

96 Minute Rule



We all know time is ticking, so how can we use it effectively in our workplace? The 96 minute rule is a **mono-tasking** strategy you can use to achieve more in a shorter timeframe. It helps you clear your mind, sharpen your attention, and focus on deep knowledge work, like compiling findings for a report. While multi-tasking disrupts workflow, mono-tasking keeps you on track so you can gain momentum.

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5 STEPS TO APPLY THE STRATEGY

Pareto principle

80% of an employee's output is accomplished in **20%** of that employee's time.

Randy Mayeux (corporate trainer)

If a person is focused during **20%** (96 minutes) of their 8-hour workday, they are more likely to complete quality work, as it is not stretched across the day and compromised by multiple interruptions.

5 STEPS TO APPLY THE STRATEGY

1 Commit to yourself.

"I will focus solely on _____ for 96 minutes." Remember, committing is easier when you are focused on the outcome.

2 Remove interruptions.

Minimise your surroundings and switch off notifications (emails, phone calls, messages, etc.).

3 Limit distractions.

Block out your calendar and find a quiet place. If you can't, communicate to those around what you're doing and why.

4 Measure your success.

Reflect on what you achieved. This will help you refine your strategy and encourage you to make a habit of it.

5 Adapt the rule to suit you.

Not every day will allow for 96 uninterrupted minutes, but you can apply the principle to any time period (e.g. 15, 30 or 50 minutes).

Beware the multi-tasking myth. While it has been celebrated in the past, multi-tasking does not improve productivity. Spreading your focus across multiple tasks:

- **Wastes time** as it causes a cognitive lag-time when switching between tasks.
- **Sabotages tasks** as it fatigues your brain and lowers your IQ (by 10%).
- **Creates stress** and reduces your ability to handle stress long-term.

REFLECTION

Think about a recent feedback conversation you've had with someone.

1 To what tasks could you apply the 96 minute rule? Example: I could spend an hour and a half going through data and compiling findings for big reports.

2 List the benefits of scheduling 96 minutes to focus on the tasks above. Example: There's always a lot of data to go through, so focusing on it in one go will allow me to find deeper insights and save time – as I won't be constantly losing my place when distractions pop up.

3 What does your ideal focus space look like? Example: My phone's on mute, my headphones are on, and I have a hot coffee by my side.

4 Are there any challenges you may face when applying the 96 minute rule? How can you overcome them? Example: My team are always knocking on my door or calling to ask little questions. What I can do is tell them about the scheduled focus time, pop it into my calendar, stick a sign to my door, and eventually embed it in our culture by sharing the rule and what it's helped me achieve.