Dealing with Environmental Demands

Name: ____________________________________________________________

When you are hired for a job, you might not like every aspect of the work environment. However, there are ways to arrange the environment so that you can better tolerate certain demands. Sometimes, minor adjustments can make a big difference in your comfort level.

Two things to keep in mind:

1. You will need to ask your supervisor for permission before using some of these strategies.
2. You might need help from a family member, job coach, or other support person to identify and arrange some of these strategies.

How can you cope with indoor jobs? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

____ Wear layers so you can take off your top layer if you get too hot.
____ Wear layers so you can put a sweater on if you get too cold.
____ Get a small fan to keep your area cool.
____ Take scheduled breaks outside to get “fresh air.”

How can you cope with outdoor jobs? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

____ Take scheduled breaks indoors or in the shade.
____ Wear warm clothing (coat, warm socks, etc…) in cold weather.
____ Wear light layers in hot weather.
____ Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
____ Wear sunglasses, tinted lenses, or transition lenses.

How can you cope with noise demands? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

____ Wear headphones with music.
____ Wear ear plugs or soundproof headphones.
____ Use a white noise machine or fan to “drown” out sound.
____ Take your scheduled breaks in a quiet place.
___ Hum very quietly.

___ Ask to work in a quieter location (i.e. if you are in an office setting).

**How can you cope with lighting demands? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:**

___ Wear sunglasses, tinted lenses, or transition lenses.

___ Change light bulb intensity level (if you work in your own area / office).

___ Take your scheduled breaks in a dim or dark environment.

___ Close your eyes during scheduled breaks.

**How can you cope with long work shifts? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:**

___ Take scheduled breaks doing something you enjoy (i.e. read, text, surf the internet).

___ Schedule things to look forward to during your day (i.e. a good lunch, a good snack).

___ Write down your plan for the day or follow a visual schedule.

___ Check things off your list as you complete tasks.

**How can you cope with seated jobs? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:**

___ Complete some of your work standing up.

___ Take short stretch and walking breaks.

___ Use a specialized back support or seat cushion.

___ Politely request a more comfortable chair.

___ Use an adaptive desk tray.

**How can you cope with standing jobs? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:**

___ Politely request a stool or chair for certain jobs (i.e. cashier positions).

___ Take scheduled breaks sitting down to rest your legs.

___ Wear supportive, comfortable shoes.
How can you cope with messy jobs? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

___ Wear gloves.
___ Wear a hat.
___ Wash your hands regularly.
___ Use hand sanitizer.
___ Have a towel or wet wipes handy.
___ Change aprons, scrubs, or shirts if needed.

How can you cope with smelly jobs? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

___ Wear an air mask.
___ Use Lysol or some other air spray.
___ Take scheduled breaks in the “fresh” air.

How can you cope with clothing demands? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

___ Wear a soft shirt underneath required clothing.
___ Wear a seamless shirt underneath required clothing.
___ Remove tags from clothing.
___ Buy tagless clothing.
___ Buy clothes with flat seaming.
___ Wear seamless socks.
___ Use pants with encased elastic bands.
___ Try on several sizes to find the most comfortable for you.

How can you cope with less structured and unpredictable environments? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

___ Use and write in a monthly calendar.
Use and write in a weekly calendar.

Use scheduling systems on your cellular phone (Blackberry, iPhone, Palm, etc…).

Use a Personal Digital Assistant (P.D.A.).

Use computerized scheduling systems (Outlook or Google calendars).

Make a checklist of tasks to complete each day.

Use a picture schedule showing the sequence of tasks.

Use a left-to-right work system (using folders, bins, shelves, boxes).

Use specifically labeled trays, folders, shelves to keep your materials in one place and organized.

Request written instructions to accompany verbal instructions.

Request written instructions instead of verbal instructions.

Ask for only one task to complete at a time.

Use a timer, watch, or liquid timer to know when to start and end tasks.

Work in a separate work area / table / desk / cubicle.

How can you cope with jobs that require you to work at a peak (fast) work pace? Check all of the strategies that you might need to use:

Take deep breaths when you are feeling stressed.

Use headphones to help you stay focused on the task.

Use specifically labeled trays, folders, shelves to keep your materials in one place and organized.

Work in a separate work area / table / desk / cubicle to reduce distractions.

Take scheduled breaks so you can “slow down” – eat, rest, and relax for a few minutes.
There may be other strategies that could work for you. Brainstorm with someone who knows you well (i.e. family member, teacher, coach, counselor).

List these ideas below:

1. 

2. 

3. 