

title: **Need advice: How to disclose my ADHD at my new job to get proper accommodations (or should I?)**

id: g2wkgq

url: [here](https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/g2wkgq/need_advice_how_to_disclose_my_adhd_at): https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/g2wkgq/need_advice_how_to_disclose_my_adhd_at

num_comments: 20

num_up_votes: 16

upvote_ratio: 0.91

Post Text

Because of my ADHD, I need much more quiet and more time to think well enough to solve any sort of coding problems. I can think in a space with some noise as need be, as I've worked as a TA at my college, and I've taught at a coding camp with noisy kids. However, having quiet makes me able to think a lot more, and constant noise is overwhelming for me, often causing my mind to go blank. When I interviewed at my job I'm starting after I graduate in May, we got a tour of the facility. It seemed that only the people there for interview day were there, so it was hard to tell what the office atmosphere is usually like. One of the main rooms where I assume I would be expected to work had a lot of work stations in it. I have been told that the programming is all pair programming, so I assume that would be a lot of talking. There were small meeting rooms that looked like they would be a much better space for me to work in. I'm starting work remotely, but at some point after the pandemic ends, I will be working in the office. On the job application form, I had put that I chose not to disclose whether or not I had a disability. A person working at the disability office at my school had advised me not to bring up ADHD until after I get the job offer, so I haven't mentioned it at all yet. How do I navigate getting adequate accommodations? Graduating with a BA in compsci and no internships, I feel that I will already be at a disadvantage compared to other entry-level devs, so I worry that if I don't get proper accommodations, I will not be able to do my job well enough to keep it. I need this job so I can afford to move out with my partner who needs to escape their abusive parents. Thank you in advance for any advice!

Comments

Commenter_2

ID: fno19v7, Upvotes: 18

We had this topic just yesterday

https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/g23qm3/disclosure_when_applying_for_jobs/

tl;dr you shouldn't

I have the same problem but I have noise cancelling headphones and can work with them no matter how loud it is around me. I am listening to music, often times it's music to focus, there are tons of material on youtube. It's not noise that makes us unable to focus, it is more that our attention jumps to whatever conversation is going on. With some monotone music your attention will stay where ever you it is in my experience.

Commenter_3

ID: fnolq6t, Upvotes: 2

This is how I get through homework. I need noise canceling headphones with simple music to work.

Commenter_4

ID: fnp8qyw, Upvotes: 4

Headphones don't help with visual noise in an open office plan I actually had a coworker build a set of blinders onto his glasses so he could only see looking directly ahead (at his screen).

He looked ridiculous, but I guess it worked, because I had to leave that place and he's still there!

Commenter_3

ID: fnp8zw4, Upvotes: 3

If it works! I've gotten used to visual distractions I guess. Noise is what bugs me, I try to force my self to focus, then get frustrated at myself then it goes downhill haha

Commenter_4

ID: fnpbnmq, Upvotes: 2

Yeah, "it's not stupid if it works". I seem to have just as much problem with visual 'noise' as I do with aural. I actually dug out a method for [toggling my screen into g rayscale]([https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/ezwy6o/anyone_have_proble m_with_visual_noise_and_use/](https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/ezwy6o/anyone_have_proble_m_with_visual_noise_and_use/)), just to see if it helps (short answer: "kind of").

My solution with an open office job was to leave and to working remote full time .. which was great until my startup laid us all off this month. ;)

Commenter_3

ID: fnpd3wy, Upvotes: 2

Sorry to hear that! Yeah my college is all online so that helps, but i have to work when my toddler is asleep and with noise canceling headphones or it dosent work, he screaming just gets to me. And anyone else talking distracts me enough.

I also have a big desk and face it away from people so maybe that's why I haven't had issues with other distractions.

Commenter_5

ID: fnp2qtu, Upvotes: 1

Yeah, I just recently was diagnosed and got on meds also, but I'm not informing future employers of my status. As much as we've progressed as a society there is still a stigma around mental illness. Even a top performer is likely to get funny looks from at least some of the people they work with, and that can have a negative impact.

Commenter_6

ID: fnpzuu7, Upvotes: 1

> It's not noise that makes us unable to focus, it is more that our attention jumps to whatever conversation is going on. With some monotone music your attention will stay where ever you it is in my experience.

This is how I do it. I have a few songs that I listen to that 'get me in the groove'. In fact, I really think they help me hyperfocus. And when it works, it WORKS. Like a gaddam superpower.

And I basically play the song on repeat over and over.

People ask, "don't you get sick of that song???"

Me: No. (with a smile).

Them: Are you INSANE?

Me: (laughs) if I was would I be conscious of it?

Commenter_7

ID: fnohu54, Upvotes: 8

I'm in the UK and understand the market is very different depending on where you are but I'll give my 2 cents.

Context: I'm a bootcamper, F, over 30s, and my misophonia is maddening.

My personal opinion is: the right company will appreciate you disclosing it and will do their best to make reasonable adjustments.

I disclosed it and had no issues whatsoever. Instead of being given a huge and dry book, they paid for a more interactive online course. They also let me WFH (ha!) if I feel like I need it (to concentrate more or if I feel like I have to catch-up on reading, etc).

In-ear earphones is a must for me (headphones hurt my head), I'm always listening to rain when I need to focus.

Also, I understand the stress of being an entry-level engineer. Feel free to DM me if you ever need to vent or need advice.

Commenter_8

ID: fno632y, Upvotes: 11

I would not bring it up as in "I have adhd", but I would say "I work better in quiet environments, is that possible?"

Commenter_9

ID: fno5s9m, Upvotes: 5

It's a protected disability. It is literally a crime if they do not accommodate you and you are unmedicated. (In the United States)

But, it's not as simple as just being diagnosed to have protection:

<http://www.disabilityresource.org/47-adhd-and-the-protection-under-the-ada>

You need to have it be demonstrated that it effects your life greatly, maybe your doctor would need to write a note, or something to establish this. Ask your doctor about this.

Edit: this link basically says an employee who provided docs got protection under ADA:

<https://hrdailyadvisor.blr.com/2015/09/14/wait-adhd-is-a-disability/>

Commenter_10

ID: fnofila, Upvotes: 6

My 2c on this. Is don't disclose, even if shit hits the fan, human nature is what it is, you're giving them the excuse to do away with you at first sign of trouble. It may there are laws but until A.) They are enforced properly B.) They don't come up with creative ways to circumvent them; It's a problem. You're better off carving a niche where your non-linear thinking shines and creating systems that support you to do a decent job. You can always make requests like I need quite areas or other things that seems fit, but always present such requests as being beneficial for the company to give you.

Thankfully ADHD is no longer a big problem for me, but this has been my experience now 9 years coding

Commenter_11

ID: focbp7r, Upvotes: 1

Why is it not a problem anymore?

Commenter_10

ID: fomqfcw, Upvotes: 1

/u/sniR_ Well it's nearly gone away, because I worked to cure/improve it.

Commenter_11

ID: fomucg1, Upvotes: 1

I humbly ask for tips please :)

Commenter_10

ID: fon8cvf, Upvotes: 1

Have a read here: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-step-process-boost-focus-working-memory-adhd-andrew-terry-buttgieg/> you'll get some ideas.

Commenter_11

ID: fon9dr0, Upvotes: 1

Wow thats very detailed. Thank you very much I will read into it this evening

Unknown_User

ID: fnpp3vf, Upvotes: 1

Won't you be pair programming as well? What sort of accommodation do you want? To work by yourself in a quiet room, or to pair in a quiet room?

Commenter_6

ID: fnq2s6v, Upvotes: 0

>Graduating with a BA in compsci and no internships, I feel that I will already be at a disadvantage compared to other entry-level devs, so I worry that if I don't get proper accommodations, I will not be able to do my job well enough to keep it. I need this job so I can afford to move out with my partner who needs to escape their abusive parents.

I wouldn't say shit. You are walking into a new job as a newbie fresh out of college. There is no advantage I can see.

If you walk in and start up with the "I have a disability. I need special bullshit." odds are they WILL NOT say "Oh wow! Here is all the special crap you need."

They will likely instead (when you aren't looking) roll their eyes and say "this kid just started and already he's a pain in the ass. Get rid of him."

DO NOT start off work being a pain in the ass. NO ONE wants a pain in the ass worker, especially one right out of college. **BE A CODING MACHINE.** Get work done correctly, timely, efficiently - and they will love you. Once they love you, then you'll be FINE.

Pay attention and find out what *they* want, rather than demanding that they help from the kindness of their heart.

Relevant video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMliNd2b2K0> (BTW I didn't make these, but this guy is brilliant)

Find a way to deal with needing quiet without being a pain in their ass. Headphones are good. Maybe you can spend some time in a conference room when its empty (but this makes you stand out. Not sure this is a good idea.)

Headphones are fine. They'd be tolerated, especially if you are getting work done.

Commenter_12

ID: fo96ln9, Upvotes: 3

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>BE A CODING MACHINE

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>. Get work done correctly, timely, efficiently - and they will love you. Once they love you, then you'll be FINE.

I absolutely agree, when you're starting out use the excitement and the novelty of the job to get shit done, you will eventually get bored of it. but thats 3/6 months in. I would also suggest, pick up as much side projects, small things like helping out in the lab (if there is one), organizing an event or anything of that sort. that'll help in two ways, introduce yourself to the group as a "helping/working" member of the team and kills the monotony of sitting at the desk and staring at the PC.

Also, something I realize I should have done more often at my last job is, if you cant focus just walk/drive to your nearest starbucks or something you like that gives you a quick distraction, and makes you feel refreshed (I used to go to a local bakery, which had these amazing stuffed buns for less than \$2, oh I miss those being locked up now).

Another thing Id advice, which I didnt know was a consiquence of my ADHD was, do not be in a hurry to push your code. There is a mistake in there. I have had to do so many forced pushed, phurrr.....

Good luck, you got this! :)