

# How to practice mindfulness at work?

A *Boostalab* guide



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You have probably experienced moments of mindfulness without necessarily... being mindful of it! Whether it's counting sheep as you fall asleep, observing the physical changes in your body at the end of a yoga session, or admiring the birds on a walk, you've paused to focus your attention on a specific element.

According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, a professor of medicine who is helping to make mindfulness accessible to as many people as possible, mindfulness is a state of awareness that results from paying attention — intentionally, in the present moment, and without judgment — to the experience that unfolds moment by moment.

This state provides many scientifically proven benefits such as increased concentration, better stress management, more creativity and a greater state of wellbeing. For these reasons, more and more organizations are promoting it to their teams.

In this guide, you will find how to integrate, step by step, moments of mindfulness at work. The intention is to collectively find a state of mind that allows you to live your passions to the fullest and to accomplish your tasks without feeling too much pressure.

## When to use this guide?

- You are looking to increase your level of concentration, creativity, and wellbeing.
- You wish to establish regular moments of mindfulness in your team.
- You wish to experiment with tangible practices to implement a culture of mindfulness within your team or organization.

## How to use it?

- By following the suggested steps to integrate a mindfulness practice at work.
- By choosing, among the suggested mindfulness activities, the ones that will have the most impact on your colleagues, on your team and on your organization.
- By taking into account each person's own pace and interests.

## To learn more

- American Psychological Association (2018) [Mindfulness in the Workplace : Does It Really Work?](#)
- Reitz. M. & Chaskalson. M. (2016) [How to Bring Mindfulness to Your Company's Leadership](#)
- Warrell. M. (2020) [Mindfulness: A Time Tested Tool To Improve Your State Of Mind](#)
- Hougard. R. (2018). The Mind of the Leader
- Gelles. D. (2015). Mindful work – How meditation is changing business from the inside out

One of the keys to facilitating the integration of mindfulness practice into daily life is to make it a collective process. After all, learning alone is good, but learning together is better! Here are 5 steps to leverage the power of the team.

## 1. Arouse curiosity

To implement a new habit, you must first be convinced of its added value. To make a proposal that will motivate your colleagues to try some mindfulness practices, ask yourself, "Why would it be beneficial for us as a team to integrate mindfulness into our daily lives?"

Some tips for formulating a compelling message:

- Identify the benefits of experimenting with it and the expected positive impacts on wellbeing, physical and psychological health. This Harvard Health [article](#) describes some inspiring information.
- Anticipate possible resistance and adjust key messages accordingly.
- Share the tangible benefits for everyone.

*For example: We have been experiencing a lot of stress for a while and I suggest that we try a new way to help each other find balance. Did you know that mindfulness meditation promotes a better state of wellbeing by allowing us to better manage stress? I suggest that we try it together.*

## 2. Experiment

Start by trying one or two practices that will bring quick benefits. There are as many mindfulness techniques as there are personal preferences! So, allow your team to explore different approaches and then encourage team members to incorporate them at specific times in their schedule. There are several free YouTube videos to experiment with.

Examples:

- Cardiac coherence exercise
- Guided meditation session (on stress management, for example)
- Body scanning
- Moving meditation session (Qi gong)
- Visualization before starting a discussion
- A "here and now" round table at the beginning of the meeting, asking everyone to name their current energy level, the tensions they feel in their body, the emotion of the moment, etc.
- Challenge to stay fully present in the conversation, avoiding the temptation to multitask



### 3. Set up appointments

It is through recurrence and frequency that we observe the best results. The more you practice mindfulness, the better the effects. After experimenting and identifying what the team likes best, create a new habit by setting appointments. For example:

- Schedule a weekly team meditation session (e.g., a 20-minute guided meditation before the Thursday meeting).
- Organize special sessions for more stressful moments (e.g., at the launch of a project or before an important presentation).
- Plan a recurring moment in the schedule (e.g., at 11:00 a.m., we take 5 deep breaths!)

To ensure that these appointments are prioritized and do not disappear over time, appoint a person responsible for creating these "mindfulness appointments" for the team.

### 4. Observe the impact and improve

Let time run its course and keep an eye on what is working well and not so well for you and your team. Adjust your routine accordingly.

For example:

- Include a time on the agenda of a meeting to review the practices experienced by the team and the impact felt by everyone.
- Organize "discovery" sessions to listen to a webinar on the topic or to share favourite meditation apps.

### 5. Reinforce

As mindfulness becomes an indispensable practice for the team, the effort to make the practice regular will be less demanding. But until then, some reinforcement may be needed to ensure sustainability.

For example:

- Regularly celebrate learning as well as the success of a challenge.
- Acknowledge with gratitude positive changes in self, colleagues and the team.
- Systematically plan moments in your schedule or personal routine.
- Put a visual on the bottom of your screen (keyword, inspirational image) to remind you to breathe mindfully.
- Take turns being in charge of the "mindfulness" project, alternating every month for example. The role of the leader is to follow the progress of the different steps, plan the activities, identify the needs of the team and ensure the added value.
- Form "mindfulness pairs" to motivate each other to incorporate more moments in the week.
- Take turns leading short mindfulness meditation sessions using recorded videos.

## WHY NOT MAKE IT A TEAM CHALLENGE?

There is nothing better than setting a team or organizational challenge to implement new habits. What will be everyone's personal commitment to establish mindfulness moments in the next 2 weeks? Practice, share and celebrate the journey before setting a new challenge!

Examples:

- Meditate for 1 minute on day 1, 2 minutes on day 2 and so on for 14 days.
- Set aside one hour a day to do one thing at a time (without interruptions or notifications).
- Select one activity to do mindfully every day. E.g., brushing your teeth, drinking a glass of water, taking a walk.

## WHAT TO DO IN A SITUATION OF HEIGHTENED STRESS...

Unfortunately, it is all too common to put off good habits until later when workloads and stresses increase. Yet it is at these times that the effects of mindfulness are most beneficial. Here are a few tips for staying on track in turbulent times:

- Schedule shorter but more frequent sessions than usual.
- Schedule formal practices (10 minutes of meditation) on your calendar.
- Take advantage of activities that are already part of your routine (brushing your teeth, eating, or walking mindfully).
- Prioritize a 10-minute practice when you get up... to avoid procrastination.
- Give each other reminders.
- Notice the benefits of each practice and thank yourself for the time you spent on it.



# Develop the leadership of your teams with our learning solutions

Our turnkey solutions combine quality instructional content with an efficient learning experience and cutting-edge technology to develop the leadership skills of your teams, managers and employees.

## List of available soft skills

### Team leadership

- Aligning and empowering
- Constructive feedback
- Delegating
- Engagement
- Excelling as a team
- Psychological proximity
- Psychological safety
- Recognition
- Team standards
- Team synergy

### Organizational leadership

- Change management
- Civility
- Coaching
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Impact and influence
- Kindness
- Managerial transition
- Transition to hybrid mode

### Intentional leadership

- Autonomy
- Digital agility
- Learning
- Managing time and priorities
- Proactivity
- Stress management
- Unconscious biases

See the full list [here](#).



## Did you know?

According to [research](#), those who participated in a leadership development program saw a 20% improvement in job performance and a 25% improvement in organizational results.

A [Gallup](#) study highlights that 1 in 2 employees have left their organization in their career to escape a bad manager.

# The Boostalab learning solutions

A unique approach focused on action and results!

Forget traditional training and opt for an approach that will transform your organization and anchor learning in a sustainable and practical way.



## Aha! Micro-content

We only offer what is innovative, tangible and relevant.



## Team challenges

Participants build authentic connections by focusing on their challenges.



## Taking action on a daily basis

They implement the practices quickly, so that the magic happens.



## Autonomy and empowerment

They become masters of their own development!



## Efficient, engaging and high-impact solutions

The practical tools offered online allow for immediate implementation within teams and for managers to **see the positive changes**.

**Oxfam Québec**

The solution completely met our needs! Our managers were not used to working together. The fact that we also had a challenge to achieve led to **great achievements** that were reflected in the teams.

**Humanware**

Our managers challenged themselves to increase the impact of their feedback practices. The platform allowed them to set development priorities, work as a team and encourage each other to take up the challenge and thus succeed in **changing their practices, in action and in a sustainable way**.

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