title: **Do meetings sap the energy from you?**
id: w564gm
url: <u>here</u>: https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/w564gm/do_meetings_sap_the_energy_from_you/
num_comments: 30
num_up_votes: 118
upvote_ratio: 0.98

Post Text

Hi all, When it comes to my daily tasks, I can hyperfocus on design/coding. However, after any meetings I have, I feel completely drained. To be honest, most of the time in the meeting I try doing other tasks to keep my energy up, but this of course leads missing info during the meeting. Generally, after 30-40mins, my mind shuts down. I think it's because my brain isn't enjoying what's going on and just wants to get back to work. Any advice? I thought about asking clients and colleagues to shorten the length of the meetings, but it's not always easy.

Comments

Commenter_2
ID: ih62w1r, Upvotes: 35
I also struggle with meetings, especially when captions aren't available because I have auditory processing issues, so it takes even more energy to follow the conversation.

I've taken to asking my team to keep it on topic and to end the meeting when it's gotten too long, and that kinda works. Definitely a work in progress still.

> ###### OP
> ID: ih69fvu, Upvotes: 1
> I would like to try this, but then what if a lot of work needs to be covered in the meeting?

> > ###### Commenter_2
> > ID: ih69pax, Upvotes: 3
> > Is it essential that it hapoens in a meeting specifically and not some form of async communication (slack thread, wiki page, email, etc) ? Or could it be split into shorter meetings? I guess sometimes you can't avoid it, but you can try to minimize it.

> > > ###### OP
> > > ID: ih6ibf0, Upvotes: 1
> > > I suggested shorter meetings, or having them split up. Internal catch up meetings (Google Meet) are usually one hour (9-10am). After that, it takes me time to get my energy back. Trying to minimize my meeting times, but it's not easy.

Commenter_4
ID: ih65oj8, Upvotes: 26
Meetings rob me of at least an hour of productivity for that day. Multiple meetings or chaotic meetings are even worse.

I also have trouble with interruptions and task switching. If I have to switch out my workspace for another to fix an issue / do some work for someone in another branch, I tend to have a similar set back sometimes. When interrupted with questions I mostly just lose my hyperfocus and it takes ages before it comes back. If I am again interrupted when trying to get back into focus then out goes the next hour of productivity.

I wish people would just leave me alone and let me work :)

Commenter_5
ID: ih7n7v5, Upvotes: 4
My org abuses meetings. I spend a good 3-4 hours out of the day in meetings with people that should be having a meeting without me

Commenter_6
ID: ih8909l, Upvotes: 4
I try and have all my meetings in the morning so I can be productive in the afternoon. I've added a four hour post lunch meeting in outlook that recurs daily. When people ask I say "I have ADHD and it helps me focus on developing." I haven't had anyone complain about it.

Commenter_7
ID: ih6cccc, Upvotes: 18
I rush to get as much work as possible before my meetings because I know I'm not getting much done after

Commenter_5
ID: ih7nead, Upvotes: 5
My team is spread out in the east coast/Europe and I'm the only one in ca. so their afternoon meeting is my buttcrack early in the morning.

Commenter_7
ID: ih7qpr9, Upvotes: 3
Oof that's brutal

Commenter_8
ID: iha3m7v, Upvotes: 1
Same !
 I am west coast on an east coast team. For them it works out that they can get up and get several hours of work in before stand up and other meetings, then they can collaborate and get less focused work done rest of the day.
For me, everyone leaves a bit after my mid day, with on and off meetings between 8-1ish. This means my focus hours should be like 2-5, but my brain hates this time of day. I am at peak dysfunction around that time, always have been. On top of that, I am am brand new to programming, so I waste a lot of time being stuck if I do manage to get any focus work done. I have been considering trying to get up early and just get off much earlier, but 5/6am start everyday is proving tough for me, only been able to manage a few days a week like that.

I have no idea how some people on the team get anything done with all the task they seem to be juggling and meetings with the ppl on the project on top of team meetings. The team also is slack heavy, and peolle are expected to monitor it all day. No idea how I am supposed to monitor slack, transition from meeting to meeting AND actually get work done. I started tuning out of meetings to work through them, but was told I need to participate more in meetings.

Have you found anything that has helped you manage ?

Commenter_5
ID: ihac069, Upvotes: 1
Oh welcome to the industry my man. This is literally it. You just have to be vigilant. You'll get used to it eventually but the time difference shit needs to go. I would say if it's your first job, white knuckle it until you get a year or so under your belt then get something more local. Good luck

Commenter_9
ID: ih6kj43, Upvotes: 15
Meetings suck for everyone, not just ADHD folks (who do seem to hate them even more). Take advantage of this, and push for fewer meetings. Often others want the same, but just don't want to voice that for various reasons.

Commenter_10
ID: ih6fzxh, Upvotes: 12
Meetings destroy my day.

Commenter_11
ID: ih6snaa, Upvotes: 5
In-person meetings are tough. Short of leading them myself or coming geared up to ask questions, I get drowsy. Doodling helps. Or finding a way to force myself to reinterpret the info. Like taking notes for someone else bc they are missing the meeting wakes me up for some reason and makes me process the info differently. Or using modified Cornell Notes, one column for pure info, the other for my thoughts and questions about that info.

For remote work:

I find trying to type up what everyone is saying helps me stay awake - though if I need to participate in the discussion I end up missing portions of dialogue. Hand notes work too, if I can keep up. If I can record the meetings I go back and fill in what was missed.

I also appreciate that meetings force me to reckon with how much time is in a day. If I have a meeting at 10, then I only have 1 hr before that to get a task done. It becomes a challenge to see if I can complete that task. Much more motivating than a completely empty day.

Every type of meeting needs to be followed by a break for me. Get up, get water, maybe do a small chore if I'm remote or otherwise lock myself in an empty conference room to do nothing for 10 minutes (not even look at my phone).

Commenter_12
ID: iha1bri, Upvotes: 4
Not always, but meetings tend to be a violent maelstrom of boredom, escapist fantasy, and hair-raising anxiety. If the focus is on me then the panic attack forecast hits 50/50.

Commenter_13
ID: ih78h4u, Upvotes: 3
Meeting definitely drain me. But, I have figured out how to deal with them well enough to move to management where they're a bigger part of my day. Things that help me:
- Having something to keep me busy in a way that doesn't pull my attention from the meeting is a must. A notebook where I can take notes or doodle is great. Quiet fidget toys like pop-its are good too, especially if the meeting is remote and my hands stay off-screen.
- A notebook is also useful for capturing things that pop into my head that I know I shouldn't just blurt out. If I don't write things down, I either forget them or lose focus on what else is being said trying to keep them in memory.
- I avoid attending meetings that don't have a clear purpose where I can be an active participant as much as possible. Sometimes informational meetings are unavoidable, and I pull out my notebook or fidget toy and do my best to pay attention. But, if a meeting isn't about accomplishing something as a group, I'll do my best to either make it about that or get it replaced with something that isn't a meeting or just get rid of it.
If you can't pay attention in a meeting because it shouldn't be a meeting in the first place, that's on the meeting organizer, not your ADHD.

- I try to be the one running meetings whenever possible, which forces me to stay engaged. I find I'm pretty good at keeping things on track after years of learning to rein in my own wandering mind. Most people seem to like how focused I can keep a meeting. But, I did make at least one enemy of a guy who really liked to think through things aloud and hear himself talk.

Commenter_14
ID: ihatm2a, Upvotes: 3
I'm going to be contrarian here and say that the right type of meeting (max 3 people) is super energising for me and ultimately saves me a lot of time. I've had many experiences of going down a rabbit hole with a JIRA ticket, spending days to come up with a pull request and then had to throw it all away because I misunderstood the requirements. Architecture planning/kickoff meetings are invaluable for me.

Meetings with 5+ people generally suck.

> ###### OP
> ID: ihay6at, Upvotes: 2
> Yup, this usually works best for me. I gauge the email threads. If there's too much to discuss over email, I request a meeting to have it all laid out.
>
> I think where I lose the most energy is "agenda creep", where we discuss pressing issues, but then one issue can on for 30+mins. Guess I need to almost have time blocks for meetings.

Commenter_5
ID: ih7n2b5, Upvotes: 2
Meetings fucking suck.

Commenter_15
ID: ih80d02, Upvotes: 2
Yes I have the same issue. Ironically I also find it very difficult to productively focus on work in time prior to a meeting I know I have scheduled. Even if it's much later in the day. So basically I hate meetings.

Commenter_16
ID: ih8ilq9, Upvotes: 2
meetings usually boost me, I can't concentrate on them but I feel refreshed none the less.

Commenter_17
ID: ih9wuet, Upvotes: 2
Yes absolutely. Especially meetings where I'm mostly there to be kept in the loop, but don't need to contribute anything. I keep Lego at my desk usually. Something to keep my mind busy so I don't get too antsy, but not too engaging that I can't pay attention to the meeting. Yesterday it was taking apart one of my kids' happy meal toys and putting it back together.

Stupid little browser games work well, too. At one point I just hopped into Minecraft to run around in circles because it's just stimulating enough to keep me sane. I work from home though, so I've got it pretty easy admittedly.

> ###### OP
> ID: ihb025d, Upvotes: 1
> That's amazing, Lego would be awesome to use. I used to try keep notes, but I'd end up doodling. I have to make sure I don't open Reddit, but it's hard not to do other pressing low-focus tasks during the meeting.

Commenter_18
ID: iha39kc, Upvotes: 2
Yes. They also require a different type of energy / headspace to be in. For this reason, all my meetings have been curated into Thursdays / Fridays. All meetings, all day. Mon-Tues-Wed are for actual programming work that requires a creative headspace.

> ###### OP
> ID: ihazp09, Upvotes: 1
> Yeah we're getting a bit better with this, having meetings only from Tue-Fri. Do you keep an agenda/notes for each meeting?

Commenter_19
ID: iibf5nd, Upvotes: 2
Suggest that you alternate between in person meetings and async ones. I like seeing my coworkers for a standup twice a week. Great to see them, share a Dad joke,.the other 3 days a week we.use geekbot to do async standup. I can see what others are working on, raise blocking issues, etc, but spentd 45 minutes less a week in calls.

> ###### OP
> ID: iihln5w, Upvotes: 1
> I'm working remotely, but every morning we have an hour check-in with a run down of each client. I want it to be 30 mins, but some clients take a while to discuss.
>
> We use Google meets and Slack. How does Geekbot compare?

Commenter_20
ID: ih7q0yi, Upvotes: 1
Yes, but for some reason I do have extra energy/motivation to work out right after a meeting.

Commenter_21
ID: ih7s8jf, Upvotes: 1
Meetings suck for everyone:

So, I think of the purpose:

1. My boss is trying to justify their fairly useless job.

2. We're trying to organize things, but the person at the helm wants input for everyone instead of having sidebars with team members to save themselves time.

3. There's a string of announcements that could be an email.

4. They're a ton of fairly pointless catching up that is geared toward normal brains.

I say this because it's important to know the purpose of a meeting to gage what you should do. If it's announcements followed by an email, we can turn our brains off and let managers pretend that they are useful. But if it's organizing things, we should take notes, attempt to say a word or two, and ask for a summary email. Otherwise, we need to acknowledge that everyone struggles with anything over fifteen minutes, and that pain is universally understood by everyone but the person coming into the meeting with a purpose that may or may not be related to our roles.