

## Members Quarterly

Spring 2015 Edition

## Perspective

# The Amazing Power of the Energy Microburst

*Boost your performance and productivity*

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**A**s a strong supporter of health and wellness in the workplace, I was pleased to read that taking regular short breaks on the job boosts performance and productivity.

Researchers at the Human Performance Institute in Florida found that 93% of people surveyed indicated that they were interested in improving their energy levels throughout the day. In order to be more productive and successful, they recommend that we break for a microburst of activity (5 to 10 minutes) every hour. In the study, employees were asked to simply do things like stand up at their desk and stretch or take five minutes to catch up with a colleague while perhaps walking the stairs. They would partake in some form of emotional or mental recovery as they worked. After 90 days, participants reported that they not only had increased energy levels throughout the day (and particularly in the afternoons), but increased engagement, focus and motivation both at work and at home. That's a win-win situation for everyone!

So what's the next step? Do we mandate hourly breaks for all employees? Not quite, but it's important to tell your people that they are not expected to sit in front of their computers for hours without a break. It's okay to get up and move around a bit. We already know that sitting for too long is not a good thing for our bodies. We disengage from what we were doing, take a breather and come back more focused and motivated.

When we sit in one spot and work for hours without a -proper break, we become less productive and less focused. How often have you reached the point where you're almost burned out? It's good to know that you're not alone and this is a valid sign that it's time to take a break.

The good news is that to reset your focus and energy, you don't have to run 10K on a treadmill. Step away from your desk/workspace, clear your head and then come back revitalized, particularly in the afternoon. It can be as simple as going to briefly chat with a colleague, going for a quick stroll or doing some simple breathing exercises and -stretches. Just get up and move around. These short bursts of physical activity will also relax tight muscles, increase oxygen to your brain and relieve eye strain from gazing at a monitor for hours. Chatting with co-workers feeds our -social needs which also helps to relieve stress. If you telework, go out and meet a friend for lunch, go into another room and phone a friend in addition to doing breathing exercises and stretches.

Even the world's top athletes need their regular "time outs". We can certainly benefit from them too. Just make sure that your folks don't abuse the privilege taking excessively long breaks or disrupting other -colleagues' schedules. If we maintain a healthy lifestyle, work hard and perform well, we will reap the benefits, increase performance and productivity, stay focused and keep everyone happy!

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It's time to micromanage your energy. Let old habits die, give this your best shot and enjoy the new revitalized YOU!

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