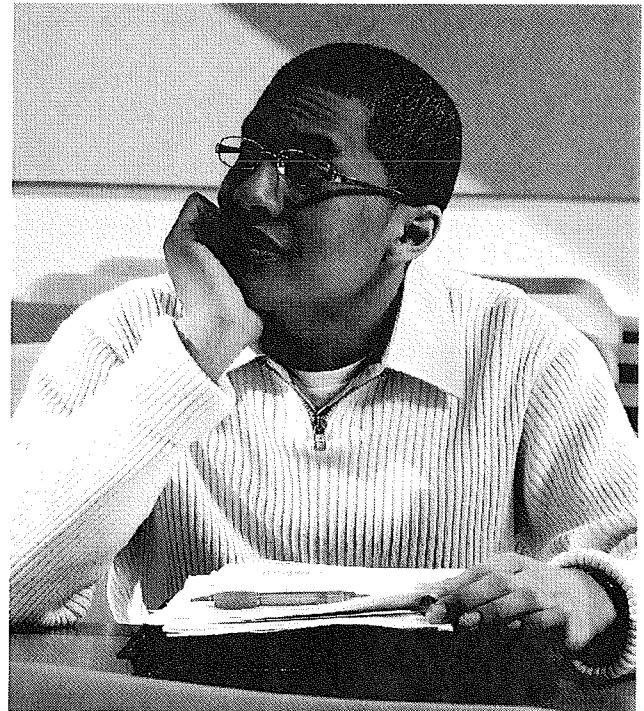


Staying Focused at Work

Today's hectic workplace is full of constant interruptions. With so much going on, it's easy to lose focus on your work. Here are some ways to keep your concentration intact:

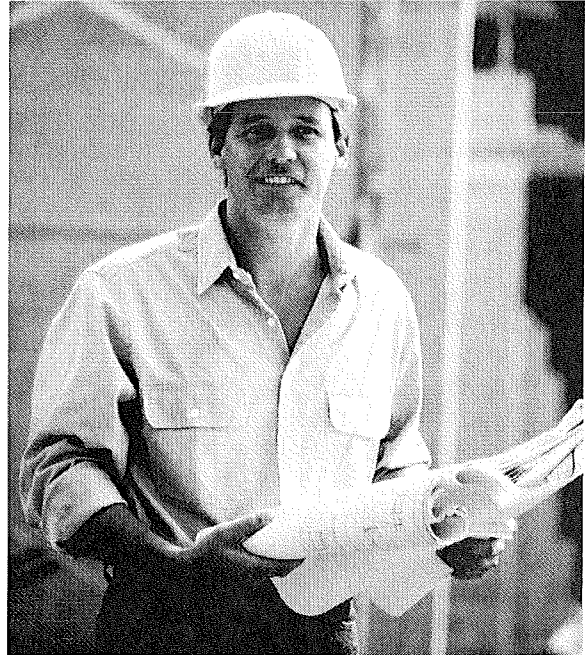
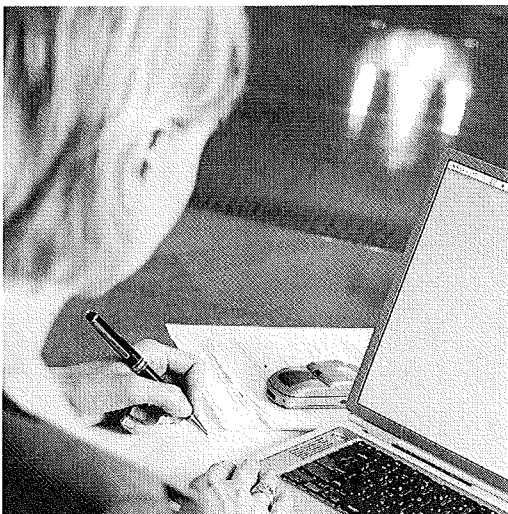
- **Organize your work area.** A workplace free of clutter has fewer visual distractions. Toss old scraps of paper and neatly stack paperwork and books. Organize tools and equipment.
- **Make lists.** Make a list of the tasks you need to accomplish on a given day, and a second one for what you need to address in the next week. Organize these items in order of importance, then break large projects down into workable steps. Jot down a rough estimate of how long you think each item will take to complete.
- **Provide inspiration.** Fill your work area or locker with pictures and quotes that inspire you or make you laugh, or bring in a plant (where appropriate). When you catch your focus flagging, glance at these items for a quick morale boost.
- **Practice relaxation.** On days when you have several urgent projects, you may become overwhelmed. Take a deep breath or do a mental relaxation exercise to help regain a sense of calm.



- **Be unavailable.** With your manager's approval, turn off your phone or hold all calls while you work on projects that need your full concentration. Post a "Do Not Disturb" sign on your work area. If you use instant message programs in your office, set your status to "busy" or shut the program down.
- **Limit exposure to messages.** If your workplace culture permits, only check and respond to e-mail three times a day — first thing in the morning, around lunch, and at the end of the day. Do the same thing with phone messages. Let your co-workers know that they should call or visit you if an urgent situation develops.
- **Take breaks.** Your allotted breaks are available so that you can stay fresh and focused. Use this time to

stretch, get some air, take a walk, or have a healthy snack.

- **Enjoy your personal time.** Maintaining some separation between your home and work life makes it easier to stay focused in each environment and helps to recharge your emotional and physical batteries. Focus on your family, friends, significant other, or a hobby during your personal time. Try not to think about work too often.
- **Take a vacation.** If your usual strategies for maintaining focus simply don't seem to work, it may be time to take a vacation. Travel and reconnect with nature, or stay home and spend some time with your family or make improvements to your house. Limit the number of times you call in to work, and if you can manage it, don't check in at all.



If you are having a hard time concentrating at work and the above steps offer no relief, contact LifeMatters to discuss techniques for regaining your focus at work.

LifeMatters® professionals are available 24 hours a day, every day of the year to discuss a variety of lifestyle concerns. Call anytime.

1-800-657-3719

Toll-Free U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico
From overseas, call collect to 651-259-3840

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