



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)

A close-up photograph of several colorful wooden blocks (orange, blue, green, yellow, pink, red, purple) scattered on a dark, textured surface. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the word "BUILD" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

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

2

3

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 two yellow sticky notes. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white background.

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>