



Strategies, Motivation, Health

Network Café – Welcome Center, University of Bremen

17 March 2021 – Dr. Nadine Binder

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Stay Focused

How to manage distractions ...

... and why breaks matter

Monthly Mini-Workshops

X Monthly sessions to support you in staying motivated and healthy & allow you to connect

X ABC – Structure

- **A**rrive – get focused and fully present
- **B**uild – learn new strategies and deepen your skills
- **C**onnect – with others and enjoy social activities

17 March

21 April

19 May

16 June

21 July

@ 4-5.30pm

Image: Pexels

ARRIVE



Arrivals
Aankomst

Tool: A Mindful Session

Write down your answers:

What is on your mind right now that is distracting you from being fully present in this workshop?

Do not overthink your answers

Put this note
out of sight

Tool: A Mindful Session

Write down your answers:

What would you like to
focus on
in this workshop?

What would you like to
take away
from the workshop?

Put this note
in sight
(e.g. next to screen)



BUILD

Focus & Productivity

X Research has looked at average productivity in an 8-hour workday

X Take a guess at the findings:

“The average worker is productive for
3 hours per day”

→ write your estimate into the chat



A Bit of History

- X Late 18th century Europe:
10-16 hour workdays in factories
- X 1817 - Welsh activist Robert Owen:
“8 hours labour, 8 hours recreation, 8 hours rest”
- X 1914 – Ford Motor Company
 - cutting down daily hours to 8h
 - doubling wages
 - = increased productivity



What if we dare ...

... to rethink work hours & productivity

We probably get more done in
three hours of focused work
than in eight hours of trying
to be focused.



3 Steps to Focused Work

1. Remove distractions
2. Break tasks down
3. Take enough breaks



1. Remove Distractions

Share in breakout sessions:

- X What distracts you?
- X How do you minimize distractions?



1. Remove Distractions

Some advice:

- X Designated “worry time”
- X Website blockers (e.g. NuClear, Mindful Browsing, Go f***ing work)
- X Set certain times to read & respond to emails etc.
- X Use “do not disturb” mode



2. Break Tasks Down

Turning big, overwhelming tasks into actionable steps can improve:

- X Focus
- X Motivation
- X Self-efficacy

What is the next step?

3. Take Enough Breaks

Science News

from research organizations

Brief diversions vastly improve focus, researchers find

Date: February 8, 2011

Source: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Summary: A new study overturns a decades-old theory about the nature of attention and demonstrates that even brief diversions from a task can dramatically improve one's ability to focus on that task for prolonged periods.

Conclusion: “even brief diversions from a task can dramatically improve one’s ability to focus on that task for prolonged periods”

3. Schedule Breaks

X Pomodoro
(F. Cirillo)



X 52/17
(DeskTime study)



X Pulse & Pause
(Tony Schwartz)




3. Take Good Breaks

What makes a “good” break? What do you do?

- X 100% rest
- X No work (also no emails, etc.)
- X Away from the screen (and the phone)
- X Get moving – walk to the kitchen, bathroom, or even do some light exercise
- X Fresh air



A wooden desk with a white keyboard, a blue folder, and yellow sticky notes. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box.

Review your Notes

What are you
taking away
from this
meeting?



CONNECT

Activity: More Than One Story

Share stories in your breakout group



More Than One Story

Link:

<https://www.morethanonestory.org/en>

Resources

- X „Brief diversions castly improve focus ...“ (2011):
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110208131529.htm>
- X More than one story – game: <https://www.morethanonestory.org/en>

Get in touch and join us next time

X Dr. Nadine Binder: nadine@nadinebinder.com

X Welcome Center @Uni Bremen: <https://www.uni-bremen.de/en/research-alliance/welcome-center>

X Find out more about the workshops: <https://www.uni-bremen.de/dezernat2/betriebliches-gesundheitsmanagement-bgm/angebote-des-gesundheitsmanagements-und-weiterer-einrichtungen/mental-health-impulsworkshops>