Losing Steam at Work? How to Stay Productive

If you're regularly reaching for more caffeinated beverages during the workday, or feeling overwhelmed and unmotivated, it may be time to evaluate—and maybe fix—the way you use your time and learn when to step back before burnout sets in. The following tips can help you plan, prioritize, stay on track, and reduce your stress level.

Become a daily planner. Set aside the last 15 minutes of each business day to plan the next day's “to do” list. Establish your objectives and list the tasks, breaking down larger projects into manageable chunks, and prioritizing them. Plug your meetings, deadlines, and other commitments into a calendar and set reminders.

Spend your first hour at work on the day's most important activity. Another option: Tackle your most dreaded task first. You'll beat procrastination and feel more productive and energized to move on to the more enjoyable tasks.

Focus on just one thing at a time. While multitasking seems like a time-saver, it often keeps you distracted and less productive.

Keep Up on Preventive Care

Preventive screening tests are among the most important things you can do to protect your health. Screenings can help find diseases early, when they may be easiest to treat and before you have symptoms. Talk to your doctor about whether—and when—you should get these common screening tests based on your age, health history, genetics and other personal risk factors.

- **Physical Exam:** Allows you and your doctor to assess your overall health, keep tabs on conditions you may have, and ensure you’re up-to-date on age-appropriate and risk-based screenings and immunizations.

- **Blood Pressure:** Regular checks are the only way to tell if your blood pressure is out of the target range. High levels increase the risk for heart disease and stroke. Blood pressure checks should be done at every visit to your healthcare providers.

- **Cholesterol:** A blood test measures the cholesterol (type of fat) in your blood. High levels may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

- **Glucose:** A blood test that measures the amount of glucose (blood sugar) in your blood. High levels may increase the risk of diabetes.

Take breaks to decompress. Even a simple stretch at your desk, brisk walk around the building, or eating a healthy snack (a small handful of almonds or a piece of fresh fruit) can help reduce stress and allow you to return to your work feeling more refreshed.

Beware of time robbers. This includes co-workers who stop by to chit-chat and linger. The remedy: Suggest a time when you're free to catch up. And only check your news feeds and social media during your break.

Keep your workspace orderly. Organization is crucial to your success—an uncluttered desk can help you avoid getting bogged down in the needless details that slow your progress.

If you're consistently feeling unfocused, frazzled and fatigued, talk to your healthcare practitioner for advice.

- **Skin Cancer Screening:** A doctor will perform a full-body skin exam looking for moles, birthmarks, or other pigmented areas that look abnormal in color, size, shape, or texture. If your doctor notices something abnormal, they may recommend a biopsy of the area in question.

Keep a pulse on your health! Follow up with your doctor today to discuss what screenings are right for you.
Preparing Kids Emotionally for School

Whether your child is entering a new school or just a new grade, make sure to take time to prepare your child emotionally for what's ahead. The following tips can help make the back-to-school transition a bit easier for everyone.

Add a bit of structure to ease into routines. After a carefree summer, the school routine can be disorienting. Try assigning your child some chores or reading daily and introduce them to writing these assignments down in a planner or on a calendar to help them keep track.

Get back into firm meal and sleep/wake schedules, and other healthy habits. As the countdown to school starts, wake your kids up 10 to 15 minutes earlier than the day before, and shift their bedtime by the same amount of time. Serve healthy breakfasts and dinners at school-friendly times. Make sure to include daily exercise—another habit that can help kids adapt to the stress of starting school.

Meet the teacher together as early as possible. Building a relationship between your child and the teacher can reduce separation anxiety on the first day of school—especially for those entering school for the first time or changing schools.

Role-play responses to manage fears. Bullying, a new school, and not knowing anyone in their class are common worries. Talk about what your child could say and do when faced with his or her fears. Practicing coping strategies in a safe environment can help them feel less fearful.

Get your child excited about a new activity. Starting a new extracurricular activity, whether it's band, theater, soccer, or something else, is exciting, helps kids make new friends, and eases back-to-school jitters.

If your child seems overly anxious about school, talk to your healthcare practitioner or behavioral health counselor for advice.

FREE Webinar:
Mastering Workplace Etiquette

To view: Log onto your member website to access the EAP+Work/Life homepage. Click on Webinar.

August is National Vaccine Awareness Month

Find out about vaccination schedules for children and adults from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

24/7 Support

Don’t forget to visit your Health Advocate member website for information, tools, tips and more!

Visit our award-winning healthcare blog at blog.HealthAdvocate.com

We're not an insurance company. Health Advocate is not a direct medical care provider, and is not affiliated with any insurance company or third party provider.