

Five tips to boost employees' mental energy

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by John Hilton | 06 Apr 2017



Enabling a healthier brain is crucial to boosting efficiency and productivity in the workplace, according to [Dr Jenny Brockis](#), medical practitioner and author of the book *Future Brain*.

Dr Brockis offered the following tips for employees to get more out of their day.

1. Don't deprive your brain of energy

The first tip is to 'fuel-up' because our brain cells don't store glucose which is their primary source of energy. Don't skip meals or go for extended periods without food or water. That is actually depriving the brain of the energy it needs from nutrients.

2. Move around every hour

Secondly, we need to move it. Prolonged sitting slows down the blood flow to the pre-frontal cortex which is the front part of the brain that we use for higher executive thinking.

If we don't move around enough we find it hard to concentrate and we make more mistakes, so it's really important that we are standing up and moving around every hour.

Go for a coffee, go for a stretch, talk to a colleague, but don't just stay sitting. And, of course, do some exercise at some point during the day - preferably in the morning.

3. Take a 10-15 minute break

The next one is to give your brain a complete break. We have what it called an ultradian rhythm which goes through cycles throughout the day lasting around 90 minutes. We have peaks and troughs of energy.

Most people get up, wind up their brains to full speed, and just work hard all day long. Then they wonder why they can't switch off and go to sleep at night. It's because we need to take a break at some point during the day.

At mid-morning, take a break for 10-15 minutes. At lunchtime, don't eat 'al desco', move away from the desk and have a proper break. Moreover, have another small break in the afternoon.

We need to give our brains a break so that we are not trying to apply our focus for too long because that's exhausting. It just gives our brain a bit of a breather so it can recharge itself and be reenergised to work better for the next chunk of time.

4. Always monotask

Monotasking is the new black. It is where you prioritise your work by picking the top three things you need to do. You start with the number one top thing and you do not do anything else until that job is finished. By doing that you are applying your pure undiluted focus and working to a very high level. You get work done faster, and with more energy over to spare.

5. Schedule time for thinking

The last one is a bit like the brain break and involves finding time for thinking during the day. A lot of people say they are so busy doing stuff all day that they don't have time to think. That's dangerous, especially if you are a leader of an organisation.

It's about scheduling in a 15 minute appointment with yourself and it doesn't matter where you are or how you organise it. It's that time where you are not going to be interrupted and you can just press the pause button and think about what matters. Reflect on how things

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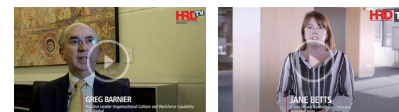
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are going and organise your thoughts.

If you're a business leader, what do you need to be thinking about to help your staff and improve customer service? It's just taking time out to look at the bigger picture because otherwise you get bogged down with completing tasks all day long.

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