



 MyAnalytics

Habit playbook

Examples

Habit playbook

Schedule shorter meetings

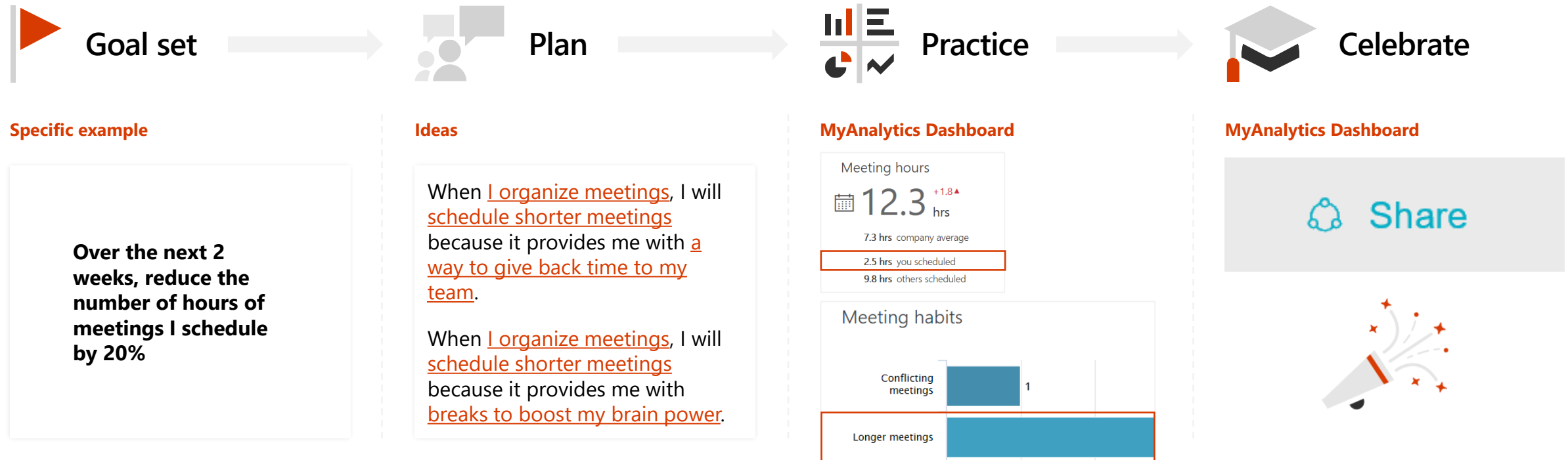


Bonus read

[Do You Really Need to Hold that Meeting?](#)

When we schedule long meetings we lose the group's attention and waste time. Work expands to the time allotted for it so we typically use the full amount of time scheduled for a meeting even when it is unnecessary. In a study where people working at a range of companies were challenged to schedule forty-five minute meetings rather than hour meetings and twenty- or twenty-five-minute rather than thirty minute meetings, people found they could get more or less the same amount of work done with the enormous cognitive benefit of regular breaks.

Source: How to Have a Good Day, by Caroline Webb



Habit playbook

Write reminders to send emails later while in meetings



Bonus read

[Why You Shouldn't Multitask](#)

Multitasking during meetings sends the signal, "It's OK to not pay attention." When we shoot off a quick email during a meeting, we miss that part of the conversation and have gaps in our understanding. This can lead to different interpretations of a decision, missed opportunities to provide critical guidance, or inconsistent follow-through on action agreements.

Source: [If You Multitask During Meetings Your Team Will Too](#)



Specific example

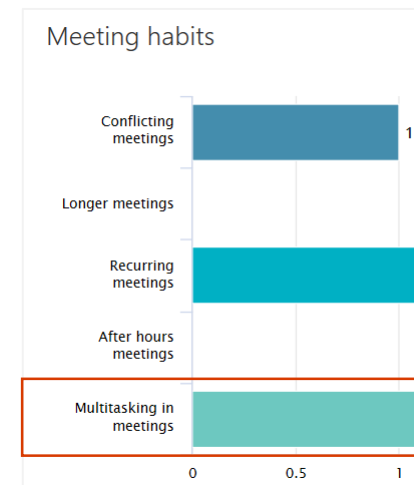
Over the next two weeks, reduce multitasking in meetings hours to zero.

Ideas

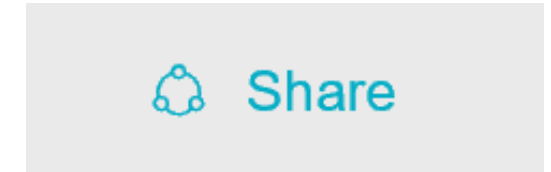
When I feel the need to email during a meeting, I will write a reminder to send the email later because it provides me with the satisfaction of getting the email off my mind.

When I feel the need to email during a meeting, I will write a reminder to send the email later because it provides me with the confidence that I have a complete understanding of meeting discussions.

MyAnalytics Dashboard



MyAnalytics Dashboard



Habit playbook

Include an agenda in meeting invites

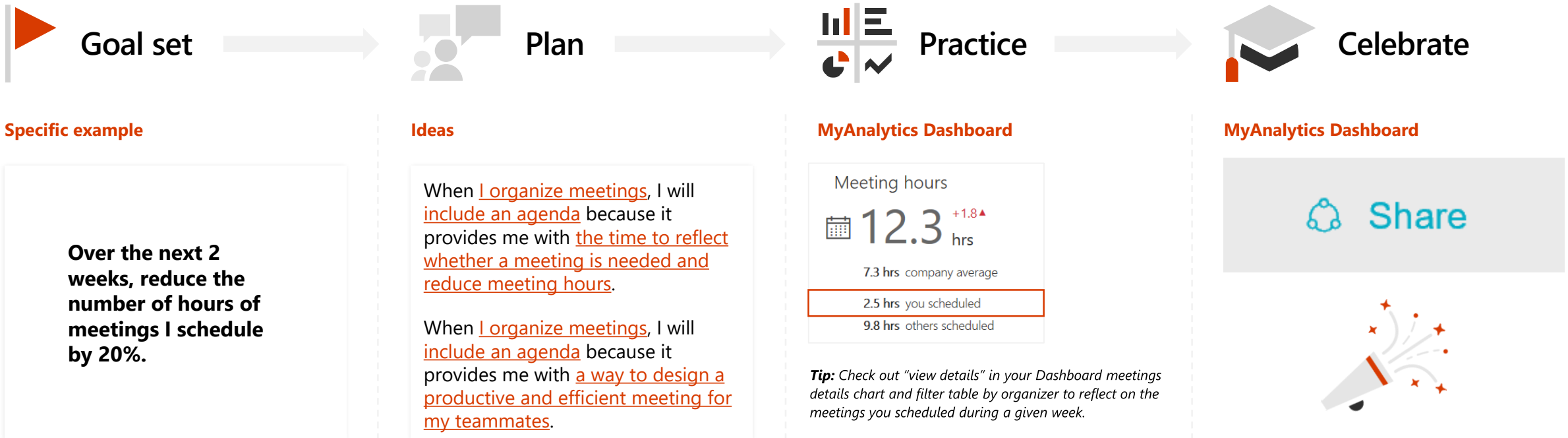


Bonus read

[How to Design an Agenda for an Effective Meeting](#)

Taking the time to write an agenda enables you to carefully reflect on the need for the meeting and design an effective meeting. The habit will prevent you from organizing unnecessary meetings and help you reduce the number of meetings you schedule. Surveys indicate that people think the majority of meetings are a waste of time. In one, 71% of survey respondents said meetings are unproductive and inefficient. Avoid contributing to this problem with well-designed agendas.

Source: [Stop the Meeting Madness](#)



Habit playbook

Book focus time in advance

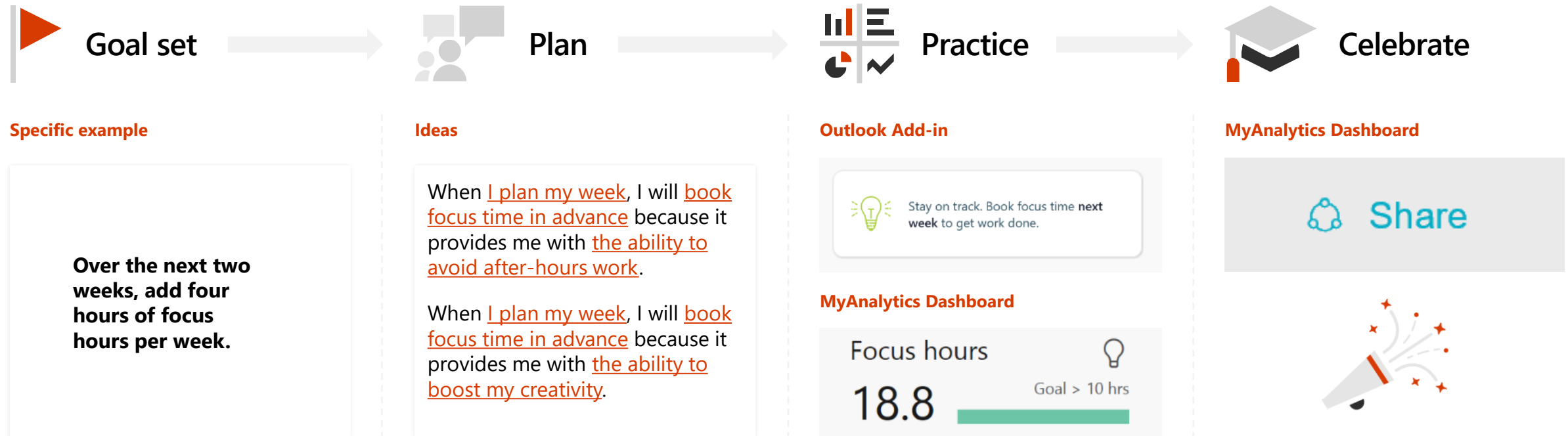


Bonus read

[Productivity in Peril: Higher and Higher Rates of Technology Multitasking](#)

We perform our best on cognitively demanding tasks when we intentionally block time to focus on them. Multitasking impairs our performance because when we process tasks in parallel, our brains are actually switching our attention from one activity to another. When switching, our brains struggle to cleanly discard the first task and move on to the next one. Constant switching creates “attention residue” and prevents us from following a train of thought long enough to stumble upon an innovative idea.

Sources: How to Have a Good Day, by Caroline Webb, [Why You Shouldn't Multitask](#) and [How Can I Use More of My Brain?](#)



Habit playbook

Batch process emails 2 to 3 times per day

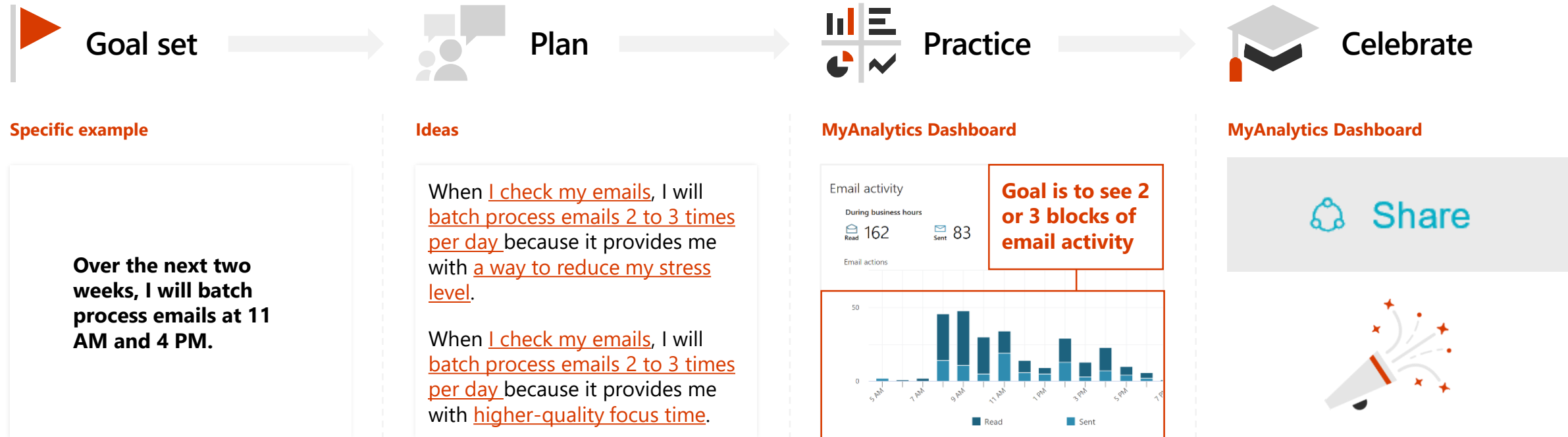


Bonus read

[Brain, Interrupted](#)

Processing emails constantly throughout the day and during our focus time subjects us to the harmful impacts of interruptions, including lower productivity and increased stress. It takes us longer than we think to fully return to a task after an interruption. Research conducted by the University of California, Irvine shows that it takes 23 minutes to get back on task after an interruption. Similarly, research conducted by Microsoft and the University of Illinois shows that it takes 16 minutes to return to a task when the interruption is specifically email.

Source: [Worker Interrupted: The Cost of Task Switching](#)



Habit playbook

Use another form of communication



Bonus read

[Stop Letting Email Control Your Work Day](#)

We often struggle with interpreting email because words are not the primary way we internalize messages. Research has shown that 60% of communication is understood through body language, 33% through tone of voice and 7% through the actual words. When the mind receives too little information from a sender, it composes its own story and has a tendency to emphasize negative stories over positive ones. To reduce miscommunication and email use, for quick casual questions or comments - send a chat, for complex messages - schedule a meeting, and for sensitive topics - pick up the phone or have a face-to-face conversation.

Source: One Second Ahead, by Rasmus Hougaard



Specific example

Over the next 2 weeks, reduce the number of emails I send during business hours by 20%.

Ideas

When I determine email isn't the best way to communicate, I will use another form of communication because it provides me with a way to reduce miscommunication.

When I determine email isn't the best way to communicate, I will use another form of communication because it provides me with a way to strengthen my relationships.

MyAnalytics Dashboard

Email activity

During business hours

Read 137 Sent 56

Email hours

5.7 hrs
Goal < 10 hrs

MyAnalytics Dashboard

Share



Habit playbook

Wait to send late-night emails until the AM



Bonus read

[Your Late Night Emails Are Hurting Your Team](#)

Working after hours sends the signal, “When I’m on, you need to be too.” A significant and consistent correlation has been found between the amount of time managers send email and organize meetings after-hours and the amount of time their direct reports do the same. In one Fortune 100 technology company, data shows that every hour that people managers spend after-hours translates to 20 minutes of additional direct report time spent after-hours. The numbers vary, but significant correlations hold true for several other companies as well.

Source: [If You Multitask During Meetings Your Team Will Too](#)



Specific example

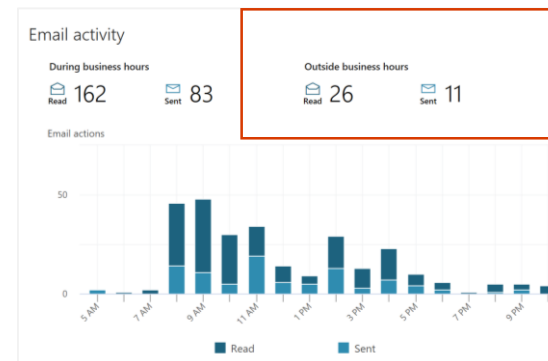
Over the next 2 weeks, reduce the number of emails sent outside of business hours by 50%.

Ideas

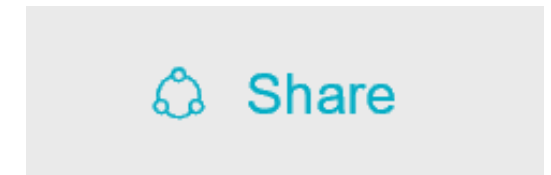
When I choose to work after hours, I will wait to send late-night emails until the AM because it provides me with the satisfaction that I am helping my teammates unplug.

When I choose to work after hours, I will wait to send late-night emails until the AM because it provides me with a way to show I respect my teammates' boundaries.

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MyAnalytics Dashboard



Habit playbook

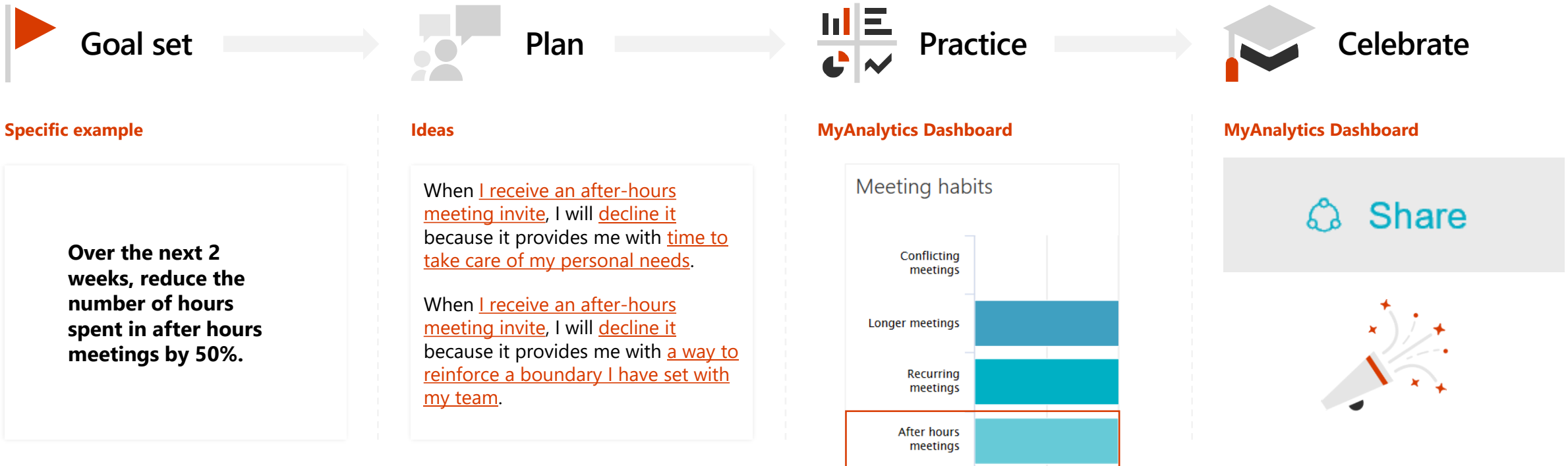
Decline after-hours meetings



Bonus read

[Saying No to the Non-Essential](#)

Declining meetings after hours will enable you to reclaim personal time, reduce your stress levels and get the break time you need to perform at your very best. Over time when done consistently, your team will start to respect this boundary and hopefully also adopt it. Sometimes urgent deadlines and unusual schedule conflicts will force you to meet after hours though. When this happens, note the meeting exception in your acceptance to continue to manage expectations.



Habit playbook

Proactively schedule “slack time”



Bonus read

[Work and Life, Ideas42](#) (Pages 32 & 33)

One of the reasons we often feel overloaded is because people typically expect tasks to take less time than they actually do. We base our estimates on one standout memory rather than the average time it's taken to do similar tasks in the past. Scheduling “slack” time can help. It is a block of time on your calendar to accommodate for natural poor planning. When this time is blocked, it can't be taken by a meeting, so you have additional time to complete important tasks before the work day ends.

Source: How to Have a Good Day, by Caroline Webb

