



## **Do You Want To Be More Productive and Have Higher Performance? Take A Break!**

Yes. That's exactly what the science and stats suggest. Not only are you more productive and perform at a higher level when you take a break, you would likely also support the economy and benefit your company and co-workers if you just stepped away from the desk and took some time for some good old fashion rest and relaxation, or R&R. As I'm winding down this evening, I am reminded that there's power behind the break. Before I turn in for a break of my own, a recent interaction compels me to share a few words with you.

Imagine... You've been awake since 5 am. You meditated. Prayed. Exercised. Got the kids off to school. Made sure the dog was settled for a day at home. You dropped the dry cleaning off. Picked up a fruit tray for the office huddle and breakfast. You got your favorite coffee because it's just "one of those days" and still managed to get to your office all before 8am. After the office morning huddle

and breakfast, you tackled a day of back to back meetings, a few interruptions in your planned day, lunch at your desk at 2pm FINALLY and you managed to pack up to leave the office and head home at 6pm. Once home, you helped with homework. Maybe it was your turn to cook dinner. Thanking God you didn't have any other evening activities, you made your way to the couch, once the kids and dog were to bed. Whew! You lucky person you!! You get to do this all over again tomorrow!!

Sound familiar? This was my life for many years and I know others who are replaying this same routine day in and day out. Sure. There are variations. No kids? It's your significant other. Or a parent. Or your wonderful dogs that you care for, in addition to yourself. You are truly working more hours of the day than you ever imagined. According to a Gallup Poll, one in five full-time workers clock in over 60 hours per week. Additionally, only one in five take a lunch break. How can that be? You know the importance of self-care and balance. You've read enough books to know the benefits of unplugging and taking a vacation, even if it's a staycation. However, what we know is needed more often, many are unable to figure out. That's simply the art of taking a break. Taking a time out in the middle of your day would do your body and mind good. You would do well to make time for a 5-10 minute break every hour or so throughout your day. Specifically, according to research, an optimal break time is 17 minutes. **You should strive for 17 minutes.** I know that may seem like a lofty. Consider the following benefits of taking a break.

- Increased creativity and passion
- Lower stress, better control of emotions
- decrease body mass index and waistline **According to the CDC**
- Increased productivity and performance
- Replenished mental capacity

There are many more benefits to taking a short time out in the workday. Some of them are felt immediately, like a fresh set of eyes to reread a document or brainstorm creative ideas. Some benefits have lasting and measurable impact, like decrease cholesterol. Still feeling guilty about taking a break? Here are 5 science backed ways taking a break increases [productivity]. ([https://www.huffingtonpost.com/kate-bartolotta/5-science-backed-ways-taking-a-break-boosts-our-productivity\\_b\\_8548292.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/kate-bartolotta/5-science-backed-ways-taking-a-break-boosts-our-productivity_b_8548292.html))

It's been quite a few years since I've learned to incorporate breaks into my day. It may mean my day starts and/or ends at different times. They may result in me having to shift my day around slightly to incorporate a time out. I'm OK with that and my wish is that you, too, will learn to be OK with the much needed and beneficial interruptions from staring at the computer, sending that "just one more

text", or making that phone call. Just think of it this way, you actually get more done by taking a break. Family, there's real power behind the break. Try it!

I'd love to hear from some of you on how you incorporate breaks into your day and the benefits you notice when you do.

With love and purpose,  
Philecia

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