Taking a *Break*

Week 1: Importance of Taking a Break

The Issue

A recent survey by workforce consultants showed that **34% of workers usually eat lunch at their desks**, while **16% rarely even take any lunch break**. Of those who do, 15% only left for lunch on occasion while 35% said they always made sure to take a lunch break.

Why Take a Break?

When workers feel overburdened, they tend to perform tasks through their lunch break with hopes that they won't have to stay at work later in order to finish their work. However, **that almost never works out.**

Without a break, mistakes pile up and employees tend to stay later, nullifying the perceived advantages of working through lunch. Contrary to what some may believe, several studies have found that **productivity does NOT decline when short breaks are added to the day.**

Make it Count

Breaks work best when our distraction is genuinely *engaging*: something that truly takes our mind off our stress by taking it onto something else. A walk outside, a good book, exercise are perfect examples. Knowing what distracts us effectively, planning such activities on a regular basis, and clearing time in our schedules to make room for them, is challenging but crucial. Merely imagining breaks won't work. **We need to actually do it.**

We my start to feel anxious when we turn minds away from our problems, but temporarily, like sleep, such breaks not only make us **more capable of managing stress in the short term**, but also help us **develop the inner strength that makes us feel less stressed in the long term**.

Taking breaks may feel like running away but it isn't. Rather, it is a way to refresh ourselves to dive back into the fight more effectively.

So give yourself a break. An active break. **Regularly**.

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References: http://blogs.vault.com/, http://www.healthyalberta.com/, http://www.business.com/, http://www.psychologytoday.com/,