



# **ATTENTION MANAGEMENT**

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## **What is attention?**

According to the mobile English dictionary, attention can be said to mean an action or remark expressing concern for or interest in someone or something. Mental focus. A state of alertness. In everyday relationships, paying attention to details cannot be overemphasized. Some very important relationships have been lost due to the lack of attention to what the next person is saying. Be it in personal, business or work relationship, people expect to be paid attention to and when this does not happen, things may fall out of place. To be able to maintain healthy relationships, it is important to understand the types of attention there are:

### **Focused Attention**

Focused attention is what most people would define as paying attention. This is the type of

attention that concentrates on a single task and excludes everything else. This can be done while studying or working on a project. Focused attention is difficult to maintain because it is not a natural human state, and it operates on a physiological level. Constant focused attention actually makes people tired.

## **Sustained Attention**

Sustained attention is the type of attention that people use to focus on a particular task that takes time. It is also called the attention span. For example, reading a book requires sustained attention. The brain uses sustained attention to process information and adapt to different situations. Problems with sustained attention occur when there are distractions that keep someone from completing the task

at hand. Most people need to refocus and return to the task after 20 minutes. There are three stages of sustained attention.

### **Three Stages:**

1. Grab attention
2. Keep attention
3. End attention

In order to sustain attention, it is important to remove distractions and occasionally refocus.

### **Selective Attention**

Selective attention is what people use when they pay attention to a single stimulus in a complex setting. Having a conversation in a crowded restaurant is an example of selective attention. It is not possible to pay attention to every stimulus that surrounds us. The ability to filter out background noise and focus on

one object or message is essential when we are consistently bombarded with information. The drawback to selective attention occurs when people disregard what is happening around them.

Selective attention can be manipulated. Marketing experts, for example, attempt to link their advertising messages to their customers' interests. They do this with the hope of grabbing the selective attention of people.

## **Alternating Attention**

Occasionally people need to perform two tasks that require different cognitive abilities at the same time. These situations require alternating attention. An example of this

would be taking notes during a lecture. In order to use alternating attention, the mind needs to be flexible and move between one task and another seamlessly. Alternating attention means that the work on each task is quick and accurate as the brain transitions.

## **Attention CEO**

CEOs guide the direction of their companies. The attention of a CEO will determine the attention management of an organization. CEOs must focus the attention of their employees in ways to drive business and move the company in the right direction. Modern CEOs are faced with the dilemma of attracting and keeping employee attention.

Understanding the different types of attention and implementing attention management techniques will allow CEOs to motivate employees towards greater success. In order to accomplish this, CEOs must focus their expectations of internal and external attention.

- Internal attention: Paying attention to internal procedures.
- External attention: Focusing on objects outside the organization.

## **Attentional Blink**

Attentional blink was first defined in the 1990s. Vision is a key part of attention. Rapid, serial visual presentations show that

when people focus on two targets in succession in a visual series, they are likely to miss the second target. This occurs when the second target appears 200 to 500 milliseconds after the first target. Research shows that strong emotions related to the targets make them easier to locate. Meditation is also shown to reduce the errors associated with attentional blink.





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