HOW TO STAY FOCUSED IN A WORLD FULL OF DISTRACTIONS

212-Careers

Our always-on, always-connected world provides plenty of opportunities for a lack of focus. You can work very hard to minimize distractions in your environment, but all you have to do is step out into a public setting to receive a sensory onslaught of distractions.

Monitors and displays use video and audio to scream for your attention. Roadside billboards and signs promise to improve your life if you purchase a company's products. Get around a group, and individual voices join to create a cacophony of noise.

This can make staying focused on even the simplest of tasks challenging.

For example, you head to the grocery store, something you've done countless times. You give in to these distractions on your shopping trip. Returning home, you realize you forgot some essentials and purchased things you didn't need due to in-your-face advertisements.

Have you ever heard older adults talking about a "simpler time"? They will tell you with a smile about the "good old days," a time free of distractions. That meant less stress and anxiety, and it was much easier to focus on what mattered. They are telling the truth. Times were simpler in many ways.

It's no wonder that heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other concerning health problems are more common today than years ago. Distractions ruin your focus, a lack of focus leads to stress, and stress is a close companion of debilitating and deadly health conditions.

For more focus, better health, and less stress, here are a few proven ways to effectively direct your attention in a world that seems intent on keeping you distracted, disoriented, and stressed.

- Minimize. You don't own your possessions. They own you. The fewer things you own, the easier it is to focus on what you do have.

- Use to-do lists. Write down what you have to do every day. This can be in a planner or on a simple sticky note. You limit distractions when you have a clear plan of action to follow.

- Take breaks. Your brain needs time to rest. Better focus and productivity are the rewards of nurturing your body and mind.

- Visualize success. What do you want to do? Visualize a perfect outcome. Seeing the intended results in your mind can help you to achieve your goal.

- Focus on what works. Don't bang your head against the wall, repeatedly punishing yourself with actions that don't create great results. Accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative.

- Unplug frequently. Minimize your exposure to consumer electronics and anything requiring an electrical outlet or battery.

- Share your plans. Committing to a goal publicly keeps you focused on making it happen.

Those are seven effective ways to improve your focus. If you put just a few of them into practice, you'll find fewer distractions taking control of your senses. This gives you more focus on your thoughts and actions, and that means creating better results.
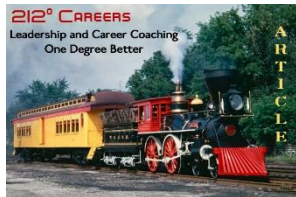
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