



Developing an Intense Focus

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We all have a tendency to become side tracked. We may want to complete an important task, yet many distractions poke and prod us away from our goals. How can we keep our focus on the task at hand?

Distractions may be hard to ignore, especially when it's a chatty coworker, a ringing phone, a demanding spouse, or many other things. Thankfully, there are some tried and true strategies we can use to put the distractions on hold and place an intense focus on our task.

Try these techniques to develop an intense focus:

- 1. Remove distractions.** You can't focus if you're constantly checking your email, Facebook, or other time-stealers! You'll get more done if you allow your mind to get in the groove with some peace and quiet.
 - Turn off your email, close your web browsers, shut off your phone or forward it to voicemail, and put on headphones to avoid loud noises. You'll be glad you did!
- 2. Remain committed.** You know that you have something you should finish, but are you one hundred percent committed to seeing it through to completion? This is where you need to be honest with yourself.
 - If you're not fully committed to your task, you're more likely to allow distractions to overtake your mind. More often than not, you'll use distractions to create excuses and exceptions that try to justify your lack of focus.
 - If you *are* committed, it will be easier to ignore distractions and keep your focus. ***This is something only you can decide.***

3. Set a time limit. Even if the task itself doesn't have a time limit, assign one anyway. If you have a deadline, you'll be more apt to complete your task in a timely manner.

- Rather than giving in to the surrounding distractions, you'll be competing against the clock to get things done on time.

4. Take frequent breaks. This may sound contradictory, but it actually makes a world of difference for the workaholic. If we work too long at one time, not only do we become physically tired, but our minds tire as well. This makes us more susceptible to distractions and shatters our concentration.

- Work intently for an hour and then allow yourself a 10-minute break. When you return from the break, you'll be more focused, your mind will be clearer, and you'll be more likely to work for another hour without losing focus.

- ***This strategy allows you to get more work done in a shorter time.***

5. Use a list. Lists are wonderful tools that help you accomplish your work quicker and easier. Before beginning, write down everything you need to accomplish and then cross out each task as you complete it.

- The process of crossing things off your list is a great motivator to keep you working without distractions, plus it helps to build the momentum to get everything done.

6. Reward yourself for a job well done. When you're able to stay focused on an important task, reward yourself! Just keep thinking about the big picture and your reward once you're finished with the task at hand.

- ***This will keep you on target and you'll finish as quickly as you possibly can.*** Everyone loves a treat for a job well done!

Remember, you're human, too. Losing your focus is easy in an existence that's filled with daily distractions and annoyances. However, you'll find that you *can* keep an intense focus on something if you practice these techniques. Make them a habit and enjoy your rewards!