



CHANGEWERXS
change through practice

MANAGING WORKPLACE STRESS
- *SIGNS & STRATEGIES*

CHANGEWERXS

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PREPARED FOR

**The 7th Annual Conference Day
Fraser Valley Chartered Professional
Accountants Associaton**

November 7, 2019

Strategies for Managing Workplace Stress

- **Track our stressors.** Keep a journal for a week or two to identify which situations create the most stress and how we respond to them. Record our thoughts, feelings and information about the environment, including the people and circumstances involved, the physical setting and how we reacted.
- **Develop healthy responses.** Instead of attempting to fight stress with fast food or alcohol, do our best to make healthy choices when we feel the tension rise. Exercise is a great stress-buster. Yoga can be an excellent choice, but any form of physical activity is beneficial. Also make time for hobbies and favourite activities.
- **Set aside time for pleasurable activities.** Whether it's reading a novel, going to concerts or playing games with our family, make sure to set aside time for the things that bring us pleasure. Getting enough good-quality sleep is also important for effective stress management
- **Establish boundaries.** In today's digital world, it's easy to feel pressured to be available 24 hours a day. Establish some work-life boundaries for ourselves. That might mean making a rule not to check email from home in the evening, or not answering the phone during dinner
- **Take time to recharge.** To avoid the negative effects of chronic stress and burnout, we need time to replenish and return to our pre-stress level of functioning. This recovery process requires "switching off" from work by having periods of time when we are neither engaging in work-related activities, nor thinking about work.
- **Learn how to relax.** Techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises and mindfulness (a state in which we actively observe present experiences and thoughts without judging them) can help melt away stress. Start by taking a few minutes each day to focus on a simple activity like breathing, walking or enjoying a meal.
- **Talk to our manager.** Healthy employees are typically more productive, so our manager has an incentive to create a work environment that promotes employee well-being. Start by having an open conversation with our manager. The purpose of this isn't to lay out a list of complaints, but rather to come up with an effective plan for managing the stressors we've identified, so we can perform at our best on the job.
- **Get some support.** Accepting help from trusted friends and family members can improve our ability to manage stress. Our employer may also have stress management resources available through an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), including online information, available counselling and referral to mental health professionals, if needed.
- **Create a balanced schedule.** All work and no play is a recipe for burnout. Try to find a balance between work and family life, social activities and solitary pursuits, daily responsibilities and downtime.
- **Leave earlier in the morning.** Even 10-15 minutes can make the difference between frantically rushing and having time to ease into our day. Don't add to our stress levels by running late.
- **Plan regular breaks.** Make sure to have short breaks throughout the day to take a walk or chat to a friendly face. Also, get away from your desk or work station for lunch. It will help us relax and recharge and be more, not less, productive.
- **Don't over-commit ourselves.** Avoid scheduling things back-to-back or trying to fit too much into one day. If we've got too much on our plate, distinguish between the "shoulds" and the "musts." Drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.
- **Prioritise tasks.** Tackle high-priority tasks first. If we have something particularly unpleasant to do, get it over with early. The rest of our day will be more pleasant as a result.
- **Break projects into small steps.** If a large project seems overwhelming, focus on one manageable step at a time, rather than taking on everything at once. This is called "chunking".

Change Matrix

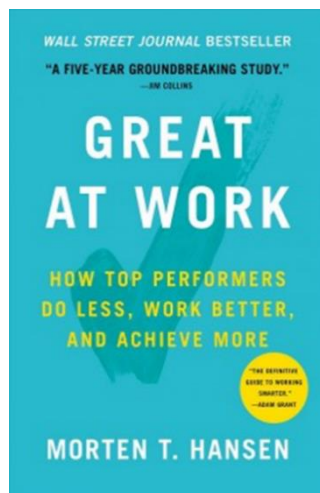
GRIN & BEAR IT	CHANGE SELF (INTERNAL)
CHANGE SITUATION/ENVIRONMENT/STRUCTURE (EXTERNAL)	LEAVE

TAYLOR'S MOTIVATION MATRIX

MOTIVATION MATRIX		
	Internal	External
Positive	<p>Motivators: Passion, self-validation, challenge, satisfaction, desire</p> <p>Outcome: Successful, fulfilled and happy</p>	<p>Motivators: Financial rewards, security, professional recognition and appreciation</p> <p>Outcome: Some success, mostly fulfilled, but dependent on others for continued feelings of success</p>
Negative	<p>Motivators: Fear of failure, feelings of inadequacy, insecurity</p> <p>Outcome: Considerable success, but a high rate of burnout and general unhappiness even after success is attained</p>	<p>Motivators: Pressure from significant others, unstable life, financial pressure</p> <p>Outcome: Some success, yet continued feelings of anxiety and unhappiness even after success is attained</p>

EISENHOWER'S DECISION-MAKING MATRIX

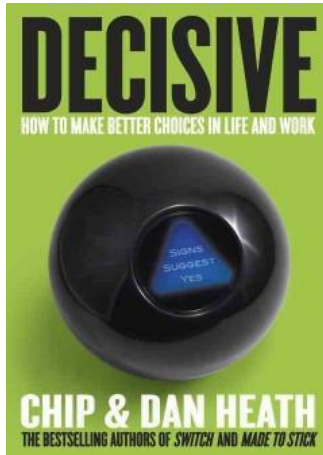
	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	<p>IMPORTANT GOALS (DO – do it now)</p> <p>E.g. Emergencies, deadlines, some calls, some emails.</p>	<p>CRITICAL ACTIVITIES (DECIDE – schedule a time to do it)</p> <p>E.g. Planning, research, etc.</p>
NOT IMPORTANT	<p>DISTRACTIONS (DELEGATE – who can do it for you?)</p> <p>E.g. Interruptions, distractions, all calls and emails.</p>	<p>INTERRUPTIONS (DELETE – eliminate it)</p> <p>E.g. Time wasters (junk mail), busy work, social media, etc.</p>



Published 2018

Hansen, a management professor at the University of California, Berkeley (formerly taught at Harvard), contributor to business management journals, author of works such as Great by Choice (with Jim Collins), and requested speaker and consultant for several multinational companies, here outlines the seven practices defined by his study to ensure great work performance.

Hansen and his research team undertook a comprehensive five-year study involving 5,000 managers and employees across multiple job sectors, with the goal of quantifying what "working smarter" means. They found that seven "smart practices" were key to an individual's positive performance and well-being. These include: do less, then obsess; redesign your work to ensure it creates value; implement a learning loop while performing daily tasks; match passion and purpose; etc.

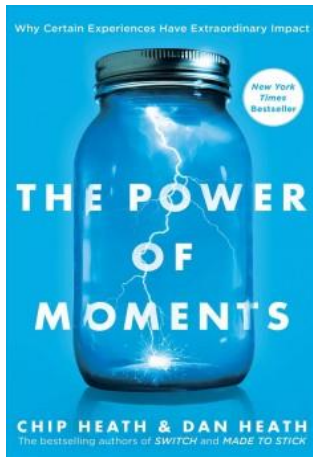


Published 2013

The four principles that can help us to overcome our brains' natural biases to make better, more informed decisions--in our lives, careers, families and organizations.

In *Decisive*, Chip Heath and Dan Heath, the bestselling authors of *Made to Stick* and *Switch*, tackle the thorny problem of how to overcome our natural biases and irrational thinking to make better decisions, about our work, lives, companies and careers.

(Chip Heath is a professor at Stanford Graduate School of Business, teaching courses on strategy and organisations. Dan, his brother, is a senior fellow at Duke University's CASE centre, which supports entrepreneurs fighting for social good).



Published 2017

The New York Times bestselling authors of *Switch* and *Made to Stick* explore why certain brief experiences can jolt us and elevate us and change us—and how we can learn to create such extraordinary moments in our life and work.

This book delves into some fascinating mysteries of experience: Why we tend to remember the best or worst moment of an experience, as well as the last moment, and forget the rest. Why “we feel most comfortable when things are certain, but we feel most alive when they’re not.”

Many of the defining moments in our lives are the result of accident or luck—but why would we leave our most meaningful, memorable moments to chance when we can create them? *The Power of Moments* shows us how to be the author of richer experiences.

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