

title: **ADHD Project Managers / Executives / Clients**

id: phgrpc

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

num_comments: 5

num_up_votes: 5

upvote_ratio: 1.0

Post Text

So as the title says, I wanted to talk about ADHD non-programmers and their role in our projects. I run a software development company, and I've definitely come across ADHD executives/clients before. I wanted to hear from the group what yall thought about our non-developer ADHD counterparts. Do you have someone in your current project/team/circle who is not a developer but you suspect/know has ADHD? How did you notice they had ADHD? What is their role? Are they the PM, other-manager, the client, the boss? How do they influence your project team members? How do they influence you / your ADHD? Positive/Negatives to share? Thanks.

Comments

Commenter_2

ID: hbilbzx, Upvotes: 8

Too tired to organize this in a cohesive manner, so braindump -

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Anyone who's got ADHD and goes undiagnosed or unmedicated most likely never entered the world of project management; it is literally the absolute worst skill of someone with ADHD. So undiagnosed ADHD PM's simply do not exist, or they're actively ruining several projects simultaneously.

Ergo if someone is a PM and is diagnosed ADHD... then they are medicated. And if it's dialed in right and they take their diagnosis and treatment seriously... then they actually might be the best PM you'll find (other qualities aside, of course). This is because if you are severe enough with ADHD then you've spent a significant amount of your life wishing you could 'make the trains run on time' but thinking that was for someone else... then you get medicated and all you ever want to do is make the trains run on time :)

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Software developers are harder to spot if not well-managed. R and D engineers even harder, especially if their work calls for deep dives into left field (then the work itself looks like another ADHD roadtrip to nowhere). Software development is especially difficult because you have to be able to dive in deep on a subject while keeping the greater project it belongs to in mind, and you likely have 5 concurrent tasks of this nature. And that is a nightmare to someone with ADHD. They need to get a diagnosis from a professional... immediately, for their sake and the sake of the company.

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But I'll swing in the other direction for a second ... I think the typical attitude in this /r is that there is nothing good about undiagnosed ADHD, and that is actually not entirely true (and this is coming from someone who struggled with it for decades, so I don't take the subject lightly). Undiagnosed ADHD'ers are

unconstrained by the things that constrain others; in that medium, they have the ability to actually 'think outside the box' without it becoming a cliché. They will see things others do not see, and when they fall into hyperfocus, they will go days without sleep until they've 'brought their elephant down'. At times it's truly a gift to behold, albeit a tortured one on the backend. If they are surrounded by those that are happy to do all the little things that they are never going to do... then you have a symbiotic relationship that will produce results. And I have just described Sales and Marketing. Diva? Yes. Talks to the clients no one else can get close to? Closes the crazy deals? ADHD Sales at your service.

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Someone who struggles with ADHD who has a supervisor/boss/manager that is understanding/patient/nurturing will be the most loyal employee in the company, bar none. Struggling with ADHD and watching everyone impatiently pass you by isn't frustrating... it's crushing. Giving a hand-up to someone like that will make them yours.

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Hope these disjointed thoughts land somewhere higher than your mind's cutting room floor :)

OP

ID: hbuqwfa, Upvotes: 2

>And I have just described Sales and Marketing. Diva? Yes. Talks to the clients no one else can get close to? Closes the crazy deals? ADHD Sales at your service.

I wanted to comment on this because as the ADHD Programmer, when these kinds of situations happened I'd get really annoyed in a way because: While the ADHD Salesperson painted a great vision in their heads & the client's heads, it was no way enough to fill in the blanks to complete the project as a team.

I've noticed (in myself) that I'm satisfied with the mind-theatre of a visionary idea. But the actual drudgery of walking that path is just so un-satisfying, or incomplete.

It's weird, because when I've needed to delegate a project to someone else, I've gotten very frustrated explaining things to the next guy, that I just want to go do it myself. Not sure what that is about still in the context of ADHD & Programming.

I think there is something there about just having to do something twice, and only wanting to live it once. Also brain dumping on a Monday Labor Day where we are supposed to be off.

Commenter_4

ID: hbnllpn, Upvotes: 1

HOWDY THERE!

So I'm the last year or two I became a project manager at a physics lab and 10/10 agree with the first guys post that there's no way I would've gotten here unmedicated.

Here are things I can suck at as a PJM:

- I still run late to my own meetings
- I add too much to my agenda
- Agree to do something and immediately forget what it is and also I didn't write it down
- not great at estimating how long tasks will take lol yikes

But also good things about having ADHD and being PjM

- Idk if it's my personality or my hyperactivity but I'm outgoing and can get conversations going with all the introverted developers on my teams.
- My many million mini interest of things makes me a jack of all trades and so I understand a lot of the field and can understand the significance and context of the work we are doing. Important for motivating team and helping them understand why and how their task fits into big picture
- above two things helps with talking with bosses and with clients
- hyper focus is super handy when you have due date coming up and you have to dive into code and help team along

Slowly I'm getting better at the more project managementy stuff with time management and tasking. Haven't gotten yelled at yet so that's good lol. Okay actually once I just remembered for missing my own meeting and everyone was not pleased whoops.

And again would not be able to any of it if it were not for my meds.

Lol I don't know a single other project manager or above at my work that has adhd so I have nothing to compare too. But hopefully this gives you someone else to compare to at some level □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

Commenter_5

ID: hbpr033, Upvotes: 2

>Agree to do something and immediately forget what it is and also I didn't write it down

I'm a developer and oof, this is so real right now it hurts.

OP

ID: hbuscl4, Upvotes: 1

> the significance and context of the work we are doing.

I think honestly this is the biggest thing that makes a PM great. It is so darn overlooked almost in all of the places I've come across.

Ex:

Dev: "Hey PM, this library wont work in production"

PM: "Oh okay, so when will feature X be complete?"

Dev: "Uhh, I dunno, maybe in 2 weeks?"

PM: "Ok great"

Where as someone who does know something about development/discipline would actually participate in the problem solving.

\- Story time

I recently had to put the brakes on a client's PM. What happened was they were asking a question in a nice long CC email chain, I was in it. "When will X happen in Y system?" I mean its a decent question, but in the context of the project X was never something that needed to happen in Y system.

I threw the Client PM a bone, and asked "Hey ClientPM, who do you think is responsible for \[The Question\] ?". He didnt really answer that question, so I knew he was lost here, but started answering the questions from the other 3rd party team members that were coming in.

The other party asked "Ohh, if we are going to do X with Y, can someone send me the Y API?" When Y is something I was dealing with, we just all agreed to do only A,B,C never X.

I finally called the ClientPM's boss when the ClientPM started instructing the 3rd party guy to the the Y system API documentation. Lord have mercy, you are going to send him on a goose chase, and who knows how much \$\$ is going to cost the 3rd party company if we didnt stop them.

We had a "come to jesus" meeting with the Client Boss, Client PM, and myself. Explaining, hey everyone's time is important, and X with Y was never part of the plan. But here you are ClientPM making everyone's job harder by confusing everyone. So stop. His answer...

"I just have a philosophy of answering quickly" Bruh...

That 2 minute email you sent just burned at least 6+ collective hours across the 10 or so people dealing with this email chain.

I suspect he has ADHD, it is 100% not my place to say anything about it, but there has been other "what were you thinking" moments.