

# Healthy Department Toolkit



Enclosed in this toolkit are resources to help you and your department be energized throughout the day. Learn how to plan an energized meeting, choose energizing foods, incorporate energy breaks and add movement to your day.



# Healthy Department: Energized Meetings

## Key Strategies for Planning an Energized Meeting

*An unfocused meeting that easily gets off track, runs long, or has unclear goals can sap the energy of those involved.*

*See below for a few strategies that can help your meeting stay focused and keep your colleagues energized.*

*Prolonged sitting in long meetings does not support good energy for those in attendance.*

*By incorporating breaks and encouraging more movement and/or standing, you will help maximize attendees' energy and have a more effective meeting.*

### Develop Agenda and Circulate

- Plan to tackle high priority items early and circulate the agenda ahead of time so attendees know what to expect. You may also want to ask for feedback from others to ensure important items are not left off the agenda.
- For meetings longer than 1 hour, incorporating a 5 minute physical break (e.g. standing, walking, stretching) can help keep energy and focus high. (See the attached stretching handout for more ideas.)
- Allot each agenda item a “time zone” to help you stay focused and on track. This practice will help you determine if your agenda is too long and will help keep the group focused. If your agenda is too long for the allotted meeting time, add some items to the “parking lot” list to discuss at another time.
- Save time on the agenda to ensure everyone is on the same page and has a clear idea of their action steps.

### Establish Roles

- An engaged group of attendees is crucial to holding an Energized Meeting. Suggested Roles:
  - Leader*– Set and circulate agenda, make decisions on adjustments and progress
  - Time Keeper*– Stick with allotted time on agenda and notify progress during discussion
  - Note Keeper*– Don't forget to share the notes with everyone.
  - Energizer*– Pay attention to energy level of group, keep discussions focused, encourage movement
- For the most effective and energized meetings, rotate roles for regular meetings to keep things fresh.

### Try a Standing Meeting/Encourage Standing During Meetings

- Encourage (and model) standing during meetings if appropriate for the setting and goals.
- You don't have to stand for the entire meeting as even a short break of a few minutes from sitting can increase energy levels.

### Consider a Walking Meeting

- Walking meetings work best when you have a small group, a quiet place to walk, confidential conversations are not needed, everyone is comfortable, participants can opt out of walking portion, and when the goal is to check in as opposed to a detail-oriented agenda.



# Healthy Department: Food at Meetings

## Choose Energizing Foods

*If you are serving food for the meeting, what you serve can make an impact on the energy and focus of attendees.*

*Here are a few questions you can ask yourself to help you select foods that best support your goal of creating an energized meeting:*

### **Do I really need to serve food at this meeting?**

- Not all meetings need to have food. If your meeting is outside of a typical meal time and is 1 hour or less, consider not providing refreshments or limiting the options to water and easy to transport seasonal fruit (bananas, apples, etc.) and/or encouraging participants to bring healthy refreshments with them.

### **Have I made fruits and vegetables a main component of my order?**

- Seasonal fruits and vegetables that are prominently displayed are excellent options and can be included in just about any meeting in which you serve food. They will better support the energy levels of your meeting attendees.

### **Have I requested the smallest portions available for my chosen items?**

- If we eat large amounts of any foods (especially those high in sugar), our body's natural response is to shift into a "slower" state causing energy and focus to drop. For the most effective options choose:
  - Seasonal fruits and vegetables
  - Lean proteins (meats, nut butters, hummus, etc.)
  - Whole grains (if having breads)
  - Water (skipping juice and soft drinks).
- If you choose to have baked goods, request the smallest portions or ask that items are cut into small servings. This will make it easier for attendees to make choices that support their energy needs.

### **If I am providing a meal, have I asked about any food preferences, allergies or dietary needs ahead of time?**

- Ask in advance so you can avoid situations where people are excluded from the options you've chosen due to any limiting factors.
- As a general guideline, you should consider ordering vegetarian options at a minimum.

# Healthy Department: Energized Day



## Help! I feel my energy dropping!

*It's 3:00 in the afternoon and you feel your energy and focus begin to drop.  
Here are a few strategies you can try when you find yourself in this situation:*

### MOVE IT

- Taking a brisk walk for a few minutes can make a big difference. Challenge yourself with some stairs or a quick walk around the building—anything to get some blood flowing.
- If you can't step away from your desk, incorporate some basic movements while seated:
  - Shoulder rolls
  - Subtle arm or wrist stretch
  - Heel raises
- If you're in a lengthy meeting, try standing up for a few minutes to stretch your legs, if appropriate for the setting.

### FUEL UP

- What you eat can make a big impact on your energy. In general, try to focus meals or snacks around fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and water for the best results. Foods high in sugar (muffins, pastries, juice, soda) may give you a short-term energy burst, but it will be followed by a rapid energy crash and loss of focus.
- It can be helpful to think of the food you eat as “fuel” for your work to help you make choices that are in line with your work goals.

### STAY FOCUSED

- Unless required by your job, resist the urge to multi-task in a meeting by using devices, checking email, or letting your mind wander—you should truly try to stay engaged.
- Inevitably, thoughts about waiting tasks or other random thoughts will pop into your head so it can be helpful to have a small notebook ready to jot these down until you have time to address them more directly.

# Healthy Department: Energy Breaks



## Energy Break Ideas

Check out the list below for sample energy breaks you can incorporate into your day. Stepping away from your work for just 2 – 5 minutes can help you feel more energized, less stress, more focused and more productive when you return. Get started with at least one energy break each day and then work up to adding in a few breaks throughout your day.

**Start a movement in your office and encourage your colleagues to join you!**

1. Close your eyes and take 10 slow deep breaths – clear your mind and just focus on your breathing.
2. Head outside and take a quick walk around your building.
3. Take a bathroom break and use the bathroom on a different floor – if you're able, take the stairs!
4. Walk to the kitchen to fill up your water bottle to stay hydrated.
5. Roll your shoulders forward 5 times and then backward 5 times.
6. Stand up and do 5 shallow squats – wear flat shoes or take your shoes off.
7. Meditate for a moment. Close your door or put on a set of headphones and listen to this video [here](#).

Looking for a longer meditation? Check out the [Headspace](#) app or the [Stop, Breathe & Think](#) App for 5 – 10 minute meditations.

8. If you're able, walk up and down a flight of stairs.
9. Looking for something more advanced? Try 10 pushups, 10 deep squats, or a 1 minute plank!
10. Stand up and do 10 heel raises (raise up on your toes; hold on to a chair for balance if needed)
11. Doodle on scrap paper or grab your coloring book and colored pencils and get creative.
12. Close your eyes and lose yourself to relaxing music. Try listening to this music [here](#) to unwind.

# Healthy Department: Stretches



## Movement: Stretches

*For a few quick ideas for movement breaks throughout your day and during meetings, consider the following stretches and exercises that can be done almost anywhere:*



*Reach over head*



*Reach in front with hands clasped*



*Shoulder Rolls*



*Heel Raises*



*Shallow squats (if in appropriate shoes and clothing)*



# Healthy Department: Sharing Office Space

## Tips for Sharing an Office

### ***Be Considerate***

- Be aware of how loudly you speak on the phone, and keep conversations brief if you can.
- Try to keep your workspace tidy and ask to borrow items from your coworker's desk (stapler, scissors, etc.) and then return them.
- Check with your coworker before you start playing music or try using headphones.
- Give your coworkers the same courtesy you expect.

### ***Communicate***

- Keep communication lines open and keep a high level of mutual respect to help maintain harmonious office co-habitation.
- Ask for feedback on how you can be a better office-mate.

### ***Give each other some privacy***

- Offer to step out or consider leaving to fill your water bottle if your co-worker gets a private call.

## Tips For Staying Focused in an Open Office Environment

### ***Keep the interruptions to a minimum***

- Create a way to tell coworkers that you're not free right now and to check back later—whether it's a sign, or a flag on top of your computer, make sure your coworkers know the meaning. Be aware of how often you have the sign displayed.
- Be cognizant of how often you interrupt your coworker. Consider making a list of questions for that person and setting aside a chunk of time to review them.

### ***Have a "study hall"***

- Set aside time blocks during the workday where everyone agrees to not schedule meetings or collaborate with others—instead, focus on individual work.

### ***Agree on shared behavioral norms***

- Consider some office "rules" such as keeping all phone and computer alerts silences, taking any calls longer than a few minutes in a conference room, and avoid eating especially odiferous foods at your desk.

### ***Be patient***

- Be patient finding the best practices for productivity and overall happiness when sharing office space—it may take some time to adjust.

***The most important thing to remember is to communicate and be considerate. Be aware of your habits and how they may affect the people around you. Be receptive to feedback and be kind in offering your feedback.***