



Finnish Institute of
Occupational Health

Sleep

OFF WE GO! – TIPS FOR PROMOTING HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

Getting enough sleep is important for work ability, functional capacity and recovery. The most important functions of sleep are removing mental fatigue, supporting memory and learning, promoting mental well-being and maintaining physical health. An adult needs seven to eight hours of sleep every night in order to stay alert and be creative. Daily sleep deprivation of just a couple of hours is enough to significantly weaken cognitive performance. Our ability to receive, process and produce information worsens, as does our ability to focus, plan our actions and make judgments.

Staying up for 24 hours without sleep is the equivalent of having a blood alcohol content of approximately 0.10 per cent. A good night's sleep cannot always be taken for granted because stress caused by issues related to work or personal life may affect sleep quality.



TIPS FOR THE WORKPLACE:

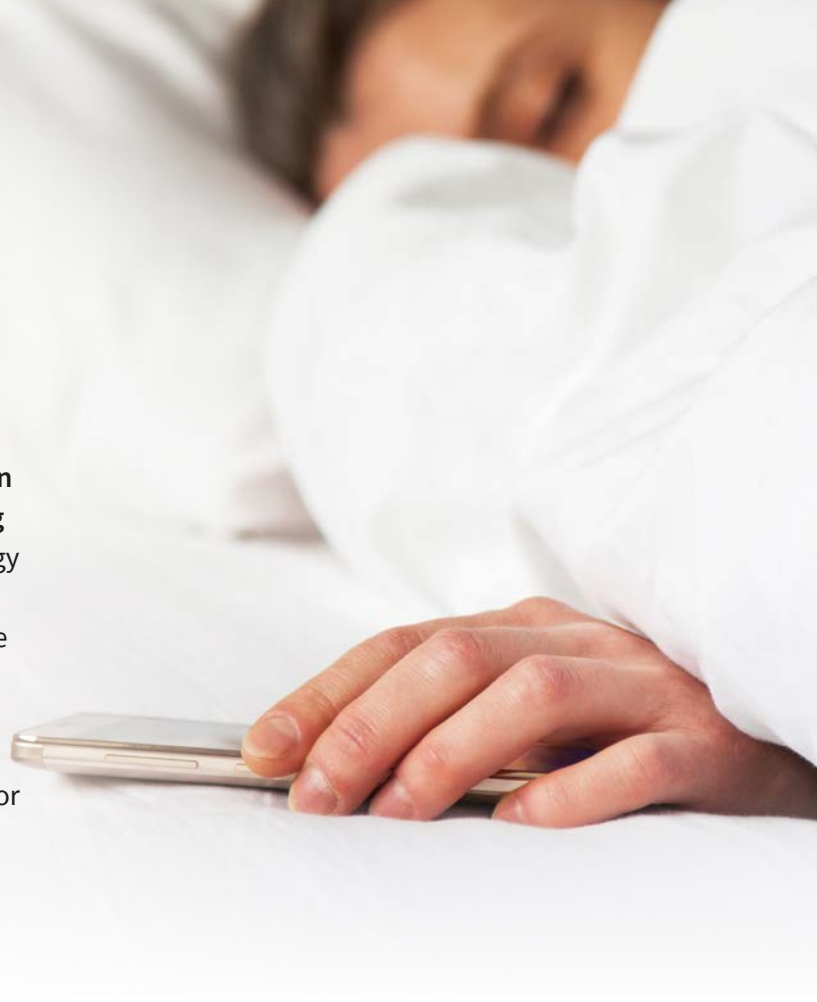
Which of the following are already implemented at your workplace? What will you do next?

- We discuss how to ease the burden of work.
- We discuss the prioritization, organization and possible restriction of tasks at work.
- An efficient working day should include enough breaks. Even short breaks help pace the work so that relaxing and recovering at the end of the day is easier.
- We take breaks from work to, for example, take a short walk or go over our accomplishments.
- Colleagues support each other with demanding tasks.
- We work overtime only in special cases. Also, we don't have to bring work home.
- We don't have to be available outside working hours, not for phone calls or email correspondence.
- If I do shift work, there's at least an 11-hour break between shifts.
- If I do shift work, the shifts rotate clockwise (morning to evening to night).

How can you tell you have had enough sleep?

You can get used to a long period of sleep deprivation and become numb to the negative effects it is having on you. A person who gets enough sleep has the energy to take care of themselves, act resilient, be creative, focus and get more things done, both in the workplace and their personal life.

Sleep is crucial for recovery. Recovering from work is both a physical and a mental process. A good metaphor for recovery would be charging a battery. When you sleep long and well enough, you wake up bright and alert, with a fully charged battery.



DO YOU GET ENOUGH SLEEP EVERY NIGHT? What do you do? What will you do next?

- I do something relaxing before bedtime, such as go to the sauna, do relaxation exercises, etc.
- I don't go to bed until I'm tired.
- I don't go to bed hungry, nor do I eat a heavy meal just before bedtime.
- I stop staring at screens well before bedtime.
- I avoid caffeinated drinks (coffee, coke, energy drinks) late in the evening.
- I avoid drinking alcohol before bedtime. Even a small amount of alcohol has a negative impact on sleep quality.
- I avoid going over stressful matters or working just before bedtime.
- I devote my bedroom and bed to sleeping and making love only. I don't bring work to bed!