

You Need to Reduce Digital Distraction to Improve Productivity

Is your brain being rewired due to technology bombardment? Are you addicted to the time-consuming tsunami of electronic updates from social media, emails, texts, facetime, etc.? Do you feel a constant disconnection from your real life due to an obsession with impersonal electronic connections?

Along with the benefits of the Age of Information comes a dark side: the Age of Disconnection. When you are disconnected because you are distracted by too many invasive intrusions into your life, you lose focus. The quality of your work will suffer, as will your relationships in the real world.

Society in general and the workplace are at great risk of permanently disconnecting from the present, from what is happening in the moment. Instead, people look for the next psychological high that comes from living someone else's life, somewhere else in the world — one that appears to be better, more fun, more lucrative or more exciting than yours. When one connection may be climbing Mt. Everest, another is riding bareback along an exotic beach and a third is skydiving, life seems pretty humdrum and commonplace back at the office or in the cube farm.

Is it time to unplug from the grid?

Numerous researchers, scientists and futurists predict that technology will advance exponentially in the next 20 years – but at what cost? Compassionate human interaction and understanding, social skills, kindness and the ability to get along with others in a meaningful way have already suffered significantly.

Gone are the days of employee interaction face to face. It is much easier to send an abrupt retort or express a non-helpful negative comment via an emotionless non-empathetic text or email. It happens all the time on social media. But when it happens in the workplace, focus, productivity and engagement take a nosedive.

The truth is, when you are constantly distracted by tweets, texts, emails and posts, it is almost impossible to maintain quality productivity. Each of those interruptions not only disrupts what you are doing but is delivered with emotions and feelings that do not serve you well in the workplace.

Turn the outside world off!

If you have been neglecting your real world, such as your family, friends and the workplace while creating and managing online identities, you may not have realized that your real-world has dramatically suffered. This creates an interpersonal vacuum that is falsely being filled by the monolithic online community that neither cares about you personally or what happens to you when you are no longer there. This leaves a

significant imbalance in your life physically and spiritually as you are only using the mind component.

Are you really going to find interpersonal happiness while texting and checking Facebook when your special friend is sitting right next to you? Are you going to improve your productivity at work and get a raise while spending half your time focused on online news stories and posts? And what happens if the power goes out or the worldwide grid goes down? Will you be able to cope without connecting to your impersonal world, will you be able to be productive at work – **even more important, will you know who you really are without that connection?**

Steps to consider for disconnecting and improving productivity

Evaluate the amount of time you spend online connecting with impersonal others. How does that compare with the amount of connecting with family, friends and business colleagues in real life? No one can tell you what is right for you; but until you know the answer to this question and compare it to all the other things available for you to do in life; you will not realize the impact of being online.

Record the number of workplace interruptions that occur daily or hourly from being online. Pay specific attention to how much time is devoured by these distractions and how long it takes you to get your focus back on track so you can be more productive.

Does being online interfere with personal downtime? How much time do you spend connecting that could be better used for self-motivation, self-inspiration or uplifting your spirit? Balance is illusive and impossible to achieve without quiet time to reflect and regenerate.

Has digital distraction take over your world, confiscated your time and reduced both engagement and productivity? Determine what works best for you and take action. Go cold turkey and put technology away for one day over the weekend so you can really get reconnected with your personal life. If that is frightening, start with disconnecting one hour per day. It will make a huge positive difference in your life, your relationships and productivity.

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