

20 HACKS

TO **RE-ENERGIZE** YOUR WORKDAY THIS SPRING



FOCAL™

At last, Spring is here. The flowers are in bloom, the birds are singing, and your hefty winter coat is retired in the closet (where it belongs!).

Spring's much-anticipated arrival is just the occasion to take an inventory of your office habits and refresh them. With a few intentional changes, you can make your workday healthier, happier, and more productive.

Ready to get started? We've put together a list of 20 simple hacks to re-energize your workday- everything from organizational tricks, design advice, and habits refreshers. It's time to spring forward!

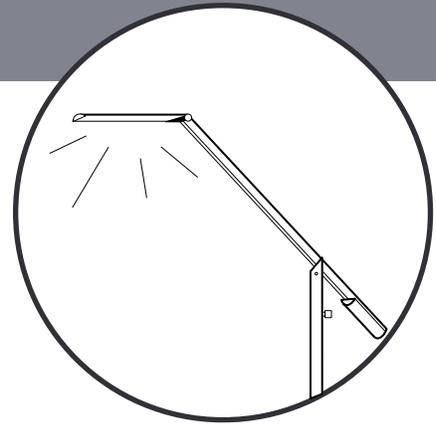


5 Science-Backed Ways to Refresh Your Space

Feeling uninspired by your workspace? Here's an easy guide to refreshing your workspace design.

1. LET THERE BE LIGHT

The right lighting in your workspace can boost your energy and productivity. If you have the ability, position your desk so you get as much direct light as possible. If natural light is hard to come by, light your space with natural bulbs.



2. COLOR ME PRODUCTIVE

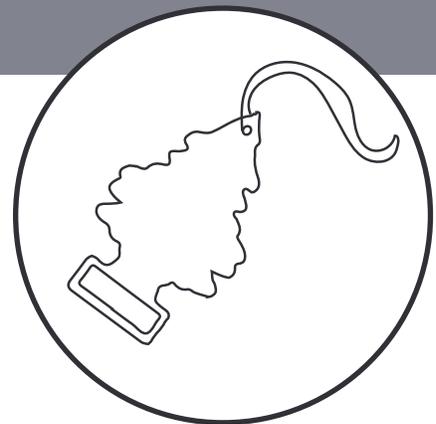
A fresh coat of paint is a quick way to update your space. According to proponents of color psychology, choosing the right color can have cognitive benefits as well.

The color blue is said to promote productivity and the color green is said to be the "color of concentration."



3. CHOOSE THE RIGHT SCENT

Did you know that smell is the strongest of the senses and is best able to influence brain activity? Why? Because olfactory bulbs are part of the limbic system and directly connect to the areas of the brain that process emotion and learning. Be sure to choose the right scent for your workplace and your workstyle.



	Pine	Enhances alertness
	Cinnamon	Improves focus
	Lavender	Supports relaxation
	Peppermint	Lifts your mood
	Citrus (any)	Boosts your energy

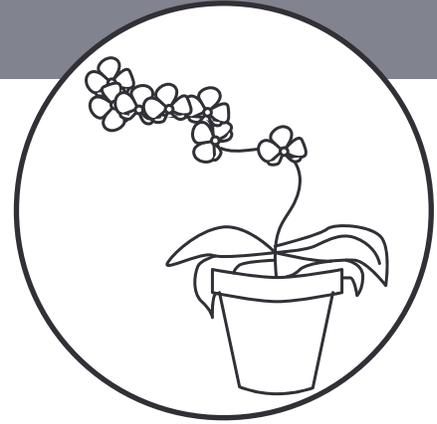
4. BRING THE OUTDOORS IN

UK Researchers found that bringing live plants into your workspace can boost productivity by up to 15%. They list 3 mechanisms by which plants improve productivity outcomes:

Plants produce oxygen and remove volatile organic compounds (such as formaldehyde, benzene and hexane) that sometimes exist in the workplace

Plants to remove carbon dioxide from the air

Plants in the workplace boosts creativity and memory retention



Try these creativity-boosting, energy-enhancing plants for the office:

PEPPERMINT



Benefit: Stimulates your brain

Light: Direct

Care: Easy

Sniffing mint can increase your alertness and enhance your memory, according to a study in the International Journal of Neuroscience. Bonus: It can also help suppress your appetite.

LEMON BALM



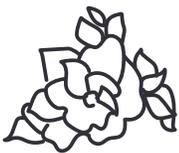
Benefit: Stimulates your brain

Light: Indirect

Care: Easy

Researchers at Ohio State University found that the scent of lemon improved people's moods and raised their levels of norepinephrine, a brain chemical linked to mood and behavior.

GARDENIA



Benefit: Stimulates your brain

Light: Direct

Care: Moderate

It's like a long-acting antidepressant. A gardenia can live for 25 years, and every time you smell its flowers, your emotional outlook improves, according to research from Rutgers.

**Source: <http://www.rodalenews.com/6-best-plants-healthy-office-0?page=0>

5. SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR CHAIR

Your office chair is seriously draining your office energy and creativity. This spring, do yourself a favor and replace your office chair with an upright seat. Doing so will keep your body engaged and your mind engaged, boosting productivity and performance.



9 Easy Energy Boosts to Incorporate into your Workday Routine

1. GO OUTSIDE

When you feel your energy dwindling, take 15 minutes and go outside. The fresh air and Vitamin D boost will get up your energy.

2. LAUGH

Not only is laughter a simple stress-reliever, research shows that it can boost your energy too. How? Every time you laugh your brain releases endorphins which keeps you energized.

3. STRETCH IT OUT

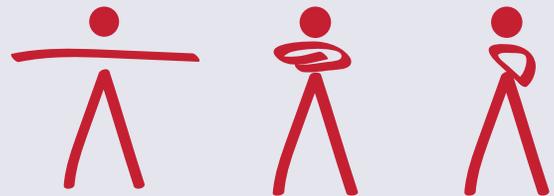
Movement is essential to keeping your energy up in the office. Taking a few minutes a day to do a yoga pose at your desk will improve your posture and your mood. In fact, studies have suggested a little yoga could fight depression and anxiety or other stress-related disorders.

4. POP IN A PIECE OF GUM

Gum can do more than just freshen your breath (although that is important!). It can also boost cognitive performance and increase your energy. Researchers suggest that chewing gum enhances performance due to "mastication-induced arousal"- meaning that just the act of chewing wakes us up and keeps us focused.

YOGA POSES FOR ENERGY

Your body was made to move, yet most of us spend our workdays stuck in a sedentary posture. Bring some much-needed movement to your workday with these office-approved yoga poses.



EAGLE ARMS

Release tension in the back and shoulders with this pose.

1. Start with your feet hip distance apart
2. Bring your arms to the side of your body with your palms up as you inhale
3. As you exhale, bring both of your arms across your body with your right arm on top of the left, giving yourself a hug
4. Bring the backs of the arms together as you inhale and connect the palms of the hands together in front of your face
5. Hold the posture for 10 seconds and then switch sides



STANDING CRESCENT

Open your chest and breathe deeply with this side-bending pose.

1. Start with the legs outer hip distance apart with the feet firmly planted into the ground
2. Place your left hand lightly on your desk and lift your right arm up as you inhale
3. Gently bend to the left side as you exhale
4. Inhale as you reach higher with your right arm and exhale as you move deeper into your side bend
5. Repeat the process for 3 breaths and switch sides

5. WATER, WATER, AND MORE WATER

Keep a pint of water by your desk at all times and drink frequently. Fatigue is one of the main symptoms of dehydration. Stay hydrated and stay energized.

6. POWER POSE

Take two minutes to get in what Harvard researcher Amy Cuddy calls the Power Pose. Simply plant your feet shoulders-width distance apart and raise your arms into the air in a V shape. You may feel silly at first, but this simple postural change affects your brain chemistry by increasing testosterone, the dominance hormone, levels.

7. DO AN ENERGIZING TASK

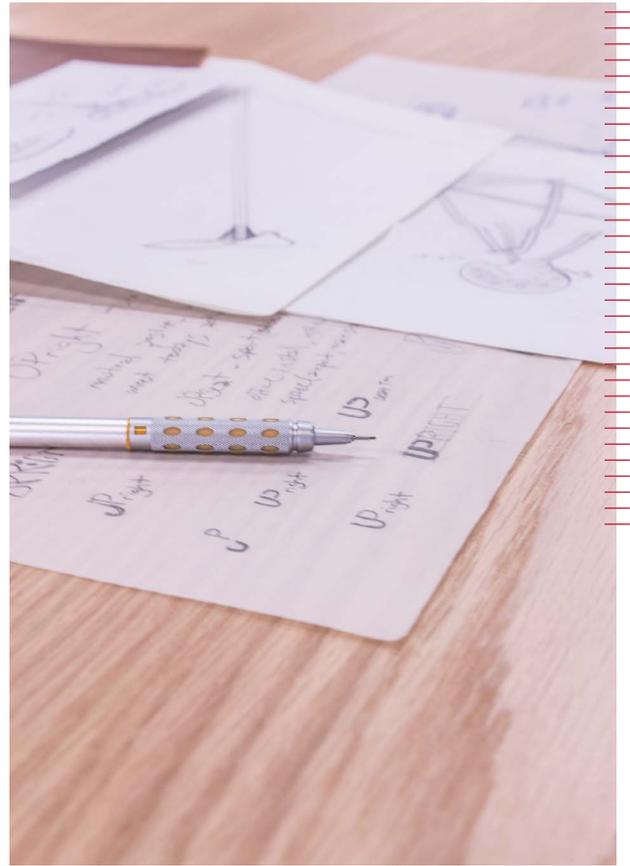
Plan to take on your most energizing task around 3pm. This will help you actively fight off post-lunch fatigue. A study found that being interested in a task makes it significantly easier to stay awake (despite an energy lull).

8. KEEP A NOTEPAD & PENCIL NEARBY

Nothing is quite as energizing as a brilliant idea. Nothing is quite as dispiriting as forgetting said brilliant idea because you didn't jot it down. Have a notebook at your desk at all times to keep all of your inspired ideas.

9. ROCK OUT

Looking for an instant energy and mood boost? Turn on some tunes. Listening to a lively tune 1. brings you back to the present moment, thereby improving focus and 2. releases dopamine, the neurotransmitter linked to pleasure.



A MUST-LISTEN PLAYLIST FOR ENERGY

Looking for an inspiring soundtrack to your workday? Get pumped up with this playlist for energy! To listen, visit [this link](#). Happy listening!



6 Simple Habits to Refresh Your Workday Routine

HABIT 1: Start your day earlier

Try heading into the office 30 minutes earlier than usual. Your early arrival will give you a jump-start on the day, allowing you to get focused before the impending office chaos sets in.

HABIT 2: Deliberately choose one MIT

When you have a torrent of tasks to complete, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and unfocused. Instead, start your day by identifying your Most Important Task (MIT). Your MIT should always be specific and achievable. This simple act will give you a sense of purpose as you go about your workday.

HABIT 3: Adopt the 30-10 Rule

It's almost too easy to procrastinate on the Internet. With good intentions, you search something related to the task at hand, but then your mind wanders to puppies (as minds are wont to do) and before you know it you've spent 45 minutes transfixedly watching videos of french bulldog puppies running around in circles. Sound familiar? Then try what Leo Babuta of Zen Habits calls the 30-10 rule. Simply set a timer for 30 mins and power through distractions and get to work. When the timer goes off, spend 10 minutes doing whatever it is you like- watch puppy videos, whatever. Then, it's back to work. This routine will keep you energized and hyper-focused for shorter bursts of time.

CREATE HEALTHY HABITS WITH THESE THREE APPS:

1. SLEEP CYCLE

Sleep Cycle makes waking up easier than ever by syncing your wakeup time to your body's natural rhythms.

How it works: Waking up easy is all about timing. Sleep Cycle alarm clock tracks your sleep patterns and wakes you up during light sleep. Waking up during light sleep feels like waking up naturally rested without an alarm clock.

Why we love it: At first we were skeptical, but Sleep Cycle really does make waking up a more gentle experience.

2. COACH.ME

Coach.Me is an app that provides 1-on-1 coaching on any goal and connects you with a community of other users working on the same goal.

How it works: Sometimes you need that little extra push to achieve your goals. Coach.Me makes it happen by connecting you instantly with an expert who can keep you on track.

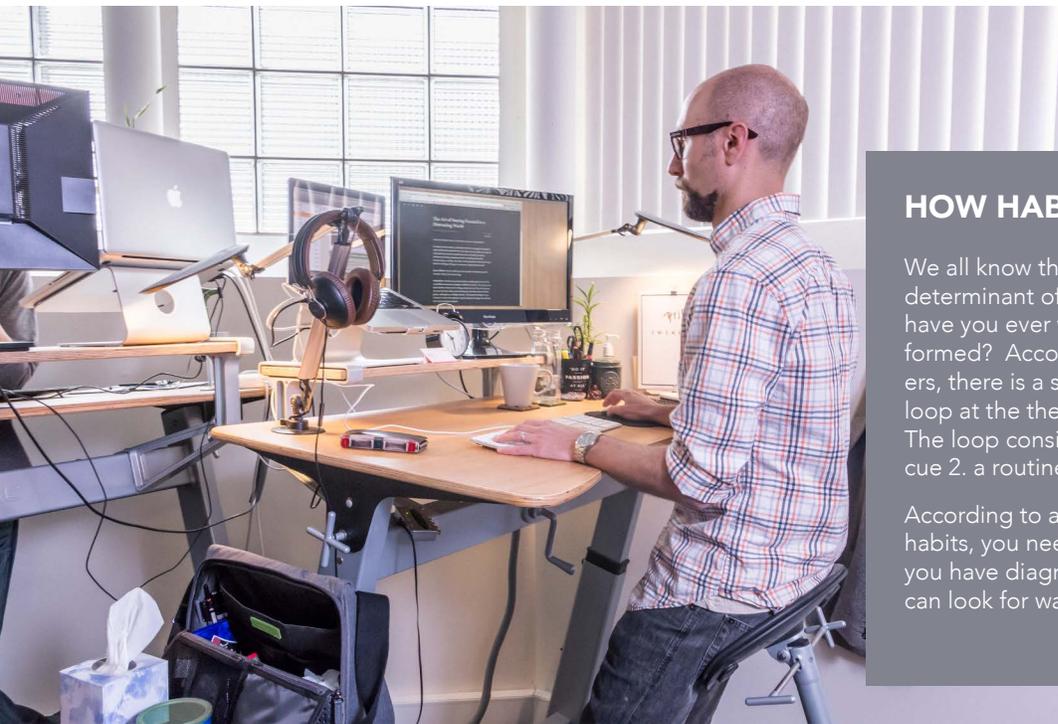
Why we love it: Not only is Coach.Me great for building office habits, it can also help you build healthy habits outside the office such as saving money and getting into an exercise routine.

3. MOMENTUM

Momentum is a beautifully designed personal dashboard designed to eliminate distraction and provide inspiration, focus, and productivity.

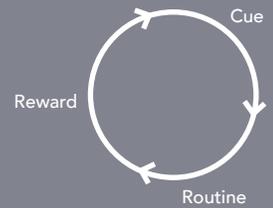
How it works: Each morning, when you open your Internet browser you will be prompted to answer the question "What is your main focus today?" Type in your MIT here and throughout the day, you will gently be reminded of your purpose for the day.

Why we love it: Momentum's design features breathtaking nature photography and thought-provoking quotations. This helps you approach your day with purpose, thoughtfulness and calmness.



HOW HABITS WORK

We all know that habits are a powerful determinant of human behavior. But have you ever wondered how they are formed? According to MIT Researchers, there is a simple neurological loop at the core of every habit. The loop consists of three parts- 1. a cue 2. a routine and 3. a reward.



According to author Charles Duhigg, "to understand your own habits, you need to identify the components of your loops. Once you have diagnosed the habit loop of a particular behavior, you can look for ways to supplant old vices with new routines."

HABIT 4: Go offline

During the workday, we are constantly connected. This can be both a blessing and a curse- the latter because of the unending distractions that the Internet provides.

Spend a few hours each day off-line (gasp). Doing so, will enable you to stay hyperfocused on the task at hand.

HABIT 5: Start saying no

Most people feel overcommitted and overworked in the office. This leads to stress, fatigue, and anxiety. Get into the habit of saying no to obligations that don't make sense for you. It can feel difficult to say no to your co-workers, but think of it in terms of opportunity costs. Economist Tim Harford explains it this way, "everytime we say "yes" to a request, we are also saying "no" to anything else we might accomplish with the time. It pays to take a moment to think about what those things might be."

HABIT 6: Tidy up your desk at the end of the day

Your creative process can be messy but your desk doesn't have to be. Allot 10 minutes every evening to clean up your desk- put away an errant papers, tidy all of your cables, and toss your trash. You'll come into work the next day to a more peaceful working environment.