Planning Workday Breaks

This playbook outlines the steps necessary to effectively plan for regular, meaningful breaks during the workday to maintain high levels of productivity and well-being.

Step 1: **Understand Importance**

Acknowledge the significance of taking breaks to prevent burnout, maintain productivity, and improve mental health. Recognize that breaks are a crucial component of a sustainable work routine.

Step 2: **Schedule Breaks**

Pre-plan your breaks throughout the day. Use a digital calendar or planner to block out time for short breaks every 90-120 minutes to align with natural concentration cycles.

Step 3: **Break Activities**

Decide on various activities that can be performed during breaks. Options may include:
- Physical movement, such as stretching or a quick walk
- Mindfulness practices, like meditation or deep breathing exercises
- Engaging in a hobby or reading
- Socializing with colleagues
Choose activities that are refreshing and distinct from work tasks.

Step 4: **Create Environment**

Prepare a conducive environment for breaks. This may involve setting up a comfortable space away from your workstation or ensuring you have quick access to a peaceful area.

Step 5: **Set Reminders**

Use tools like smartphone alarms, desktop notification apps, or even a traditional timer to remind you to take breaks at the scheduled times.

Step 6: **Monitor & Adjust**

Keep track of how the break schedule affects your workday over time. Adjust the frequency, timing, and activities of breaks as needed to maximise their restorative effects.

General Notes

Flexibility

Be flexible with the scheduling of breaks when needed, such as during unusually busy periods, but try to avoid skipping breaks entirely.

Avoid Work Discussions

During breaks, intentionally avoid discussing work-related matters to give your mind a complete rest from professional topics.