

Cheat Sheet

get in the

flow

 **state**

*...in 2
Minutes*



**Supercharge Your Productivity, Achieve Peak
Performance and Maximize Human Potential**

2 Minute Insight

Get in The Flow State...*In 2 Minutes*

Supercharge Your Productivity,
Achieve Peak Performance and
Maximize Human Potential

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What Is The Flow State?

Commonly called “Being In The Zone”, the flow state can be described as an enlightened experience unleashing **superhuman creativity**, where you feel the following:

- Complete concentration.
- A sense of time flying by; losing track of the outside world.
- Massive productivity and immersion in tasks without any apparent effort.
- An optimal state of consciousness where self-awareness disappears.
- The sense of a cloud lifting you up into productivity, where you let go of your fears and blocks, and you just do!

This state can be experienced in work, adventure sports, or even sex. When in the zone, you act, move, and flow with the rhythm of creativity, undisturbed by self-consciousness.

Why Do You Want To Be In The Flow State?

There are 4 reasons to get into the flow state:

1. **Working at Peak Ability.** The quality of your work increases dramatically, and productivity levels seem superhuman.
2. **Saving Time.** Creative tasks that usually take weeks, due to procrastination or lack of focus, can be done in hours.
3. **Tapping into Your Inner Genius.** The process of being in the flow uncovers hidden human potential or abilities you may not have been aware of, especially if environmental stressors were blocking them. Penetrating and creative results and breakthroughs are made.

4. **Combating Stress and Increasing Physical Health.** The flow state not only feels amazing, but is also scientifically proven to enhance happiness and recuperative functions. It unleashes five potent neurochemicals that amplify the immune system. Disabled individuals have even attributed partial recoveries to their habitually engaging in flow state activities.

Why Is A Bit of Challenge Necessary To Be In The Flow State?

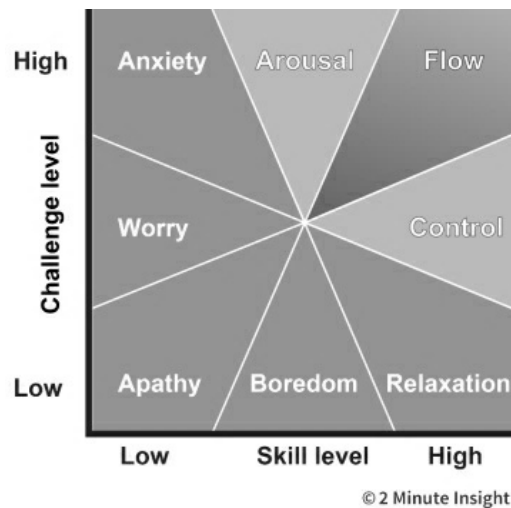
A good balance must be struck between the challenge of the task and the skill of the performer. Four factors are in play here:

1. Passion for an activity automatically stimulates **interest and enjoyment**.
2. If the activity is not challenging, you won't be **motivated** to dive into the process and flow won't happen.
3. However you can't have too much challenge. It must be an activity in which a skillset is **well matched**, such as a new milestone for a familiar activity.
4. If your skillset is not well matched or developed, you will just end up being **frustrated**, not excited. Negative emotions block flow.

Scientifically, there are 8 activity states representing the interplay between the challenge an activity poses and your skill level:

- Apathy (low challenge, low skills)
- Boredom (low challenge, medium skills)
- Relaxation (low challenge, high skills)
- **You're in Control (medium challenge, high skills)**
- Worry (medium challenge, low skills)
- Anxiety (challenging, low skills)

- **Arousal (very challenging, medium skills).**



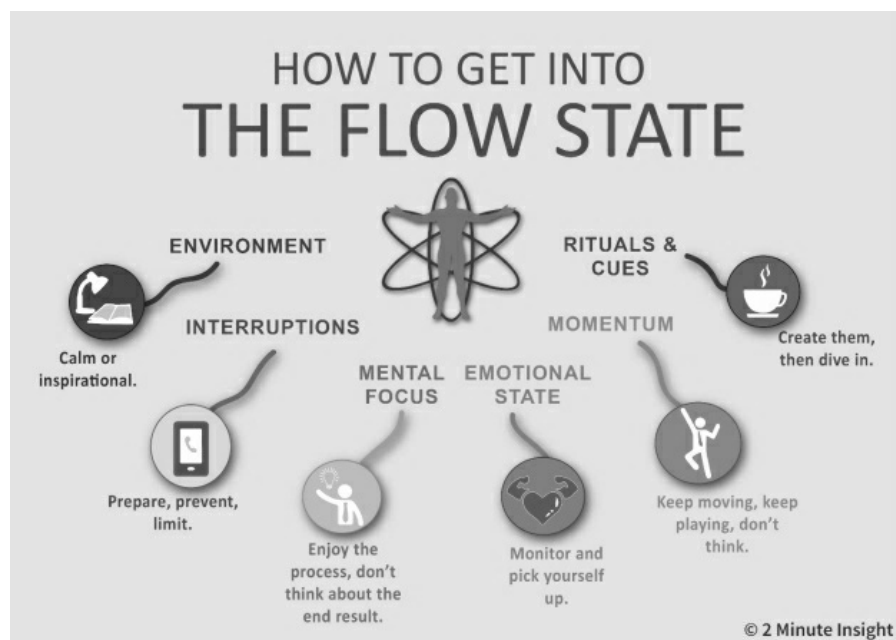
If you're in **the “arousal” state** you can move into *flow* by developing more skills.

On the other hand, **if you're in control** you can enter *flow* by making the task more challenging.

So what does this all mean in plain English? Depending on your skill level you can achieve flow by:

1. **Developing your skills in order to meet the challenge.**
2. **Taking more risks. Set higher challenges and higher consequences for yourself to drive interest.**

How To Get Into The Flow State



Step 1 Plan The Time, Incidentals and Prevent Interruptions That May Hinder You

Before you get into the flow, you have to execute preventative preparation. Any interruption during the course of an activity, such as hunger, bathroom breaks or people, will hinder your ability to concentrate.

The best way to deal with this is to think about all potential interruptions beforehand and prepare for them.

1. **Set aside plenty of time.** Clear your schedule for the next couple of hours, or however much time you need, so that you won't be anxious, anticipating the next interruption. For instance, some people prefer to wake at 4 am and work from 4 to 8 am for four hours of quiet time.
2. **No multi-tasking.** No distractions. No worrying about the next appointment. No engaging socially for this specific time period.
3. **Plan the incidentals out.** Think about your needs and what you may run into in the course of the activity, and plan for it. Turn off the phone, emails, online distractions, and make bathroom and food preparation

ahead of time. For an outside activity, plan for the terrain, the best time, location, weather and other incidentals.

Step 2 Take Care of Your Environment

Most people don't realize that your environment unconsciously impacts you a great deal. The atmosphere around you can either trigger flow or stunt those creative juices.

The most common negative environmental influences are:

- Noise
- Discomfort with environment
- Discomfort with temperature
- Discomfort with people
- Environmental triggers bringing up irritation, anger, and anguish that blocks flow

Pick a Calm and Relaxed Environment. Schedule a time and place for which you don't anticipate interruptions. Book a room, or wake up very early.

Leave Uncomfortable People. Don't underestimate the reality of people's energetic influences on you. If there is anyone negative, combative, unstable, draining – in short, anyone whose energy negatively impacts you – stay away from them. If you want to achieve flow state, you need to shield yourself.

Isolate Yourself. While it may be best to isolate yourself, if you can't physically be alone, you may be able to *feel* alone, by using such things as ear plugs, headphones, or sitting in a corner at a place where you don't know anyone. Use certain music if it helps you get into a certain mood.

Use Creative Triggers For Inspiration. To tap into your most creative center, place inspirational pictures and colors around your workspace for inspiration. Visual triggers work because the underlying building blocks of creativity is pattern recognition (the brain's ability to link new ideas together) and risk-taking (the courage to bring those new ideas into the world).

Take Advantage of Novelty. While some people operate best in a predictable environment, others are inspired by the excitement brought by a certain degree of unpredictability. If you belong in the latter category, introduce elements of newness and complexity to elevate your excitement neurons.

Step 3 Think About Enjoying the Process, Not the End Result

Now that all interruptions are taken care of, and you are in a good environment, the next step is mental focus.

You need goals to get into flow, and challenges to motivate interest. However, while you are diving into the flow state, it is best **not** to focus on what you must achieve in terms of results or expectations.

Flow cannot happen as long as there is any resistance. What do we mean by resistance? Fear, worry, forcing, pushing, deadlines, “must do”, pressure...the “pushing and forcing mode”.

Instead, let go and give up the expectations that you have for yourself. Dive in mentally by focusing on the process and enjoying the journey. Just start playing – without any seriousness and without expecting anything!

While this may sound counterintuitive, what it really achieves is mental freedom, channeling the exploration mode. The mind is now open to creative breakthroughs.

The following chart summarizes how this works psychologically. Focusing on enjoying the process results in fast and easy immersion.

When you are fully focused and in concentration mode, creative breakthroughs happen. Results then come naturally.



All this is impossible with all the blockages that come along with expectations.

Step 4 Monitor Your Emotional State

Flow requires a complete focus of attention on the task at hand.

The best emotional state that allows optimal mental focus is a combination of energetic alertness and emotional calmness.

Consequently, you should monitor your emotional state to make sure it's not encumbered by physiological and psychological distractions.

When mental focus becomes hazy, here's how to make quick adjustments to your emotional state for a fast pick-me-up.

1. **Distracted State.** Is your mind racing and distracted? Calm down with the exercises below.
 - Close your eyes and do a short 5-minute **meditation**.
 - Take a few deep breaths and spend a few minutes in silence.
 - **Visualize** yourself being in the flow. Everything is easy, you are calm, happy and focused, everything is flowing naturally, great ideas are coming easily... and you deeply enjoy this enlightened state.
2. **Aroused State.** In an aroused state – angry, anxious, worried, and so on – repeat the calming exercises above. Move physically. Take a 15-minute walk or run. Do exercises to relax you.

3. **Sluggish State.** Do you feel that your energy level is low? Do something to pick up your energy levels:

- Try metabolic pick-me-ups like jumping jacks.
- Have a healthy snack.
- Read something motivational to lift your spirits.
- Call a friend that makes you laugh, for a surge of positive energy.

4. **Stressed State.** Are you stressed? Take on a **playful** and **fun** attitude towards your task. Don't focus on not being good enough. You are simply playing and enjoying the process.

Step 5 Keep Moving, Keep Playing, Don't Think: Just Do.

To maximize this time of creative exploration in the flow state, don't give your mind a chance to think. Remember to keep moving, keep flowing and keep going. Continuous motion achieves forward momentum.

If you stop, you will automatically go into self-aware, self-critical mode and doubt yourself. **Action and momentum** switch off your self-consciousness, ego and self-sabotage. So don't allow your logical mind to second-guess you!

Whatever the activity, let the creativity flow out naturally.

Remember: Don't think, just keep moving effortlessly.

Another technique for momentum creation is to set a time limit. Depending on the activity, it may help to give yourself 30 minutes of uninterrupted flow time and just go at it!

For example, if you are writing, don't think about the past, future, editing, spelling, grammar or the results. Just focus on how much time you have left, and let all the words flow out naturally.

Step 6 Create Rituals and Cues Around Your Flow State

The very last step is practice.

Keep practicing, fine-tuning and creating a set of personalized ritual and cues that your brain will automatically and effortlessly associate with flow.

This set of rituals and cues will be unique to you, and it will signal to your body that it's time to dive into that hypnotic state.

The more often you practice, the faster you get there, and the deeper and more creative the connection will become.

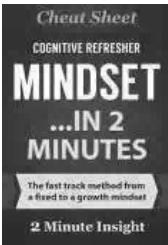
Conclusion

This concludes the practical and actionable steps to get into the flow state. To get a free digital copy of the infographic chart, to print and use as a visual reminder, [click here](#). Put it in the best visual spot to guide you into the optimal experience of creativity.

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