



The When of Peak Performance

Key Takeaways

- 1 From “How to” to “When to”
- 2 When We Work Is as Important for Peak Performance as How
- 3 Rolling with Your Biorhythms
- 4 For Daily Optimization We Need to Surf Our Ultradian Rhythms
- 5 Identifying Your Chronotype
- 6 Surrendering to Your Biology by Energy Surfing

Quote:

“We are smarter, faster, dimmer, slower, more creative, and less creative in some parts of the day than others.”

— *Daniel Pink*

Diagnostic
N/A

Exercise

1. **Find Your Chronotype and Identify One Variable You Can Reshuffle!**

2. **From Today, Begin Surfing Your Biorhythms!**

See next page for details

Exercise

Find Your Chronotype and Identify One Variable You Can Reshuffle



What time do you usually go to bed?



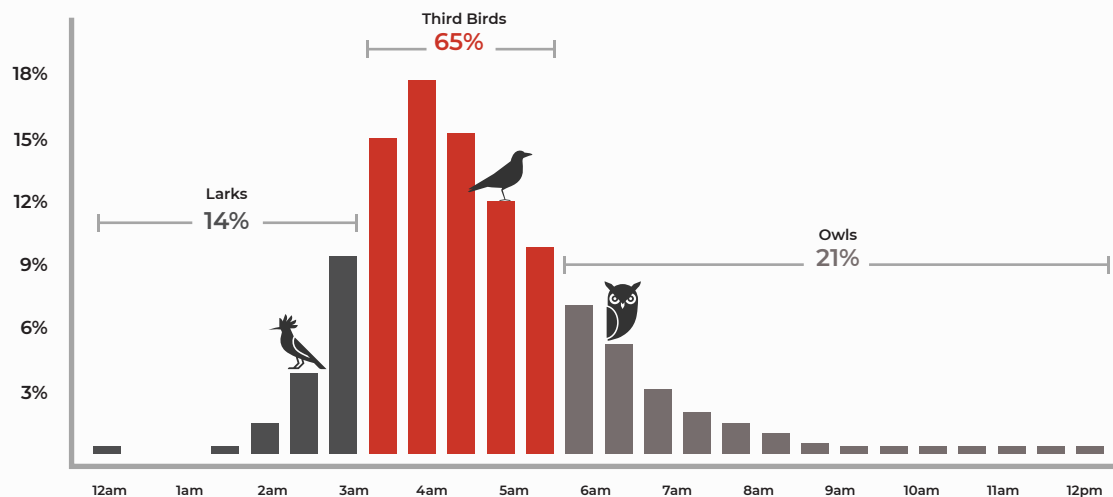
What is the midpoint between those two times?



What time do you usually wake up?



Note your midpoint (right in the middle) against the chart below.



Exercise

From Today, Begin Surfing Your Biorhythms!

Two Components to Effectively Energy Surfing:

1. Aligning our day around chronotype determined peak energy periods
2. Effectively energy surfing within those peak energy periods

1 – Reshuffle Your Work, Family and Life Around Your Chronotype

| Requires Intense Focus: | ↔ | Requires Less Intense Focus: |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Complex cognitive tasks | | Exercise |
| Analytical work | | Socializing |
| Essential meetings | | Casual meetings |
| Presentations | | Commuting |
| Owl=Evening | | Owl=Morning/Afternoon |
| Lark & Third Bird=Morning | | Lark & Third Bird=Afternoon/Evening |

Exercise

From Today, Begin Surfing Your Biorhythms!

2—Triple B (Burst, Break, Burst) Within Your Chronotype Based Peak

- Understand how your energy oscillates per hour over the longer longer term
- Improve moment to moment “energy awareness” and adjust improvisationally

3—Win with Breaks, Naps and Walks

| Good Breaks—Energy Surfing | Bad Breaks—Energy Sapping |
|---|---|
| Low Prefrontal Cortex Engagement. Low Cognitive Stimulation. Induce Boredom. | Highly Stimulating. Capture Attention, Drive Dopamine. Desire More. |
| Keeps Cognitive Load Low | Raises Cognitive Load |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wall staring • Napping • Closing your eyes • Walking • Stretching • Mindfulness • Breathwork • Drinking/eating (and nothing else) • Foam rolling • Light, quick exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texting • Social media • Video • TV • Conversing with someone • Reading • News • Gaming • Other phone use |

Glossary

Synchrony Effect: The Synchrony effect refers to superior performance at optimal and inferior performance at suboptimal times of the day. Type, task, and time need to align.

Biorhythms: A recurring cycle in the physiology or functioning of an organism, such as the daily cycle of sleeping and waking.

Three Types of Biorhythms:

- **Circadian Rhythms:** biological cycles that occur about every twenty-four hours. Sleep follows a circadian rhythm. Hormone secretion, blood pressure, body temperature, and urine production also have circadian rhythms.
- **Infradian Rhythms:** biological cycles that take longer than twenty-four hours. For example, menstrual cycles occur about every twenty-eight days.
- **Ultradian Rhythms:** biological cycles that occur more than once a day. Sleep follows an ultradian rhythm of about ninety minutes as well as a circadian rhythm. Alertness and hormone levels also follow ultradian rhythms.

Basic Rest-Activity Cycle (BRAC): This is a rhythm that plays out in 80-120 minute cycles non-stop, day and night. Just because this rhythm is most detectable during sleep, when we move from non-REM sleep to REM sleep and back—we shouldn't discount the role it plays in how we feel and perform within the day. Every 90-120 minutes, your body has a period of significant energy and alertness followed by a period of fatigue. During that burst of energy, you can work with your body to get far more done. During the low point of the cycle, you have to work against your body's natural rhythms to accomplish much at all, which is often a losing battle.

Glossary

Chronobiology: Chronobiology is a field of biology that examines timing processes, including periodic (cyclic) phenomena in living organisms, such as their adaptation to solar- and lunar related rhythms. These cycles are known as biological rhythms.

Every person has a master biological clock ticking away inside of their brain, and dozens of smaller biological clocks throughout their body.

Suprachiasmatic Nucleus (SCN): It is a group of cells in the hypothalamus that respond to light and dark signals. It controls the circadian biological clock.

Chronotype: A person's natural inclination with regard to the times of day when they prefer to sleep or when they are most alert or energetic. According to Dan Pink, who's synthesized a lot of this work in his book When, the three chronotypes are larks, third birds and owls.

Notes

Lesson Resources

1. The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload,
By Daniel Levitin
2. Successful Aging,
By Daniel Levitin
3. When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing,
By Daniel H. Pink
4. [Research: The Average Age of a Successful Startup Founder Is 45](#),
By Azoulay, P., et al., Harvard Business Review
5. [Flow Research Collective Radio: The Importance of Good Sleep](#)
6. [Flow Research Collective Radio: Why Sleep Is a Crucial Component of Performance](#)
7. [The Science of Stress, Calm and Sleep with Andrew Huberman](#)
8. [When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing, Daniel H. Pink, Talks at Google](#)
9. [Sleep is your superpower, TED Talk By Matt Walker](#)
10. [Auto - MEQ](#)

Lesson Resources

Three Key Points:

1. Our cognitive abilities do not remain static over the course of a day – As Pink writes, “We are smarter, faster, dimmer, slower, more creative, and less creative in some parts of the day than others.”
2. These daily fluctuations are more extreme than we realize – according to Russell Foster, a neuroscientist and chronobiologist at the University of Oxford, “[T]he performance change between the daily high point and the daily low point can be equivalent to the effect on performance of drinking the legal limit of alcohol.”
3. How we do depends on when we’re doing what we’re doing – Innovation and creativity are greatest when we are not at our best, at least with respect to our circadian rhythms. This is known as “inspiration paradox.”