

Momentum

Mindfulness in leadership



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Mindfulness tips

- ✓ Just breathe! Take brief breaks throughout your day to focus on each breath as it flows in and out. You'll relax and perceive the present more clearly.
- ✓ If you notice your mind wandering into self-criticism, fear or avoidance, just label the thought (e.g., "regretting that argument") and return to the now.
- ✓ Try to experience the world anew each day, even amidst familiar routines. Fully take in physical sensations—sight, sound, scent, taste and touch.

Managing mindfully = productivity

Can a peaceful practice that's been around for centuries improve the modern workplace? Research shows that the answer is yes!

The practice of mindfulness—focusing attention and awareness on the present moment, without judgmental reactions to it—is something you can use to manage more skillfully and inspire optimal productivity on your team. Although rooted in meditative tradition, being mindful is something anyone can do at any time.

- Having a greater consciousness in the present helps you navigate stressful situations and make better decisions.
- Focusing on what's occurring right now, and not replaying old habitual reactions and judgments, helps you evaluate situations objectively and allows innovations to emerge.
- Mindfulness helps you become more grounded, alert and engaged. By detaching from the busy wanderings of the mind, you can minimize worries, negative emotions and self-criticism.
- Managing mindfully creates a more open, positive, calm, collaborative work environment for the team.
- Keeping a clear mind regarding the present, you're likely to inspire staff to work more mindfully as well.
- Studies have shown substantial improvements in employee performance and fulfillment when a leader's management style is considered mindful.

Those who practice mindfulness have greater control over stress and anxiety. With less brain clutter, a mindful leader has more energy, clarity, perspective, and ability to remain calm throughout the day.



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Staying present during turbulent times

By maintaining focus on the present, and not insisting on preconceived outcomes, a mindful leader can better navigate challenging situations.

- Amidst a crisis, a mindful manager can stop and identify the next logical step—which may be no step at all! It may just be a temporary pause to carefully consider strategy.
- Encouraging your team to accept the omnipresence of workplace change will boost their resilience.
- Being mindful doesn't mean everything will be perfect. When an adverse project or collaborative outcome occurs, don't bemoan your inability to control the situation. Instead, control your reaction to it.
- A mindful leader responds to workplace disruption with focus and clarity. This helps a leader avoid repeating past mistakes. By acknowledging and accepting change, a leader can step back, observe, communicate openly, and respond with composure and purpose.
- Use deep breathing and awareness of physical sensations to calm and minimize your body's response to stressors.

Mindfulness and a healthy workplace



Sharing mindfulness

While the practice of mindfulness is an individual activity, research shows that it positively affects interpersonal behavior and work team relationships. With better grounding in the present (our minds wander roughly half of our waking hours!), you'll be able to pass the benefits of mindfulness on to your staff.



Wellness benefits

The practical benefits of mindfulness in the workplace are numerous. Many studies have shown that when using mindfulness techniques, employees experience less emotional exhaustion, decreased burnout, and greater job satisfaction and work-life balance. The physiological benefits of reduced stress include lower blood pressure, better pain management, better sleep and fewer gastrointestinal difficulties.



Team achievements

Managers who demonstrate awareness, compassion and understanding in relationships with staff can attain higher levels of employee engagement—and in turn a greater employee commitment to accomplishing the organization's goals. Many of today's employees seek greater meaning in their work, and they value employers who empower them to make meaningful contributions.

Additional sources: Science Daily, Case Western Reserve University, Inc.com, TopMBA.com.



Webinar—Join us on Wednesday, June 27 for a webinar entitled *Practicing Mindful Leadership*. You'll learn techniques for using workplace mindfulness to manage more skillfully and boost your team's productivity. Register [here](#).