

How pausing increases performance

If we want to be at our best at work, we need to punctuate our days with **pauses**.

In squiggly careers, we should take pride in pausing. Adding long or short pauses into your weeks will increase performance.

"A pause is an opening. It acts as a portal to other options and choices, giving more dimension to your experience."

Robert Poynton, Do Pause

3 reasons why pressing pause pays off

1. Prevents sameness and making the same mistakes

2. Antidote to busy and burnout

3. Improves focus and productivity.

Ideas for action

Carry out a space vs. speed scanner activity



Using lines and circles as a way to represent your day helps you to visualise and spot small ways you could add more pauses into your day.

- Pick a timeframe (i.e. a day / a week / your year so far)
- Use a **|** to show intense activity (speed)
- Use **○** to show pauses (space)
- You can try this idea for action looking back at your time, or looking ahead at what you have coming up.

| ○ ||||| ○ ○ |||||

Coach yourself question

What's one pause that would make a big difference to your day?



Think about using the shortest pause possible



What is the shortest pause you could imagine? Designing frequent short pauses into our days can help to improve learning.

- 1-minute reflection times after each meeting
- When asked a question in a meeting count to 5 before answering
- Have a pausing playlist - songs to listen to when pausing
- Take 3 deep breathes before you walk in front door.

Coach yourself question

What's are your pause pay-offs? (getting unstuck / quality / relationships)



Play around with pauses in presentations/meetings



Practising pausing during meetings means you will be more comfortable pausing in other parts of your day.

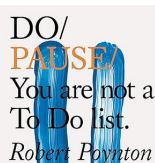
- Using **dramatic pauses** - straight before/after you're about to make an important point
Sounds like:
"The most important action to remember is.....we can do XX."
- Change pace** - pauses help us slow down and change direction.
Sounds like:
"Let's take a moment to consider... (pause) how we can do this."

Coach yourself question

When could pauses be powerful in your meetings / moments?



Recommended resources



Do Pause: You are not a To Do List
Robert Poynton



Design pauses into your day.
Be inspired by this TedX talk from Nancy Scannell about the power of the pause.



Helen and Sarah share more ideas for action to help you slow down on episode #304 of Squiggly Careers.