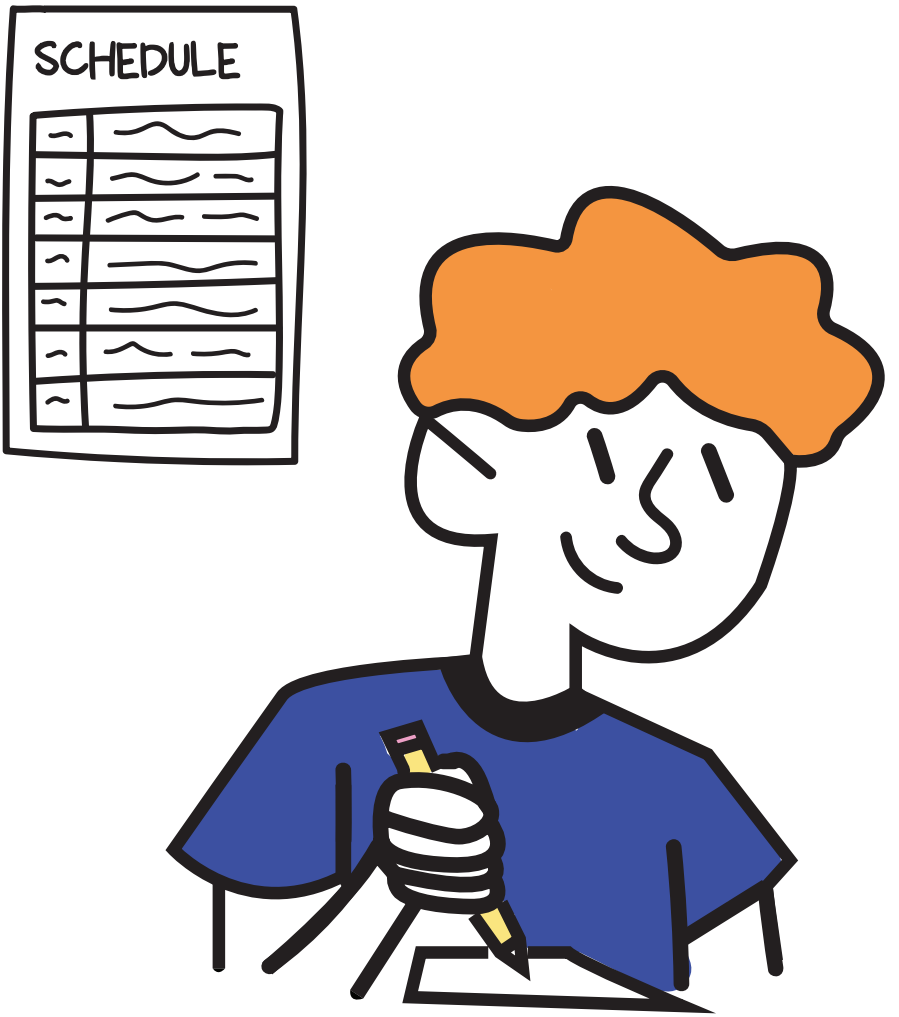
As the Human Resource Officer at your company, you have a variety of important tasks related to your job. For example, taking care of the well-being of the employees and hiring the correct personnel. You help the office run efficiently and keep the vibe of the space comfortable and professional. What you do is important, you are important. You are the advocate for the needs of the employees. People with ADHD are smart and cable but need to be accommodated properly. This where you come in.

Implementing Universal Design

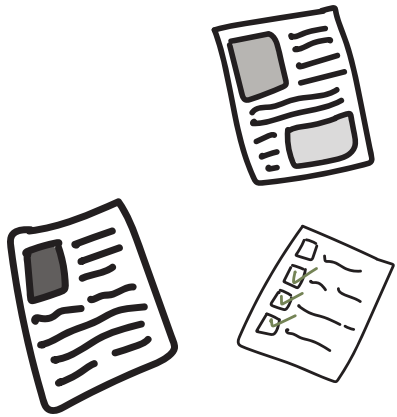
The article, “Universal Design – Assisting Accessibility” by Mary Ann Jackson, explains there are Seven Principles of Universal Design:

- Equitable use
- Flexibility in use
- Simple and intuitive
- Perceptible information
- Tolerance for error
- Low physical effort
- Size and space for approach and use

These Seven Principles can be implemented in physical and nonphysical accommodations in the work environment. Using this system has been proven to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Being properly accommodated allows them to thrive. Undiagnosed people can also benefit from these accommodations.


SCHEDULE

Accommodations

People with ADHD are an incredible asset to any job, but due to a lack of accommodations, they are not able to achieve their full potential. In order to help them be more productive in the workplace and help them feel more included, happy, and comfortable they need to be accommodated. Accommodations can be implemented either generalized for all employees or individualized for specific employees with ADHD depending on your workplace and company. Either way, here are some accommodations you can implement in your work place to better improve the productivity of your employees with ADHD:

- Able to physically move around workplace
- Flexible office space
- Open and informal work environment
- Clear and attainable goals
- Constructive and consistent feedback
- Encouragement
- Structured time management or a flexible schedule
- Optional work from home
- Breaks during the day