
Flow state is all you need

Nick Kipshidze
10x Developer
kipshidze.nick@gmail.com

1 Introduction

Recently - for couple years now, athletes have been achieving massive feats, world records have been rising and they are performing such stunts that it would be considered suicidal back then. How is it possible for a human to perform so perfectly in a task? Think faster, work better, do more! What if I told you that there was a way to "reprogram" your brain to optimise it for work, not only optimise it, but perform at your best and beyond!

Athletes call this THE ZONE. They say: "I got into the zone, that's when I started to score more" on interviews. They get into the "zone" and start to perform unnaturally well. The best players in any sport do this. Not just in sports though, in business. The ultra-rich of the modern world: Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg. In any profession, in any situation, you can tap into this supernatural power. It's called the FLOW state.

We can use this in programming too. Competitive programmers use this more often to solve very difficult problems in blazing fast speeds. We can use this at work too, you can boost your efficiency 100x even!

2 Flow state

FLOW state is when there's no thought in your brain, when everything around you goes dark except the thing you are focusing on, when only thing that exists for you is your task. FLOW state is a state of extreme focus. To achieve such state you must condition yourself that the task in question is so important that it threatens your survival - failing to do this task. Imagine first ever humans, cave men, running around - hunting for food, they are in a flow state, they are performing their best to catch their meal. Failing for them means death. So think about what you desire so badly that you cannot live without, what is it that you get from this task that is very important to you? For me I enjoy programming, right? Successfully solving a programming problem or finishing up a hard task for me is the most rewarding. It makes me happy, that's what I am looking for, that's why I love programming. Maybe for you financial gain would be your biggest desire from programming. So condition yourself that doing this task will grant you such rewards that it's worth risking your life for it. Write code as your life depends on it. If you convince your brain that it's that important - it will start working as such. Your brain will literally shut off all other activity just so it can focus on programming, your vision will close in on your screen and soon programming will be the only thing you will remember. That's flow state!

3 How to prevent flow state

Human brain is very good at seeing what can go wrong. Our brain is evolved to calculate what can go wrong or how it can go wrong. So let's talk about how we can prevent ourselves from getting into the flow state so we can avoid them:

The worst thing that can prevent you from getting into flow is distractions. The notifications popping up from everywhere, Your phone ringing, your family members or roommates being loud. The distractions can quickly make you snap out of your flow state and ruin your progress, then you have to restart from the beginning trying to get back into flow again. We don't want that. The best thing you can do is turn off notifications for your phone. If your phone isn't quiet and it's buzzing and popping all the time, it shows that you don't respect yourself. Think about it, do you prefer seeing a random message popping up on your phone or finishing your programming task granting you the rewards that you so desire. "What if it's a text message and I don't reply quickly?" you may ask. What if you did reply quickly? What if the minute someone messages you, you reply back immediately? Then they will recognise you as the "guy who replies quickly" and that would be even worse. Your work should be your priority. Do you rather seeing a tik tok link your friend shared or getting into the flow state at your work? What about family members or roommates being loud and distracting you? You sit down at your desk ready to get into the flow state and work hardest you ever worked! But then you hear your mom cooking food, being loud with the pots, setting things aside. Then you hear your dad, hammering something into the wall... The first reaction you might have is to get mad at them, but why? Did you ask them to be quiet? I'm sure if you just went ahead to ask them: "hey, I'm gonna be at my room for couple hours, working so can you guys keep it down?" they will stay quiet. If you did ask them and they keep making noises then probably your request wasn't effective enough, if you get mad at them and start screaming and demanding to be quiet won't work, that's very immature and unprofessional. Ask nicely and kindly.

So... get rid of all distractions when trying to get into flow state, block all messages, put your phone on airplane mode, be in a quiet environment. Also make sure you don't have to look away from screen, put your water bottle nearby so you don't even have to look away from the screen to drink. You can also narrow down your vision by closing your eyes halfway, that way you don't have to blink as much and nothing will be distracting around you.

Sleep schedule is one of the most important things, if you don't have a sleep schedule I advise you to pick a time you will go to sleep at and wake up at for the rest of your life. Good sleep will boost your creativity and thinking more than any amount of coffee will. Now, pick when you would like to do your work: some people prefer working early in the morning, some prefer late at night. Which one are you? For me I go to sleep at 7 PM and wake up at 3 AM and my work starts at 4 AM that's when I perform the best and that might be too extreme for you, but remember waking up early is very important and you need to prioritise it as such.

Another thing that will prevent you from getting into flow state and will affect your success negatively is balance. What do I mean by that? Take those famous athletes again, do you think Muhammad Ali achieved such success through balance? He balances his work and life? No way, balance is not the way. You need to be extreme, you either work all the time or be balanced and work a low paying job like others. So balance won't get you anywhere, when you work on a schedule, when you have specific "work time" and "rest time" that will negatively impact your success. Remember every hour you are not working, somebody else is! And that somebody will go past you and he will take your job position that you so desire, he will get a promotion, he will achieve success, and if you don't work all your waking hours they will overtake you.