

# Boost Workplace Energy: 2 Science-Backed Fatigue Fixes

## Description

In numerous professional environments, employees often find themselves grappling with the sensation that there are insufficient hours in the workday. However, a recent study has illuminated two effective strategies for combating fatigue: the implementation of regular microbreaks and the provision of supervisory support.

This research, conducted by scholars from Wake Forest University, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), and Northeastern University in the United States, offers insights that could determine whether employees endure a decline or experience a resurgence in productivity during the demanding hours of the afternoon.

According to the findings, both microbreaks and supervisory support contribute positively to reducing fatigue by the end of the workday, as well as enhancing sleep quality and energizing employees for the following day. The most significant alleviation of exhaustion occurs when both strategies are employed in concert.

### Work chart

Microbreaks and support were charted against fatigue. (Jefferson et al., *Contemporary Accounting Research*, 2024)

Lindsay Andiola, an accountant at VCU's School of Business, notes, "Microbreaks represent a straightforward, cost-effective method to manage fatigue, particularly during intense workloads. Additionally, supervisory support is essential in alleviating employee strain."

These mechanisms collectively provide substantial relief for professionals navigating periodical high-stress work scenarios.

The researchers initially surveyed 44 accountants regarding their work practices, subsequently conducting a controlled study involving 179 additional participants. Findings confirmed that both microbreaks and regular supervisory engagement significantly diminished fatigue, particularly during peak periods. This correlation highlights their effectiveness in times of increased job stress.

Furthermore, follow-up examinations indicated that microbreaks enhanced accuracy in audit tasks, countering the known decline in performance under pressure. As articulated by the researchers in their paper, "Public accountants routinely confront the burdens of stringent deadlines, excessive hours, and considerable workloads, leading to elevated fatigue and burnout levels that adversely impact audit quality and long-term turnover rates."

Microbreaks need not be extensive; even brief intervals of one minute can include activities such as reading a news article, grabbing a coffee, or stretching. Similarly, supervisory support entails checking in with staff, offering assistance, and expressing gratitude for their efforts. While employees may have limited control over managerial actions, they can proactively manage fatigue by integrating short, restorative breaks into their routines. While the study investigates brief pauses, it leaves the optimal timing for these microbreaks for future exploration.

By embracing these strategies, organizations can significantly improve employee well-being and enhance audit quality, ultimately cultivating a more sustainable and productive work atmosphere. The findings of this research are documented in *Contemporary Accounting Research*.

## Vocabulary List:

1. **Insufficient** /ɪn.sə'fɪʃ.ənt/ (adjective): Not enough; inadequate.
2. **Combat** /kəm'bæt/ (verb): To take action to reduce or prevent something.
3. **Resurgence** /rɪ'sɜːr.dʒəns/ (noun): An increase or revival after a period of decline.
4. **Energizing** /'en.ər.dʒaɪ.zɪŋ/ (verb): To give vitality and enthusiasm; invigorate.
5. **Alleviation** /ə.liː.vi'eɪ.ʃən/ (noun): The act of making something less severe.
6. **Sustainable** /sə'steɪ.nə.bəl/ (adjective): Able to be maintained at a certain rate or level.

## Comprehension Questions

### Multiple Choice

1. According to the research, what are two effective strategies for combating fatigue in professional environments?

Option: Regular vacation days and longer lunch breaks  
Option: Implementation of regular microbreaks and provision of supervisory support  
Option: Working overtime and reducing sleep hours  
Option: Skipping meals and increasing caffeine intake

2. Which universities were involved in conducting the research on combating fatigue?

Option: Harvard University and Stanford University  
Option: Wake Forest University, University of Virginia, and Northeastern University  
Option: University of California, Los Angeles and University of Texas, Austin  
Option: Princeton University and Yale University

3. According to Lindsay Andiola, what does supervisory support help with in professional environments?

- Option: Increasing workload
- Option: Alleviating employee strain
- Option: Creating more stress
- Option: Encouraging burnout

4. How many participants were involved in the controlled study conducted by the researchers?

- Option: 44
- Option: 100
- Option: 179
- Option: 200

5. What is one benefit of microbreaks mentioned in the research?

- Option: Decreasing productivity
- Option: Enhancing audit quality
- Option: Increasing fatigue levels
- Option: Promoting burnout

6. What can employees do to proactively manage fatigue based on the research?

- Option: Work longer hours without breaks
- Option: Integrate short restorative breaks into routines
- Option: Ignore signs of fatigue and continue working
- Option: Avoid all forms of social interaction at work

### True-False

7. Microbreaks and supervisory support have no impact on reducing fatigue according to the research.

8. Follow-up examinations indicated that microbreaks hindered accuracy in audit tasks.

9. Employees have limited control over integrating microbreaks into their routines to manage fatigue.

10. The study mentioned the optimal timing for microbreaks and supervisory support.

11. Supervisory support is crucial in alleviating employee strain, as stated in the research.

12. The research found that microbreaks and supervisory support enhance employee well-being.

## Gap-Fill

13. According to the content, the correlation between microbreaks and regular supervisory engagement significantly diminished fatigue, particularly during \_\_\_\_\_ periods.

14. The researchers surveyed 44 accountants initially, subsequently conducting a controlled study involving an additional \_\_\_\_\_ participants.

15. Microbreaks are recommended to be integrated into routines to effectively manage \_\_\_\_\_.

16. By embracing microbreaks and supervisory support, organizations can significantly improve employee well-being and enhance \_\_\_\_\_ quality.

17. Microbreaks can include activities such as reading a news article, grabbing a coffee, or \_\_\_\_\_.

18. The research suggests that short, restorative breaks can help employees navigate periodical high-stress work \_\_\_\_\_.

## Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Implementation of regular microbreaks and provision of supervisory support 2. Wake Forest University, University of Virginia, and Northeastern University 3. Alleviating employee strain 4. 179 5. Enhancing audit quality 6. Integrate short restorative breaks into routines

**True-False:** 7. False 8. False 9. False 10. False 11. True 12. True

**Gap-Fill:** 13. peak 14. 179 15. fatigue 16. audit 17. stretching 18. scenarios

## Vocabulary quizzes

**Multiple Choice ( Select the Correct answer for each question. )**



1. Which word means to explain something clearly?

- Option: Anomaly
- Option: Elucidated
- Option: Resurgence
- Option: Vulnerability

2. Which word refers to isolating or hiding something?

- Option: Ecosystem
- Option: Sequestering
- Option: Formulation
- Option: Hydration

3. Which word describes something that is important or meaningful?

- Option: Insights
- Option: Significant
- Option: Destabilize
- Option: Syndrome

4. Which word represents the ability to change or vary?

- Option: Resurgence
- Option: Variability
- Option: Monitoring
- Option: Energizing

5. Which word means to release or give off something?

- Option: Complications
- Option: Emitting
- Option: Sustainable
- Option: Radiance

6. Which word denotes taking action against something harmful?

- Option: Alleviation
- Option: Vulnerability
- Option: Resurgence
- Option: Combating

7. Which word means to refill or renew something?

- Option: Ecosystem
- Option: Resurgence
- Option: Replenish
- Option: Overgrazing

8. Which word describes the act of making something unstable?

- Option: Syndrome
- Option: Destabilize
- Option: Monitoring
- Option: Vulnerability

9. Which word refers to observing or checking something over time?

- Option: Radiance
- Option: Monitoring
- Option: Sustainable
- Option: Electrolytes

10. Which word relates to maintaining something for the long term?

- Option: Insufficient
- Option: Ecosystems
- Option: Sustainable
- Option: Hydration

**Gap-Fill ( Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

11. Her smile was so bright; it lit up the room with \_\_\_\_\_.

12. The doctor diagnosed the patient with a rare \_\_\_\_\_ that required specialized treatment.

13. The children huddled together aware of their \_\_\_\_\_ in the storm.

14. The researcher gained valuable \_\_\_\_\_ into the behavior of the endangered species.

15. The fields suffered from \_\_\_\_\_ by livestock leading to soil erosion.

16. The marine \_\_\_\_\_ was rich with diverse marine life.

17. The surgery was successful but there were unexpected \_\_\_\_\_ during recovery.

18. Adequate \_\_\_\_\_ is essential for maintaining good health especially in hot weather.

19. The community showed remarkable \_\_\_\_\_ in rebuilding after the natural disaster.

20. The team worked on a new drug \_\_\_\_\_ to combat the infectious disease.

**Matching Sentences ( Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list. )**

21. The sudden drop in temperature was considered an in the weather pattern.

22. The region is known for its rich soil due to the area being active.

23. Her generous donation brought much-needed to the struggling community.

24. The water supply was to meet the needs of the growing population.

25. The political unrest threatened to the fragile peace in the region.

26. There has been a noticeable in interest for traditional crafts in recent years.

27. The lively music had an effect on the crowd lifting their spirits.

28. Sports drinks contain to help replenish nutrients lost during exercise.

29. The outbreak of a new prompted health officials to take immediate action.

30. The rainforest a vast array of plant and animal species.

## Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Elucidated 2. Sequestering 3. Significant 4. Variability 5. Emitting 6. Combating 7. Replenish 8. Destabilize 9. Monitoring 10. Sustainable

**Gap-Fill:** 11. Radiance 12. Syndrome 13. Vulnerability 14. Insights 15. Overgrazing 16. Ecosystem 17. Complications 18. Hydration 19. Resilience 20. Formulation

**Matching sentence:** 1. Anomaly 2. Volcanically 3. Alleviation 4. Insufficient 5. Destabilize 6. Resurgence 7. Energizing 8. Electrolytes 9. Disease 10. Sustains

## CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL5

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