

## 8 Most ADHD-Friendly Jobs

Experts in adult ADHD suggest good jobs for your unique skill set -- creativity, enthusiasm, energy, problem-solving skills and more.

by the editors of ADDitude

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### What's the Perfect ADHD Career?

While there isn't a one-size-fits-all career that works for every ADHD adult (wouldn't that be nice?), there are certain professions that utilize ADHD strengths. These ADHD-friendly jobs will help you reach your full potential by putting your natural skills to work.

#### Teacher

Many ADHD adults find joy in professions that allow them to work directly with children—in careers such as teaching or child care. These jobs rely on your sparkling ADHD personality and thoughtful creativity, and they'll put your patience to the test. To be successful in a kid-focused career, you'll need to be able to think on your feet and transition from task-to-task quickly—because when you're working with kids, anything can happen!

#### Daycare Worker

"I love working with toddlers and preschoolers—they understand me! We jump from one project to the next and they rarely know when I'm off task."

— Lori, an ADDitude reader

#### Journalist

ADHD adults working in journalism find the work exciting, creative, and rewarding. Journalists need to deal well with day-to-day changes in work setting, covering a broad range of topics, interacting with a variety of people, and having a quick turnaround on assignments – all a good fit for a person with loads of energy, a short attention span, low boredom threshold, and problems with sustained focus over hours or days. Hard deadlines, however, may be a challenge for ADHD adults.

#### Copy Editor

"My best job was in a busy newsroom as a copy editor. There was constant activity and fast deadlines. If I had 15 things to focus on at once, I was golden!"

— Patti, an ADDitude reader

#### Food Industry Worker

Many adults with ADHD go into the culinary arts because the work is creative and relatively unaffected by ADHD-related deficits. Cooking requires you to focus on the task at hand and take immediate steps to create a finished product, while not demanding long-range planning or lots of working memory. Unusual or flexible hours, with sporadic ebb-and-flow pacing, add just the right touch of excitement to keep you alert and focused on the job.

#### Chef

"I left corporate America to join culinary school because that was my passion. ADHD people aren't mentally [inferior to] anyone else. They are extremely creative. If you are able to manage it, understand what your strengths are, and not feel bad about your symptoms, it's not something horrible."

— Alexis Hernández, Chef Contestant on *The Next Food Network Star*

#### Beautician

Those who work as hairstylists, manicurists, and cosmetologists are constantly meeting with new clients — each one providing a unique creative challenge requiring only short-term focus. They often remain on their feet all day and need to jump from task to task quickly, an ideal working environment for a hyperactive-type ADHD adult with lots of energy. Plus, the constant influx of customers provides ample social interactions and quick task turnover, leaving little opportunity for boredom.

## Hairstylist

“Being a hairstylist is the best job for this ADHD mama. I get a new client every 45 minutes and each person is so different! I can work 10-12 hours and feel like I haven’t worked more than 3.”

— Robin, an *ADDitude* reader

## Small Business Owner

Starting a small business suits the strengths of ADHD. The hours are usually more flexible than working for a company, and as an entrepreneur you are your own boss. Work settings can vary from day to day, which accommodates the restlessness and boredom that many adults with ADHD experience. Plus, you'll be able to focus on what you're truly passionate about, making your career meaningful.

## Entrepreneur

“I got the feedback in my old jobs that I was good at starting things but not at finishing projects. Being a self-employed grant writer is a way around that, because there are defined projects with a defined life to them.”

— Daniel G.

## Emergency First-Responders

EMTs, police officers, and firefighters must work well under pressure and be able to make split-second decisions. These jobs allow you to work in a variety of settings, while providing the kind of adrenaline-pumping excitement that helps many ADHDers focus their minds. When others start to panic in chaos, the ADHD brain kicks into high gear allowing you to see problems clearly and complete the task at hand.

## Nurse

“I’m a nurse in surgery, which is good for my ADHD because it rolls with my fleeting attention, but has enough structure to keep me focused.”

– Rebecca, an *ADDitude* reader

## High-Tech Field

An ADHD brain is a perfect match for high-tech jobs because an under-stimulated frontal lobe gets jump-started from an over-stimulated virtual environment. Computer technicians rove throughout a company working with others to solve computer problems, while software developers generally work independently — creating and troubleshooting computer code for programs, websites, or apps. Both jobs provide ample opportunity to problem solve and harness that ADHD hyperfocus on small details.

## Software Developer

“Most software tasks only take a few weeks which helps prevent monotony. As a software developer, the problems I deal with are diverse, interesting, and require constant hands on thinking—great for keeping the ADHD mind on track.”

– Adam, an *ADDitude* reader

## The Arts

It's no secret that ADHDers are some of the most creative people around, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that ADHD adults succeed when surrounded by other artists. Working in a fast-paced, artistic environment is ideal for ADHD adults who thrive in creative chaos. Whether it's as a TV producer, choreographer, or concert pianist, ADHDers are happiest when their work allows them to express their artistic abilities. After all, "There's no business like show business!"

## Theatrical Stage Manager

“As a stage manager, it's up to me to facilitate every part of a production: from meetings and rehearsals to performances. It gives me plenty to focus on and no two days are the same. Plus, it helps that theater people are some of the kindest, kookiest people on the planet. I fit right in!”

– Jessi, an *ADDitude* reader

## Thrive on the Job: More ADHD Career Advice

ADHD Experts Podcast: The Career Clinic for ADHD Adults  
Are You In the Wrong Job?

19 Ways to Succeed on the Job with Adult ADHD

7 Accommodations to Help Harness Your Inner Executive

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