

BUILD YOUR OWN

Public Relations



Plan

Five Strategies Guaranteed to Increase Your Impression in the World

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FOR ADULTS WITH ADHD, intentions often do not match the desired social outcome. How you come across to others is a crucial element of being likable, relatable, and appealing. This can be a challenge for adults with ADHD to manage when they are trying to simultaneously tune in to social cues, self-regulate, adapt to the social rules of each circumstance, and manage emotions.

Many times adults with ADHD struggle silently. They don't understand or even realize they can give off a negative "don't approach me" vibe. For example, a young man walked into a coffee shop and realized his colleagues were in there for a drink before work. Instead of walking over to say hi, or maybe even joining them, he grabbed his drink from the barista and went to a quiet corner to read the paper. There are many reasons adults can move away from encounters. Maybe they are shy, do not know how to approach colleagues, or aren't able to tune into the conversation—so they walk away. After a few of these encounters, the young man's colleagues' impression of his behavior turned negative and his daily work and future interactions with his team suffered. This young man was not promoted and he was told in his performance review that he was not a team player.

When adults have damaged their relationship with others, they need to build a public relations campaign to create a better impression or "brand." With support and proper coaching to bring awareness to certain social cues and help them self-regulate, adults can better present their true intentions to their peers and coworkers, to improve perception and ultimately create a better impression overall.

Part of what creates positive social relationships is the person's ability to show others that he has good intentions, that he is likable and appealing. The following strategies are designed to help you identify your social weaknesses in order to improve social perceptions and work more effectively with others.



PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGNS



What I do impacts other people

What they do impacts me



WHAT I DO IMPACTS OTHER PEOPLE AND WHAT THEY DO IMPACTS ME



Other people have thoughts about my actions

I have thoughts about their actions



OTHER PEOPLE HAVE THOUGHTS ABOUT MY ACTIONS I HAVE THOUGHTS ABOUT THEIR ACTIONS



People do not know what I am thinking



People know what they see

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1 Consider your behavior and the messages you are telegraphing

Think about your impact on others. Take a step back to identify what behaviors you do that are appealing and likable. Social messages are transmitted through small social behaviors such as facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, and physical movement. We all transmit these messages to the world, so make sure you are not conveying unintentional negativity.



2 Fake it sometimes—do a “polite pretend”

Adults with ADHD have a belief system that they have to be authentic all the time. For example, most people know not to tell someone their baby is ugly, but those with ADHD tend to be too literal or blunt. They don't do the “polite pretend.” If you don't learn how to engage in everyday chitchat, you are giving off a perception of being rude and aloof and many won't give you much of a chance beyond that initial conversation.



3 Learn to cope with boring moments

It is an expected behavior to engage with others. Often adults with ADHD struggle with trivial social moments because they have a need to be interested and chitchat bores them. Be aware of the message you telegraph through facial expressions, body language, and avoidance. This tells people that you are not interested at all, and others can pick up these cues within the first two minutes of your first encounter with them.



4 Look at how your actions impact other people

Part of understanding other people's inner emotional world is understanding that your actions impact others and ultimately how they feel and react to you. Ask yourself how you want to be seen and what you have to do to make that happen. Think of it as rebranding after you realize you didn't put your best foot forward in a particular interaction or social setting.



5 Take actions that demonstrate your best intentions

Think about the phrase, “what I do impacts other people and what they do impacts me.” Then contemplate that “people do not know my intentions” and “people only know what they see.” This chain of thought helps adults with ADHD understand what is called public relations, or the understanding that other people can only know what you show them.

If others do not know your goals or intentions, they don't understand that you are trying hard. Think about what actions you can show to demonstrate good intentions. Ask yourself what you can say to explain your intentions. Now think about roleplaying a scenario where you need to build authenticity. Identify how you would demonstrate your intention differently next time.

When building your public relations plan, it is important to remember that if you focus on your brand and pay attention to that journey, that focus will help your positive impressions grow. Don't get overwhelmed by trying to work on everything at once. Set a goal to pay attention to one detail at a time. You might have to leave your comfort zone to make it a priority, but the impression you create in the world will improve and you will start to come by it more naturally. **A**

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