

ARE YOU FEELIN' HOT HOT HOT

THE SCIENCE OF VACATION



Summer is here which means it is time to give yourself a well-deserved break – take a vacation! And while most of us are aware of the benefits of vacation, there seems to be a disconnect between how we value vacation and whether we use it to our advantage.

DID YOU KNOW?

Approximately 40% of Canadians do not plan on using their vacation days.

Vacation is an investment into your health and wellness, relationships, and productivity in the workplace. It allows time to put the cell phone away, disregard the email, and power down for relaxation that is so well-deserved.

RECHARGE YOUR BRAIN, NOT YOUR PHONE

Vacation is a gift to yourself but also to your employer. The science of vacation tells us that giving your brain a break from multitasking allows it to wander and create new neural pathways boosting creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking. Without vacation, fatigue (physical, mental and emotional) can lead to chronic stress which can result in poor decision making, carelessness, impatience, irritability and even depression. Use this summer to your advantage and take a relaxing, or even adventurous vacation to keep your mind at ease.

Reasons to Take a Vacation

- Recover from stress due to school, work, relationships, etc.
- Have a sense of peace, calmness, and excitement.
- Increased happiness.
- Build quality relationships with the people you will vacation with.
- A break from technology and multitasking.
- Increased productivity upon your return.
- Get out of routine and move out of your comfort zone.
- Know yourself on a deeper level.
- Time to do the things you love without the pressure of time and schedule.



DID YOU KNOW?

Canadians leave 31 million vacation days unused each year? That amounts to an average of 3 vacation days per year.

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SIMPLE STEPS TO A RELAXING VACATION

"I need a vacation from my vacation!" Let's be realistic, a vacation isn't always sunshine and butterflies. Planning can be exhausting, unrealistic expectations often lead to disappointment, and the work that piles up on your desk makes you wonder if it was really worth it. Take some simple steps to ensure that your vacation is one that doesn't negate its benefits.



Set a Budget – Decide early in the year how much you can realistically set aside as a vacation fund and stick to it. You will want to include factors such as accommodations, meals and snacks, any currency exchange rates, local transportation, any gear costs (tent, hiking shoes, cooler...etc.) activity and excursion costs and souvenirs.

What is Your Goal? Are you looking for adventure or relaxation? Something social as a group or bonding as a couple or family? Discuss your goals with those involved and be clear about the intention of vacation. You don't want your kids expecting a theme park adventure if your goal is to sit back with a cold beverage at the beach while they swim.



Plan an Itinerary – An itinerary is often overlooked but is likely the most important part of your vacation because it serves many purposes. It allows you to budget effectively, stay true to your goal, allows you to schedule in a good ratio of planned adventure, spontaneity, and downtime helping to prevent exhaustion and disappointment.

Organize Travel Documents – If you are going out of country make sure everyone's passport is up to date, notify your credit card company to avoid fraud alerts, ensure you have health coverage and cancellation insurance.

Make a List – Nothing is worse than getting to your destination and realizing you forgot the essentials. Make a list and check it twice. Share it so to ensure that nothing is missed.

"The mind should be allowed some relaxation, that it may return to its work all the better for the rest." Seneca

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