



Deep Work

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About the Speaker



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Learning Objectives

- Discuss what **Deep Work** is and why it is important
- Provide best practices for incorporating **Deep Work** into your daily routine
- Share best practices for eliminating distractions

YEAH ON AN AVERAGE DAY...

**ID SAY I DO A SOLID 15 MINUTES
OF ACTUAL WORK**



What is **Deep Work** and Why Does it Matter?



Deep work is the ability to focus without distraction on a cognitively demanding task.

- Cal Newport, Author of *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*



Why Deep Work Matters

Data shows that those who engage in Deep Work tend to have better career outcomes, and Deep Work is more effective in achieving high-quality results.

- Increased focus and productivity
- Leads to mastery
- Reduced distractions
- Timelier completion of projects
- Improved client experience
- Higher sense of accomplishment
- Better work-life balance for everyone

What is Deep Work?



1

DEEP WORK

Pushing one's mental abilities to full limit by focusing completely on a cognitively demanding task



2

SHALLOW WORK

Tasks performed while distracted, which do not demand a high degree of mental focus



3

DEEP WORK HYPOTHESIS

Deep Work is becoming more valuable while also becoming rare. A Deep Work ability will help you thrive

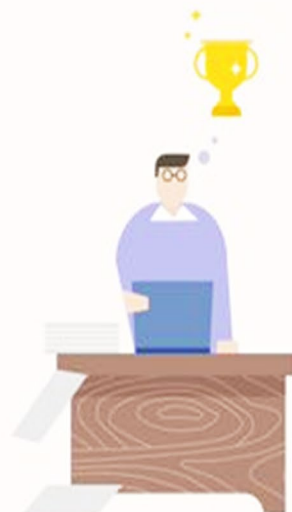
The Value of Deep Work



4a

DEEP WORK IS VALUABLE

Because it is required to master a complicated skill, e.g. software development



4b

DEEP WORK IS VALUABLE

Because it is necessary to produce works of high value, e.g. a literary novel



4c

DEEP WORK IS VALUABLE

Because it allows you to produce high value work at a faster pace



Deep Work vs. Shallow Work

Deep Work

- Reviewing work papers
- Researching complex transactions
- Drafting Financial Statements
- Preparing for presentations and meetings (audit committees, boards, sales)

Shallow Work

- Emails
- Routine meetings
- Timesheets and expense reports
- Scheduling appointments
- Other admin functions



Schedule Your Entire Day

- Schedule your entire day into blocks of **Deep Work** (critical thinking tasks to be performed distraction-free) and **Shallow Work** (non-cognitively demanding tasks that can be performed while distracted)
- Shallow work stops you from getting fired, but **Deep Work** is what gets you promoted.
- Your **Deep Work** must get priority.



Schedule Your Entire Day

- Schedule 60, 90, or 120 minute blocks of **Deep Work** in the mornings and afternoons
- Studies show that our brain is sharpest 2.5 to 4 hours after waking
- Schedule **Deep Work** periods into your Outlook calendar – Treat them as a real meeting



Eliminating Distractions

It is critical that during **Deep Work**, you identify a **Deep Work** task and eliminate all distractions

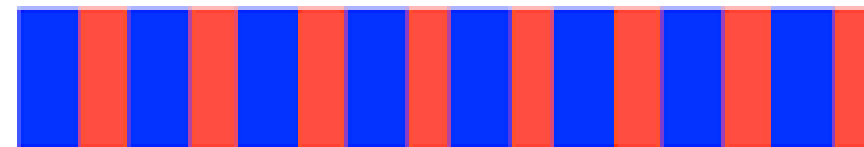
- Shut down all forms of email (go on offline mode if Outlook is required during **Deep Work**)
- Go on “Do Not Disturb” mode
- Disconnect from internet
- Put phone on airplane mode or physically place the phone somewhere you can’t easily access
- Work from closed office or **Deep Work** room

Scheduling Your Day

What You Want



What Most People Do



Sample Schedule

9:00 am	10:30 am	11:30 am	12:30 pm	1:30 pm	3:00 pm	3:15 pm	4:00 pm	5:30 pm	6:00 pm
Deep Work	Shallow	Lunch	Shallow	Deep Work	Coffee	Shallow	Deep Work	Shallow	Shut Down



Practical Steps



Break your phone addiction

- Average smartphone user unlocks their phone 110 times a day
- On average we touch our phones 2,617 times a day
- Apps on our phone have been designed to hook us
- New research shows that you are better able to complete a task both from an effectiveness and efficiency perspective if your phone is in a different room.



Break your phone addiction

Action = Motivation + Ability + Trigger

- Need to eliminate the likelihood that you will check your phone
- Remove ***ability*** by creating a 20 second buffer
 - Place phone somewhere difficult to access
 - Long password
- Remove triggers
 - Turn off all app notifications
 - Turn phone on silent



Break your social media addiction

- Dopamine and reward system
- Impact on attention and cognitive control
- Social comparison and mental health
- Sleep disruption
- Brain changes and neuroplasticity



Beware of Distractions and Looping

- The mind has a tendency to think about more interesting thoughts
- Be cognizant when you drift and bring yourself back
- Looping is when you are working on a problem, but keep going back to the parts you already know
- The brain does this to avoid excess expenditure of energy
- Be cognizant and move the problem to the next step



Psychologically Detach and Play

- Completely refrain from work-related activities during non-work time
- Your mind needs to rest and reset from work *in order to do your best work*
- Too much work or too much play is not good. The goal is to be in the center; balanced.



Make Yourself Unavailable

- Turn on Out-of-Office reply for an entire day
 - Try this for one day out of the week
 - Also, consider turning on Out-of-Office reply when facing a hard deadline
- Let it be known that you are in **Deep Work** mode
 - Schedule **Deep Work** blocks on calendar
 - Put “**Deep Work**” sign on office or outside cubicle



Create a Shutdown Ritual

- No work to be done after shutdown
- Code your time for the day and organize the next day (if client service)
- Three Questions:
 - What did you get done today?
 - What are you going to do tomorrow?
 - What help do you need?
- Zeigarnik Effect – People remember unfinished or interrupted tasks better than completed tasks
 - Let your unconscious mind help you solve a problem



Conclusion

- **Key point:** The ability to perform **Deep Work** will be increasingly rare and valuable in the future.
- **Stay competitive:** To thrive in the modern economy, individuals must cultivate **Deep Work** skills, as those who can focus deeply will have a competitive advantage.
- **Commit to Deep Work:** Embrace the **Deep Work** philosophy and implement the rules to achieve greater productivity, satisfaction, and success.



Resources

- “**Deep Work**: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World” by Cal Newport
- “*Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World*” by Cal Newport
- “*Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*” by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi
- Podcasts
- Blogs



Questions?