

Before I start: Hello boss, if you are reading this, know that I do not personally relate to anything I wrote in this article – any content that sounded too sincere and personal is purely coincidental. I've never felt sleepy during work time in my entire life. In fact, I'm the most awake when I work.

Phew. Okay, so here's the thing: some people (again, not me) find it impossible to keep awake during work, and during work only. *Why?* Although I have not struggled with this myself *clears throat*, I've done quite a bit of research erm... out of curiosity.

According to [Virgin Pulse](#), **15%** of office employees doze off on the job at least *once a week* and **76%** of workers felt sleepy at work almost everyday, and I've summed up the main causes in the post:



Not getting enough snooze

Of course, sleep deprivation naturally leads to sleepiness during the day. You already know that. However, do you also know that it also impairs attention, alertness, reasoning, and problem solving? In addition, a healthy sleep cycles helps to “consolidate” information in our brain. So first, without proper sleep you won’t be able to focus and process information; and even if you managed to, you might not be able to remember it the next day!

Just earlier this year, it was reported that one third of the Singaporean population suffers from **sleep apnea** - a type of sleeping disorder, and most of them did not even know! It’s important to make sure you have enough quality sleep, and if you don’t, be quick to find out what’s the **reason you lose sleep**.

What to do: Dim the bedroom lights before retiring for the night.

What not to do: Don’t watch television or browse the internet on your laptop or mobile phone before bedtime.



Thinking too much... or too little

Maybe your job requires a lot of attention or thinking, and that can cause **mental fatigue** which in turn makes you feel very sleepy. **An experiment** found that subjects who underwent

an intense computer gaming session later could not pedal the bike as much as subjects who only watched a documentary of cars earlier. Yes, all that mental activity – even when it's something fun like playing computer games, is *wearing you out*.

Yet, funny enough, the lack of mental activity can also cause **boredom and result in sleepiness!** But of course, boredom does not only comes from the lack of activity; it could also come from a lack of interest or enjoyment.

So what are you supposed to do? I guess I can sum it up with: love what you do, but do not overwork yourself.

What to do: Take short breaks every couple of hours and take a walk around the office.

What *not* to do: Don't wait for the hours to pass by. Find something interesting to do!



You need some food

The blood sugar level in our bodies drop throughout the day and drains the energy out of us. The quick fix to this is to have a snack or two! If you feel guilty for snacking, don't be. It's *what you eat* that determines the impact on your health. Instead of looking at snacks as extras, you should treat them as mini-meals that contribute to the overall nutrition for the day!

What to do: Snack wisely. For a start, you can try out www.boxgreen.co for a great variety of all natural and healthy snacks!

What not to do: Avoid too much caffeine or sugar — it causes sleep disruptions at night and its negative health effects extends beyond sleep problems.



Maybe... you need to workout

Many cases of tiredness can be associated with lifestyle factors such as sedentary lifestyle,

excessive physical activity or poor eating habits.

When's the last time you hit the gym or did a proper workout? If you're always feeling sluggish, and get tired really easily, it could be a reflection on your fitness level! I know *I know*, you're already so tired, how could you find the energy to exercise? Well, turns out the more lethargic you feel, the more you should be working out. Exercise is supposed to make you feel energized — not exhausted!

On the other hand, if you experience sleepiness post workout, you probably overdid it, or you simply need to fuel up with some munchies.

However, if you're only especially sleepy after lunch time, it could be what you're eating that is making you tired. For instance, you might like to avoid heavy meats, as it takes a lot of energy to break these babies down. Here's [a list](#) of what other food you should probably avoid during lunch time during work days.

What to do: Exercise regularly. If there's a gym near your workplace, consider [hitting the gym before work](#) every morning!

What not to do: Listen to your body and stop exercising excessively when you feel extreme discomfort or exhaustion.



The problem might be in your office

Dozing off? Take a quick scan at your working environment. How is it like — Is the lighting bright? Is there enough air ventilation? Are you too cold?

Of course, a brighter room keeps you more awake. However, a [recent study](#) found that artificial light is not half as effective as sunlight! In the study, people exposed to daylight were significantly more alert and less sleepy compared to subjects exposed to artificial light. Hence, make it bright, but also make it natural as much as possible!

Contrary to popular belief that cooler temperatures fights sleepiness, warm environments are actually better at keeping us awake. This is because when you're feeling cold, you are distracted — a substantial amount of your energy is used to simply keep warm. And when your body temperature drops below 35 degree celcius, you go into mild [hypothermia](#), which produces sleepiness.

What to do: Wake up earlier to get more sunlight, and always have a sweater in your office if it's too cold.

What not to do: Try to get away from direct light and replace with lensed-indirect light can make a big difference for your productivity and alertness. See it for yourself here — [Cornell study](#).

So there, 5 reasons why you're (not me) sleepy at work. Ultimately, only you can know why you're feeling so tired. So let me end this blog post with a cliché -

“Listen to your body”