

Top Ten Ways to Increase Energy Levels

Energy is capacity: the potential to do work, to enjoy life, and to achieve your goals. Nobody understands the value of personal energy better than productivity expert Laura Stack, whose new book *The Exhaustion Cure: Up Your Energy from Low to Go in 21 Days* (Broadway Books, \$13.95) hits bookstores on May 13, 2008. In this tip sheet, Laura reveals the secrets to maximizing your personal energy level.

1. **Strive for a neutral environment.** It takes energy for your body to pay attention or avoid paying attention to something noticeable in your environment. Consider keeping a space heater or fan in your workspace if you tend to be hot or cold frequently. Don't throw food away near your desk to avoid lingering odors. Make sure that your work area has the right level of light to avoid eye strain.
2. **Hear yourself think.** Counteract background noise with your own noise! Use sound machines, white noise CDs, MP3 players, or noise canceling headsets. Turn off computer speakers, close email software or turn off alerts, put Instant Messaging on unavailable, and shut off your phone or forward calls to voicemail. Create a quiet oasis in the midst of the storm.
3. **Get the wiggles.** Work regular physical movement into your work day, especially if most of your work is conducted at a desk in front of a computer. Practice renewal strategies such as desk stretches or breathing exercises. Take frequent breaks, walk around outside, or get a nutritious snack.
4. **Get one extra hour of sleep per night.** Experiment with finding the amount of sleep that's right for you, and stick with it religiously – even on the weekends and holidays! Your bedroom should be your sleeping sanctuary, not a place to read, knit, or watch TV. If your body associates bed with sleep, you'll get to sleep more quickly and sleep better. Tape late-night shows and watch them later.
5. **Get three hours of aerobic activity a week.** Divide that into 30 minutes a day, cut into three, ten-minute segments. People who get as little as three hours of aerobic activity each week have a better memory, are better at switching between mental tasks, and can screen out distractions better than people who did not exercise – all things that now require less concentration and energy expenditure.
6. **Count your blessings, literally.** Conscientiously counting your blessings once a week will significantly increase your overall satisfaction with life over a period of six weeks. People who keep gratitude journals improve physical health, raise energy levels, and report fewer physical symptoms. So write down all the wonderful things in your life and you'll counteract daily annoyances better.
7. **Eat metabolism-boosting foods.** Trim "sleepy" foods, like pasta, bagels, muffins, and cookies from your diet where you can. You're better served eating high-energy foods like meats, raisins, Concord grapes, bananas, and broccoli. Too much sugar can activate your appetite instead of control it. Try an egg-white omelet in the morning instead of cereal and a protein shake in the afternoon. Spicy foods and green tea have also both proven effective at boosting the metabolism.
8. **Steer clear of stimulants.** There's no doubt that stimulants perk you up, but they do it in a way that you have to pay for later. Even legal stimulants trigger a "fight-or-flight" reflex that releases stress hormones, followed by a big energy slump, and long term, high blood pressure and insomnia. Instead, hydrate yourself with good old water. Dehydration can cause lethargy, headaches, and a lack of concentration. If you can't give up that daily Starbucks run, at least cut back to a smaller cup.
9. **Try some aromatherapy.** Recharge your energy by jolting your sense of smell. Keep small bottles of invigorating scented oils like lavender, lemon oil, orange, and spearmint at your desk, and take a whiff when you're low on energy.
10. **Practice purposeful abandonment.** If you have too much on your plate, get rid of anything that doesn't meet your objectives or have long-term consequences for your work. Your only other option is overwork and flagging energy. Get some help. Don't try to do everything yourself, especially if you're running a business. Hire someone to deal with all the repetitive or minor tasks anyone can do, so you can get the important work done.

About the Author

Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, Laura Stack is a personal productivity expert, author, and professional speaker who helps busy workers Leave the Office Earlier® with Maximum Results in Minimum Time™. She is the president of The Productivity Pro®, Inc., a time management training firm specializing in productivity improvement in high-stress organizations. Since 1992, Laura has presented keynotes and seminars on improving output, lowering stress, and saving time in today's workplaces. She is one of a handful of professional speakers whose business focuses solely on time management and productivity topics. She is a high-energy, high-content speaker, who educates, entertains, and motivates professionals to improve workplace productivity.

Laura is the author or co-author of five books, including *Find More Time* (Broadway Books, 2006), two of the popular *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books, and the bestselling book *Leave the Office Earlier* (Broadway Books, 2004), which was hailed as "the best of the bunch" by the New York Times and listed on the June 2004 Book Sense Business & Economics Bestseller list. *Leave the Office Earlier* has been published in seven countries and in five foreign languages, including Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, and Italian. Her newest book *The Exhaustion Cure: Up Your Energy from Low to Go in 21 Days* (Broadway Books) hits bookstores in May 2008. Laura is featured in three audio success series with Zig Ziglar, Denis Waitley, and Brian Tracy. Her popular monthly electronic newsletter has subscribers in 38 countries.

Laura is the creator of The Productivity Pro® line of Day-Timer® planning system, available in March 2008. Widely regarded as one of the leading experts in the field of employee productivity and workplace issues, she has been featured nationally on the CBS Early Show, CNN, NPR, Bloomberg, NBC TV, WB News, the New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, the WashingtonPost.com, the Chicago Tribune, SELF, Me, Working Mother magazine, Bottom Line Personal, Ladies Home Journal, Redbook, Entrepreneur magazine, Readers Digest, Cosmopolitan, Woman's Day, and Parents magazine.

Laura draws from her background as a corporate manager, a University of Colorado instructor, CareerTrack speaker, radio talk show host, newspaper columnist, and small business owner. Her client list includes top Fortune 500 companies, including Microsoft, IBM, GM, Coors, the Denver Broncos, Lockheed Martin, Lucent Technologies, Wells Fargo, Mobil, Time Warner, and VISA, plus a multitude of associations and governmental agencies.

Laura holds an MBA in Organizational Management (University of Colorado, 1991), integrating the importance of productivity in business with employee retention and satisfaction. She is the Treasurer of the National Speakers Association (NSA) and is the recipient of the Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, NSA's highest earned designation, held by less than 10% of professional speakers worldwide. Laura is a spokesperson for 3M, Microsoft®, and Day-Timers®, Inc. She is a Certified Specialist in Microsoft® Office Outlook.

Laura lives with her husband and three children in Denver, CO.

