Break Time: 5 Reasons Work Breaks Boost Productivity

We like to think that productivity means giving a task or project your 100% attention and working until it's complete. But research now shows that taking breaks at work actually makes employees *more* productive.
Wondering how taking breaks could possibly boost productivity? Here are some reasons why it really works.

1. Get back to work refreshed after a break.

If you don't take lunch or coffee breaks by mid-afternoon you're exhausted, you can barely think, and you spend more time trying to figure out what you're doing than actually doing. Many of us push through and just keep working.

Working through your workday is ultimately less productive than taking breaks. 90% of participants in a recent study said that taking a full lunch break allows them to come back to work feeling refreshed and ready to go. While the lunch break may feel like wasted time, it actually prevents lost time by increasing focus.

2. Use your breaks to get inspired.

When it feels like you're never going to find a solution to the work problem of the day, it's time to take a break. Not taking breaks actually impedes our ability to think of creative, new solutions.

Taking a quick walk, grabbing a coffee, or even sitting quietly, or staring out the window, gives our brains the break it needs to come up with new solutions. So, instead of banging your head against the wall, get away from your desk! But be sure to take your phone so you can take notes when inspiration hits.

3. Stress relief is necessary.

Stress is a part of any job. If we can manage work-related stress in healthy ways, then we can thrive. An inability to manage work-related stress leads to burnout, which is a productivity killer.

One of the best ways to manage work-related stress just happens to be taking breaks during the day. Creating a habit of taking breaks when work-

related stress is high creates a sustainable work style that makes employees more productive and happier.

4. Taking breaks allows for better work relationships.

When everyone in the office is glued to their computer screen, working constantly, there aren't a lot of opportunities to build strong working relationships. Taking breaks with a coworker allows you to get to know them better, which makes it easier to work with them in the office. So, grab someone else when you're headed to get a coffee and take some time to chat!

5. Take a break for your health.

When employees are encouraged to take regular breaks during the workday, they stay healthier than when they work through break times. There are multiple reasons for this. Taking an actual lunch break can lead to healthier food choices because employees have the time to seek out healthier options. Walking during breaks provides physical activity that office employees desperately need. Breaks to gather thoughts or meditate lead to decreased stress levels.

Healthier employees take less sick days, get more done during the day, and stick with their job longer because they don't feel their job is negatively impacting their health.

In conclusion.

Often employees aren't taking breaks at work because they feel like they'll be judged by their boss or coworkers. So, it's essential to create a workplace culture that encourages taking breaks. While management may be resistant to creating this culture, the research is all there to prove that taking breaks is the key to happier, healthier, more productive employees.