



NINE WAYS TO GET YOUR PRODUCTIVITY UP!

We'll all been there. Ballplayers call it a slump. Some call it a lull or a funk. These are the times when you don't seem to have as much energy or passion for your work. You can't seem to get as excited (or excited at all) about the tasks in front of you. You are less productive, and you don't feel as good about your work either. Beyond that, the quality of your work you are getting done may be slipping as well.

This situation can be caused by many things and it can affect both individuals and teams. Regardless of the reasons for the situation, there are specific, predictable ways to get past the funk. When you apply these suggestions (and some of them you can apply within one minute of finishing this article) you will lift both your spirits and your productivity, and begin to give you your rhythm back.

Since there's no reason to wait any longer, let's get started!

Get started. Action is the most important force we have. Taking action, whatever it is, will make a big difference. Often our energy is drained by procrastination. Lou Holtz, the longtime football coach said, "When all is said and done, there is a lot more said than done." Stop talking about it or thinking about it and get started. Do something. Do anything. Get started!

Fake it. Dale Carnegie taught us that if we "act enthusiastic, we'll be enthusiastic." This is a fundamental truth. If you don't immediately take action, you can begin by getting yourself excited about the task. If you are having trouble getting excited about the task, get excited about getting over your slump. That will motivate you and help you get going.

Start small. The first actions we take don't have to be large. We may even feel a bit daunted by what is in front of us. In fact, the size of the project or obstacle in front of us may have been what caused the slump to start with. The size of your actions doesn't matter. Take a small step right now.

Think big. While you may start small, you can still think big. Having a big vision can help motivate you and get you excited. It can be incredibly helpful to have a big vision.

Set a goal. Of course the "think big" suggestion is related to goal setting. But you can have a big vision without truly having a goal. Again, at this point the size of the goal is less important than having a clear endpoint that is something you really want. I didn't make this the first suggestion, though you could argue it should be. Why didn't I? Because sometimes people procrastinate in setting a goal! You need this step, and if you can get that clear focus at the start, all the better.

Get some help. Sometimes a task is easier if you have someone to work with. Get a co-worker to share the load on your project, and offer to help them in return. Ask a neighbor for a hand. Their helping hand or their camaraderie may be what stimulates you, or maybe it is the accountability that comes from another person saying, "I'm ready, where do we start?"

Get some advice. Talk to someone who knows about your project or task. Ask for the benefit of their experience. Get their ideas about how to proceed. Their advice will be helpful, and you will likely feel some support for your actions.

Have a daily plan. Do a little bit more each day. A big effort today is great, but if it isn't followed up tomorrow you might find yourself right back where you started emotionally and psychologically. Have a daily plan and work that plan. Consistently work on the task or project and you will find your energy and enthusiasm growing. Soon your slump will be a distant memory.

Set a reward. Maybe you will reward yourself with your favorite dinner, or a night out, or a new CD. Pick something commiserate with your task and something that is motivating to you (or your team). It won't be long until you will be enjoying the rewards you set for yourself.

Johnny Cash wrote and sang a song called "Get Rhythm," and the last chorus goes . . .

Get rhythm when you get the blues
Hey, get rhythm when you get the blues
Get a rock 'n' roll feelin' in your bones
Get taps on your toes and get gone
Get rhythm when you get the blues

All of these suggestions come back to that musical advice. When we get into a rhythm, we get out of our lull and into greater joy... and productivity.

Go ahead, get rhythm today!