

STAYING FOCUSED IN YOUR DAY



Do you wake up, fumble for your phone, and immediately get lost in a stream of pointless notifications? Does this digital haze continue throughout the day, keeping you from accomplishing important tasks?



This problem isn't unique. Many of us stumble through each day in much the same way. Two major challenges are destroying your ability to focus! First, we're increasingly overwhelmed with distractions flying at us from various connected devices. This hyper-connected state doesn't allow us to process, recharge, and refocus. Second, we rely excessively on meetings as the default form of interaction with other people at work.

Do you want to address these issues and accomplish more?
Staying focused at work is not easy, but it is doable.

THESE FIVE PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES WILL HELP YOU STAY ON TASK, ACCOMPLISH WHAT MATTERS, AND ENJOY YOURSELF MORE THROUGHOUT THE DAY:

1



Practice Mindfulness

- Try a simple mindfulness practice when you wake up, which can be anything from quietly taking a few deep breaths to meditating for 20 or 30 minutes. "Meditation is a way to train your nervous system to remain calm despite the stress of our daily lives. When you are calmer, you are more emotionally intelligent and make better decisions." - **Dr. Seppälä**.

2



Organize Tasks

- Another common mistake is letting other people fill in your calendar, particularly in the morning. A single meeting can blow [an entire day] by breaking it into two pieces, each too small to do anything difficult.
- Focus on complex, creative tasks in the morning; these things will tend to be ones you accomplish individually or with two to three other people. Push all other meetings to the afternoon. These simpler, execution-focused meetings with larger groups are easier to handle.

3



Clean Up

- Is your desk a mess? Keeping a clean work environment—both physical and digital—is essential to your ability to stay focused. At work, put everything in a drawer. Create folders on your desktop to get rid of all the random files, and keep only the most important 8-12 apps on your home screen. Turn off all unnecessary notifications. Don't let yourself get distracted by clutter—you'll stay focused for much longer.

4



Shrink Meetings

- This question might seem like a strange way to stay focused, but countless studies have shown the benefits of smaller teams. Focus and responsibility are more challenging with too many people, which is how you end up with folks staring down silently at their laptops for an entire meeting.
- To stay focused, limit the number of people in any meeting to eight or fewer unless the meeting is purely informational. Make sure each meeting results in action items, a timeline for each action item, and one person who is responsible for ensuring that it gets done. That one person is the directly responsible individual.

5



Preserve Buffers

- You cannot be on top of your game if you run from meeting to meeting. If you want to avoid wasting time and burning out, add buffer time between each meeting. For every 45- 60 minutes you spend in a meeting, make sure to take 15 minutes or more to process, reflect, and prioritize. This will help avoid the burned-out feeling that you have at the end of each long day.