

OnTrack to Wellness

Brought to You by the NYC Transit HR Benefits Wellness Team

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Helping You Be Your Best.



Trying to unplug from too much tech?

You're not alone. In the U.S. 77% of adults own smart devices. And nearly one quarter say they are "almost constantly" online, according to Pew

Research 2018 polls. However, there's a fine line between usefulness and distraction. Remember that life's most valuable moments usually happen when you're away from the screen.

When Are You Most Productive?



Do you tend to get a lot done first thing in the morning, then fight to keep your eyes open after lunch? Or do you hit your stride toward the end of your workday?

Identifying your high-energy periods can improve your performance and your day.

➔ Log your time. Record what you do, how long you work on it, your energy level and state of mind. Notice times when you're able to work with sustained focus for a long period, as well as times when you struggle to stay awake or switch tasks every few minutes. After a few days, patterns will emerge that will give you clues about your productivity.

➔ Keep peak hours unscheduled, if possible, so you can work uninterrupted on high-priority tasks. Schedule maintenance work, email and check-in meetings for off-peak hours.

➔ Avoid relying on caffeine or sugary foods for energy when you're feeling tired. Instead, get regular exercise and adequate rest, so you're starting every day with a full tank.

Avoid the Anger Trap

Anger is a normal emotion, as long as you express it constructively. However, ongoing angry feelings or anger that's out of proportion to the situation can be damaging, personally and professionally, and to your health.

To help gain control of angry feelings:

- Take a time-out. Walk away from the situation, and cool off before you speak or act in anger.
- Talk it out when you're calm. After cooling your temper, find a positive way to express how you feel and state your needs.
- Forgive and let go. Don't hold on to old resentments that may trigger angry outbursts in unrelated situations later. Make peace with the past.
- Build a toolkit. Arm yourself with techniques to use when you feel anger flaring. For example, take 10 deep breaths, repeat a calming word or phrase, imagine a peaceful or pleasant memory, or take a short walk.
- Take care of yourself. Get 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night, exercise and eat nutritiously. Being overtired and hungry can often produce negative feelings. Regular exercise helps ease tension and keep you calm.



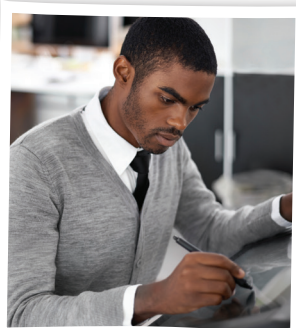
Two golden hours of productivity:

According to Dan Ariely, Duke University professor and author, the most productive 2 hours of the day are right after waking up from a good night's sleep. Most spend this time in a hectic morning routine, checking news headlines or browsing on their smart devices. Find ways to maximize those crucial hours by enjoying some quiet time to work uninterrupted or pursue personal interests before your day unfolds.

Conquer the Creativity Block

When you're out of ideas, short on inspiration and completely stuck, don't panic. Use these strategies to get your creativity flowing again.

Set a timer for 10 to 30 minutes. During this time, work nonstop on a task related to your project without editing, fixing mistakes or judging your work. You might use this time to write, draw, brainstorm ideas or do research. Sometimes forcing yourself to work steadily can help you break through the block.



Seek inspiration around you. Look through photos, websites or magazines. Visit a museum, park, busy neighborhood or an art gallery. Talk with someone whose ideas you admire. Study shapes in the clouds outside your window.

Change gears. Switch tasks, get a healthy snack or clean your workspace. You may find you can return with a clear head.

Go easy on yourself. A temporary lack of ideas or direction is part of the creative process. It will pass.

“Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs.”
— Henry Ford

Failure Isn't Forever

Failure feels bad, so your natural instinct is to avoid it at all costs. However, setbacks can be important stepping-stones toward success. Major goals are often reached only after you experience and learn from failures and adversities.

To reverse setbacks:

- 1 **Accept negative feelings.** It is normal to feel angry, hurt, disappointed and frustrated by mistakes. Cope with those feelings as a way to process the experience; then, move on.
- 2 **Seek to understand, not to place blame.** Look at failure from every angle, and be realistic about the role you played. Asking for feedback from others during this step can help you gain insight.
- 3 **Don't internalize failure.** Just because you failed doesn't mean you are a failure. Instead, choose to emerge from the experience smarter and more experienced.
- 4 **Try again.** Keep challenging yourself and expanding your skills.

Learn
from your
mistakes.
And try not
to repeat
them.



Business Travel Tips

For frequent business travelers, saving time and energy and reducing stress are always important. Travel well with these guidelines:



Keep essentials packed and ready. Maintain a travel kit in your suitcase at all times, and replenish or refresh items as needed — such as toiletries, device chargers, a pen, business cards or exercise gear. Then, all you need to pack for each trip is clothing.

Plan for checking in back home. Let the home office know when you'll be checking email, whether you can receive texts or instant messages, and when you're available for other types of communication, such as videoconferencing.

Socialize wisely. Business travel and conferences often present opportunities to meet others and have fun. Remain professional and remember that you are representing your employer. Respect boundaries in your business relationships by staying focused on work topics.



The Smart Moves Toolkit, including this issue's printable download, **Exercise Help Online**, is at personalbest.com/extras/19V8tools.

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