Attention Span

A Groundbreaking Way to Restore Balance, Happiness and Productivity

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Part I:

The Anatomy of Attention

CHAPTER THREE:

Types of Attention

A theoretical framework of attentional states

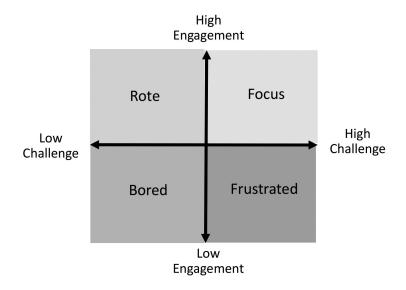


Figure 1. A theoretical framework of four quadrants representing different attentional states.

The rhythms of focused attention

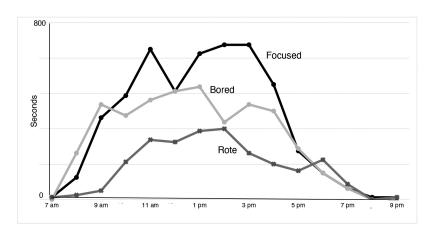


Figure 2. How different types of attention vary over the workday.

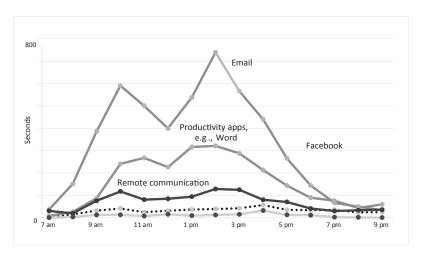


Figure 3. How people's computer activity varies over the day, based on logging.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Why, How and How Much We Multitask

Forty-seven seconds of attention

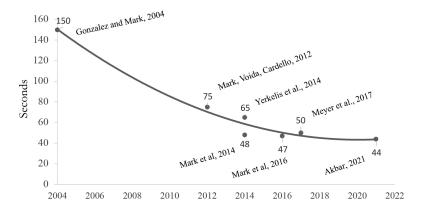


Figure 1. Average attention duration on a computer screen, 2004–2021. 12

Declining attention spans and increasing sedentary behavior

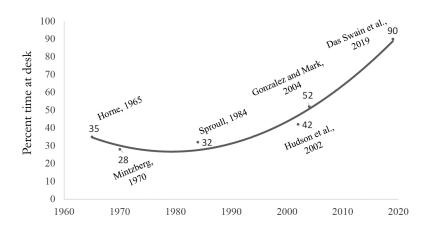


Figure 2. Percent of time spent at the desk, 1965–2019. Desk work in the González and Mark (2004) study includes both desk phone and cell phone use. Studies 1965–1984 were done prior to email in these workplaces.¹⁹

Resuming interrupted work

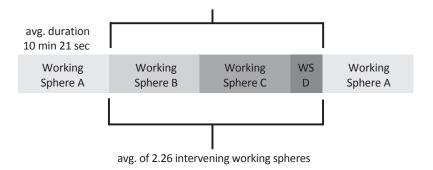


Figure 3. Patterns of switching between working spheres for information workers throughout the day.

Part Two:

The Underlying Forces of Distraction

CHAPTER TEN:

Happiness and Our Devices

Happiness during the workday

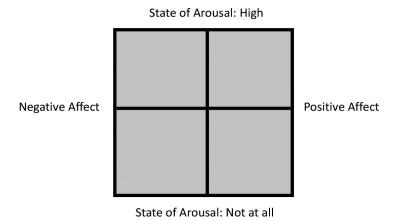


Figure 1. The experience sampling probes that were presented to participants to measure their emotions throughout the day. Participants were asked to click on that part of the grid that best reflects their emotions at that moment.

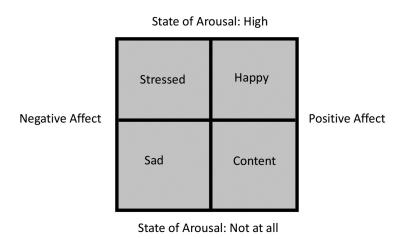


Figure 2. The interpretation of moods for the four quadrants of Russell's model.²¹

Negative emotions when multitasking



Figure 3. The image on the left is a person performing a task without interruptions, showing a neutral emotion. The three images on the right show the same person while multitasking and continually being interrupted, showing angry expressions.²⁸

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

How the Media Conditions Our Attention

Influences by the broader media landscape

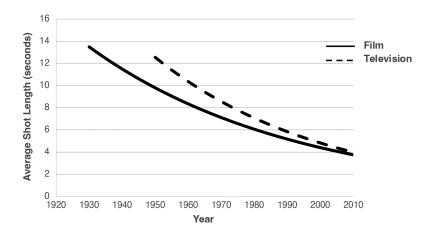


Figure 1. Trends of average shot lengths of films and TV programs over the decades (data from Cutting et al. 12 and Jeremy Butler 14).

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