

**MINDFULNESS AT WORK
FOR DUMMIES®**

BY SHAMASH ALIDINA AND JULIET ADAMS

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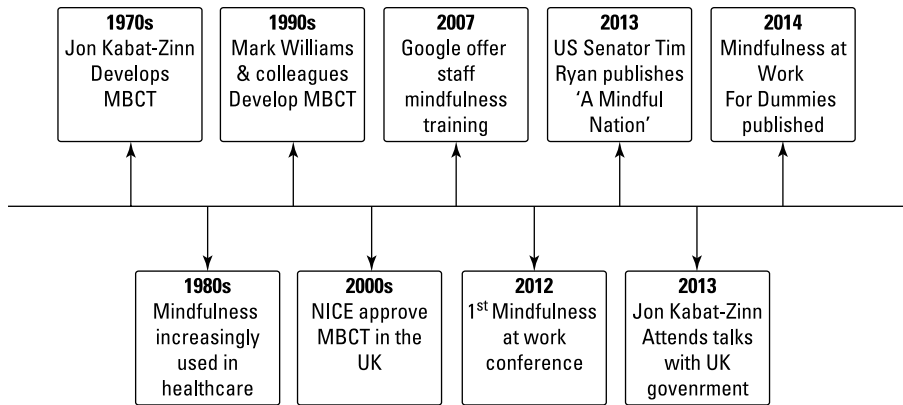
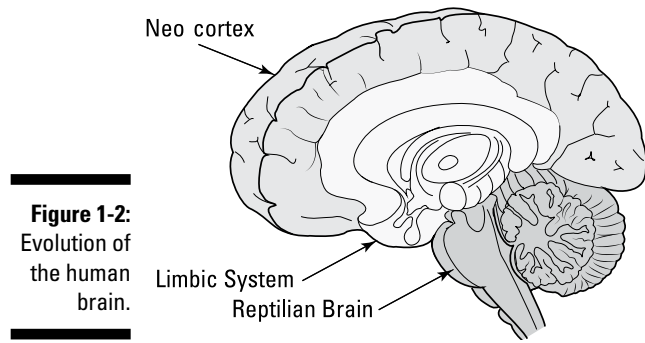


Figure 1-1:
Mindfulness
timeline.



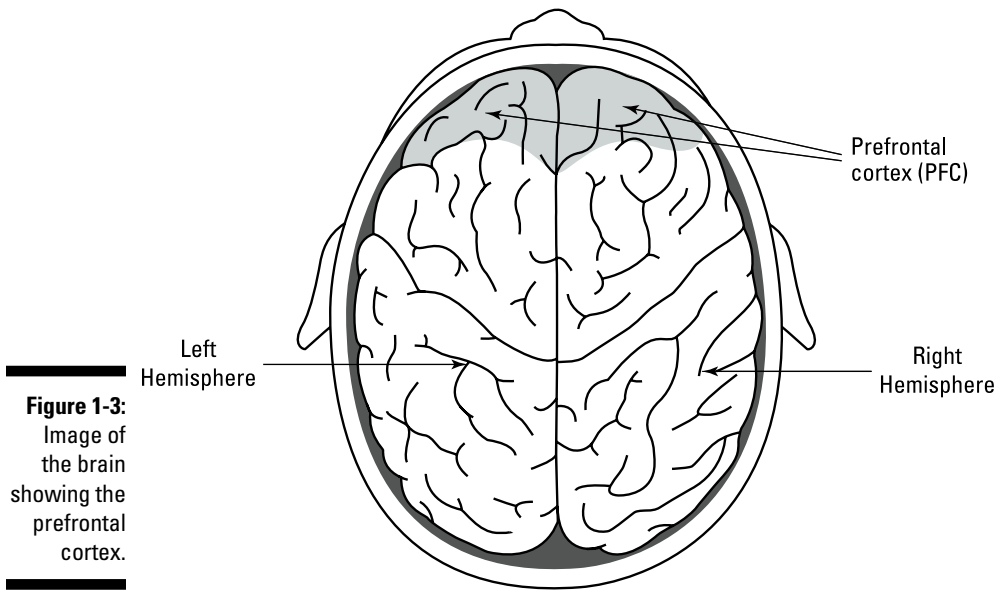
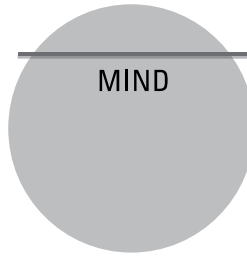


Figure 1-3:
Image of
the brain
showing the
prefrontal
cortex.

Figure 2-1:

Diagram showing how mindfulness may work to increase your creative solutions.

Creative solutions arising from unconscious mind when more mindful



Unconscious mind—creative but often inaccessible when too stressed or in a negative mindset

Figure 2-2:
The process
of mindful
action.

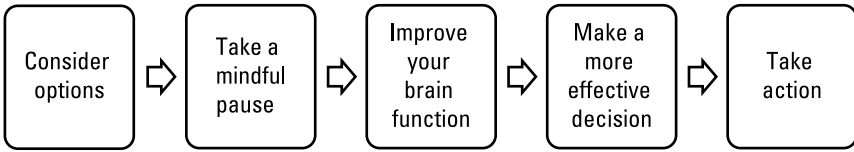
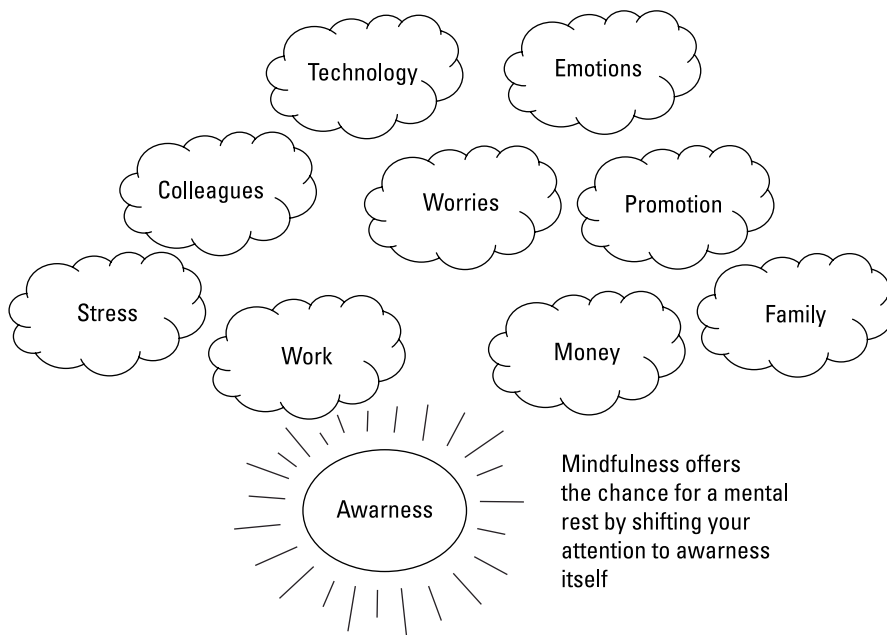


Figure 3-1:
How thoughts, emotions and the world are constantly changing and how mindfulness can help you to tune into the unchanging awareness that's underneath all that.



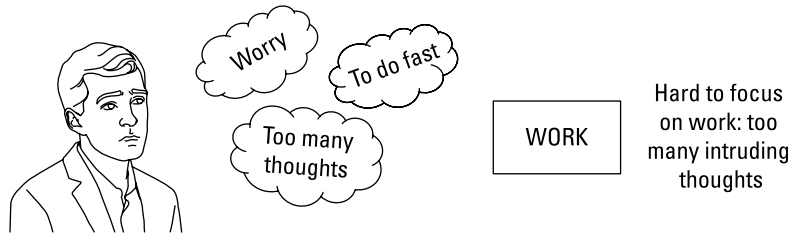
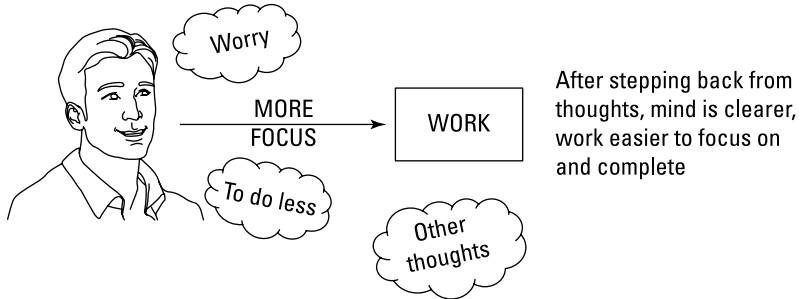


Figure 3-2:
The importance of stepping back from the thoughts that cloud your judgement.



Research publications on mindfulness by year 1980–2012

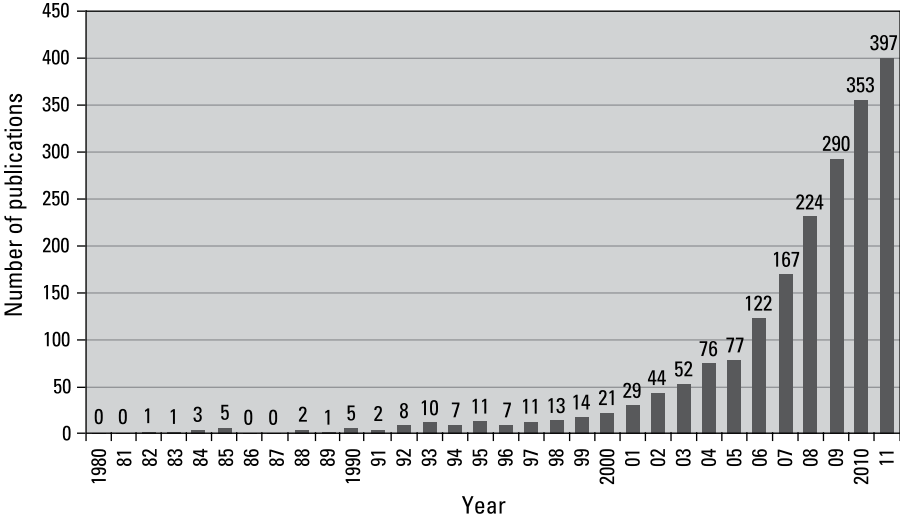
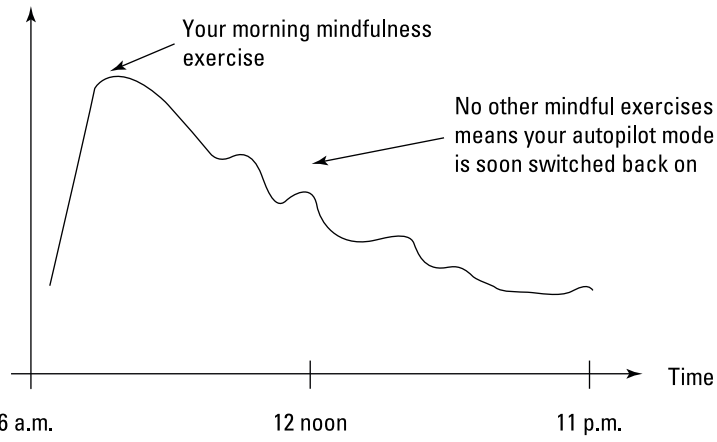


Figure 3-3:
Growth in
research
into
mindfulness.

Source: DS Black, *Mindfulness Research Guide*, http://www.mindfulexperience.org/resources/trends_figure_cited.pdf

Your 'level' of mindfulness



Your 'level' of mindfulness

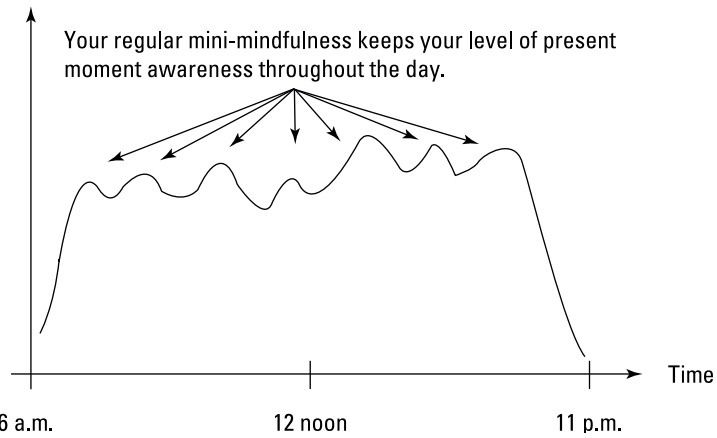


Figure 4-1:
One mindful exercise versus interval mindfulness.

Figure 5-1:
The
interplay
between
thoughts,
emotions
and
physiology.

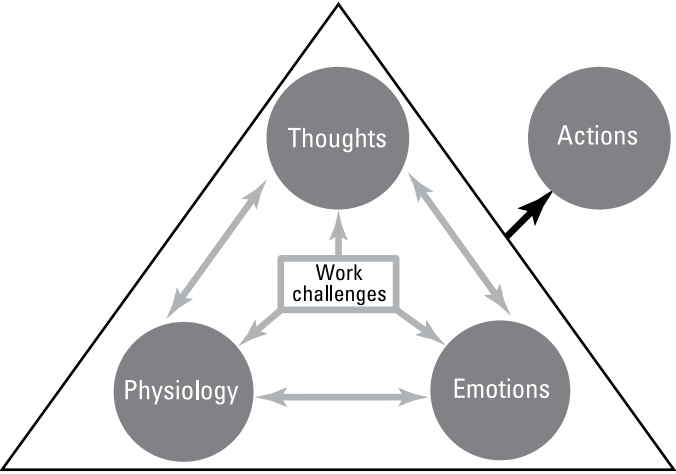
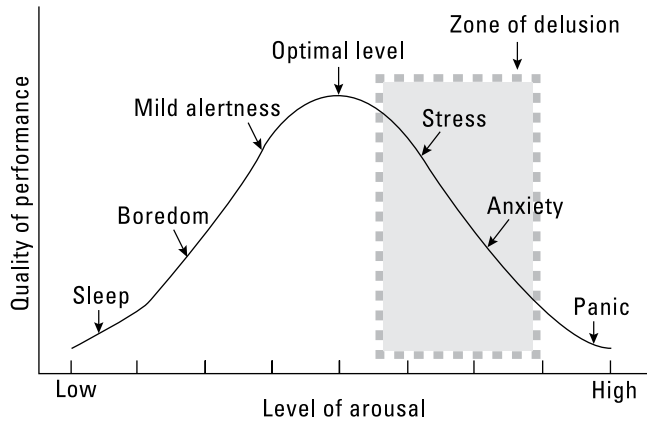


Figure 5-2:
The Yerkes–
Dodson
curve.



**Table 6-1 Testing Your Current Level of Mindfulness
with the Mindfulness Awareness Scale
(Adapted from Brown and Ryan, 2003)**

1. At work I sometimes experience emotions that I am not aware of until later.	
2. At work I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present moment.	
3. When walking to or from work, around my workplace or out to lunch, I tend to walk quickly to where I'm going without paying attention to what I experience along the way.	
4. At work I often get so wrapped up in the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what's going on all around me and what I am doing right now.	
5. At work I tend not to notice feelings of physical tension or discomfort until they really grab my attention.	
6. At work I frequently run on 'auto-pilot' without much awareness of what I'm doing.	
7. At work I often rush through work activities without really paying them much attention.	
8. At work I often find myself listening to someone with one ear, while trying to do something else at the same time.	
9. At work I often find that my mind drifts off to consider things that may happen at work in the weeks or years to come or things that have happened at work in the past.	
10. At work I often find myself snacking on the job without being aware that I'm eating.	

Table 6-2 Testing Your Current Level of Resilience

1. At work I'm a pessimist – I look out for hidden horrors lurking around each corner	
2. At work I struggle to make decisions or decide what to do next.	
3. At work I never ask my colleagues when I need help. What would they think of me?	
4. At work I struggle to put things into perspective and see the 'big picture'. I suffer from tunnel vision.	
5. When I have a big disappointment at work (such as being overlooked for promotion), I tend to feel bad and dwell on it for a long time.	
6. I work long hours, don't exercise and often find myself eating at my desk as I work through breaks.	
7. My life is dominated by my work. I rarely find time to do things that nourish me and make me feel good.	
8. I am fed up with constant change at work. Why can't things stay the way they are?	
9. At work I when things go wrong I avoid taking the blame – I may be considered incompetent if I admit to making a mistake	
10. At work little things grind me down.	

Mindfulness =

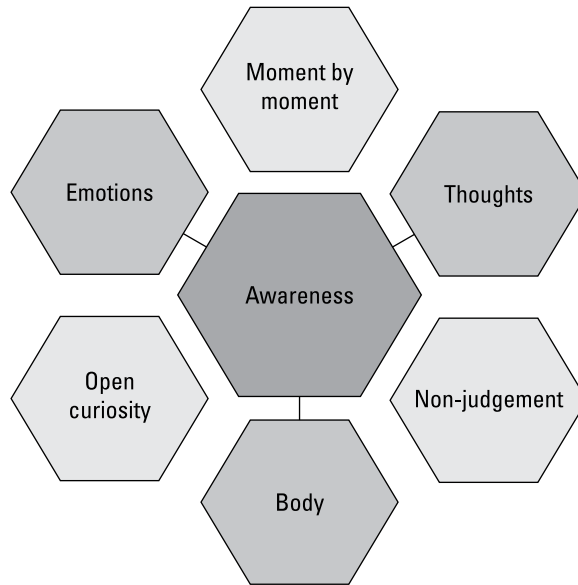


Figure 6-1:
What mind-
fulness is.

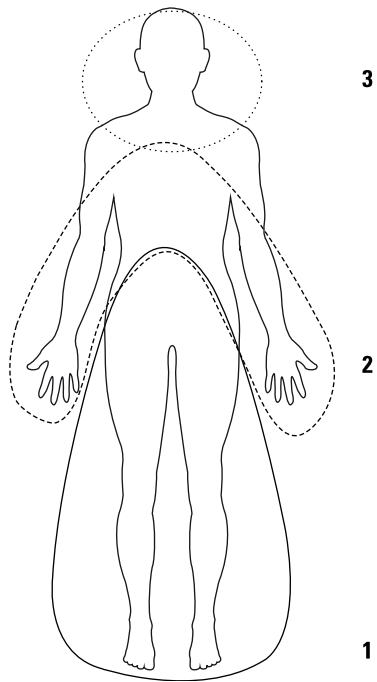


Figure 6-2:
The three-
step body
check.

Table 11-1 Mindfulness vs Coaching	
<i>Mindfulness</i>	<i>Coaching</i>
Emphasises acceptance, but gives you the tools to change	Emphasises change
Shift toward being – non-striving	Shift towards doing and action – striving towards goals
The core of your being is whole, complete and well	Emphasis on changing outer circumstances and inner attitudes to reach a sense of well-being
Present-moment focus	Future focus
Holistic – sees the big picture; considers the effects of one’s actions on others	Self-focused; emphasises personal achievement

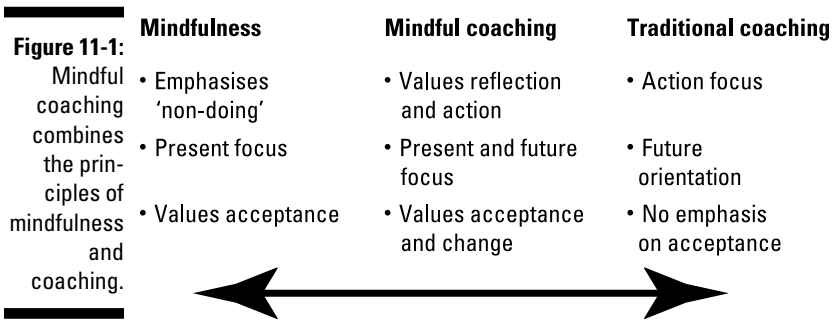
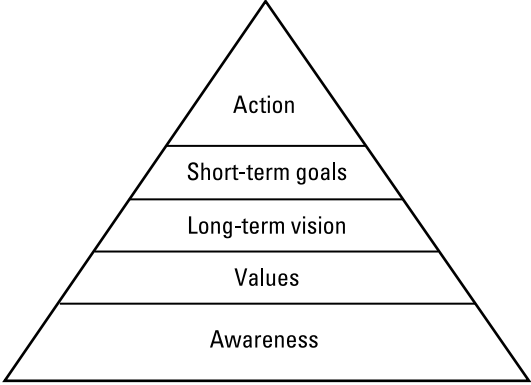
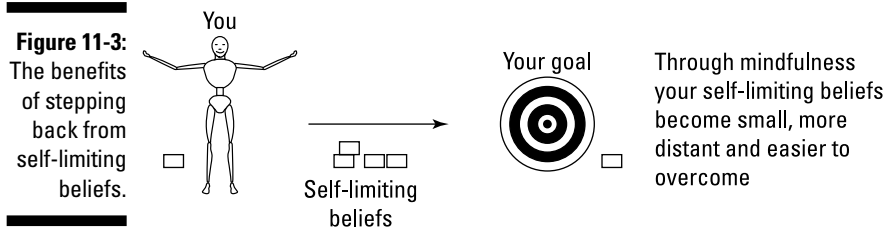
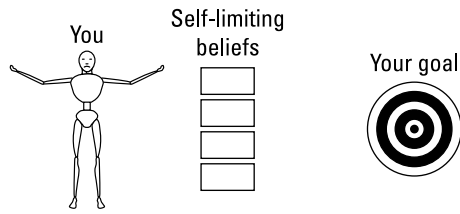


Figure 11-2: Doing mode
Traditional coaching can forget what underlies values and goals – awareness itself. Being mode





Mindfulness Pilot Checklist

Hopefully you now have all the information you need to successfully pilot mindfulness in your organisation. Use the checklist below to ensure that you deal with each step.

Action	Completed?
Stage 1: Start with the end in mind	
Identify organisational outcomes.	
Select a mindfulness at work trainer with whom to work in partnership	
Select the most appropriate training approach (MBSR, MBCT, MAWT, SIY, other).	
Agree on the best way in which to introduce mindfulness to your organisation, in partnership with the mindfulness trainer (for example, offering a taster session then a course for those interested, or starting with a full pilot course).	
Agree a marketing strategy and web/email/newsletter/flyer content.	
Ensure that evaluation measures are integrated into the training.	
Stage 2: Run an introductory session (if applicable)	
Publicise the opportunity using various electronic and physical media, with endorsement from a senior member of staff (if possible).	
Arrange a suitable room. Book equipment such as digital projector (if applicable).	
Evaluate the outcomes.	
Share the evaluation data with other key decision makers to decide on 'next steps'. Involve the mindfulness trainer in any presentation of outcomes, if possible.	

Stage 3: Running a mindfulness course pilot	
Publicise opportunity using various electronic and physical media, with endorsement from a senior member of staff (if possible).	
Arrange a suitable room for the duration of the course. Book equipment such as digital projector (if applicable).	
Agree on criteria for selecting participants.	
Select course participants.	
Inform successful candidates.	
Brief line managers so that they are supportive.	
Complete pre-course evaluation.	
Invite participants to attend day 1 of the course, and provide ongoing communication via the learning and development team and/or the mindfulness trainer.	
Stage 4: Evaluate	
Ask all participants to complete a post-course questionnaire.	
Evaluate the pre- and post-course data to determine whether the outcomes have been achieved and benefits gained, both in individual and organisational terms.	
Share the evaluation data with other key decision makers to decide on 'next steps'. Involve the mindfulness trainer in any presentation of outcomes, if possible.	

Enter your scores in the table below:

<i>Authentic Leadership Traits</i>							<i>Score for Trait</i>
Self-awareness	1		2		3		
Transparency and openness	4		5		6		
Embodiment of values	7		8		9		
Seeking a balanced perspective	10		11		12		
Total overall score							

Interpret your trait score as follows:

0 = a trait you do not display or do not value

1-3 = a trait you can work to improve

4-6 = a trait you display

7+ = a trait you truly embody

To work out your overall score, add up the figures in the right-hand column. The authenticity of your leadership style is shown below:

0-13 = a low level of authentic leadership behaviours displayed

14-26 = a moderate level of authentic leadership behaviours displayed

27-36 = someone who leads with authenticity

If possible, repeat the exercise with one or more colleagues, peers or members of your team. Don't forget to emphasise the need to be honest! Do your team members see you in the same way that you see yourself?

Table 14-1**Comparing old leadership habits to new mindful approaches**

<i>Old Rules</i>	<i>Mindful Ways</i>
As a leader, you need to be constantly in touch. Phone and email communications should be responded to instantly.	<p>Research shows that constant interruptions from the phone and email messages reduces productivity and can lead to burnout.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✔ Remember that you do have a choice. You don't have to answer the phone if you're in the middle of something. You can always call people back later.✔ Emails don't have to be responded to instantly. Log off for a while. You'll be able to focus on your work and get more done if you only check them at set times, for example in the morning, at noon and at the end of the day.
Being a good leader means making the most of your time. Cram as much as possible into your day. Save time by scheduling meetings back to back.	<p>Many meetings are highly unproductive. Back-to-back meetings are even less effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✔ Meetings often overrun, which has a cumulative effect. This is both unprofessional and can lead to stress.✔ Back-to-back meetings give you insufficient time to prepare yourself between meetings, leading to wasted time.✔ Knowing that you have multiple meetings can make it less easy to focus on the present moment as your mind strays to mentally prepare you for the next meeting.
As a leader, you need to be organised. Timetable similar amounts of time to do similar tasks. Tight timescales make you work faster and harder.	<p>Planning your day can be a good thing, but be honest – most tasks take a lot longer to complete than you initially think.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✔ Tasks that you're doing for the first time are likely to take more time.✔ Be realistic when allocating time for tasks. Doing so helps you manage the expectations of others and reduce the pressure you put on yourself.

(continued)

Table 14-1 (continued)

<i>Old Rules</i>	<i>Mindful Ways</i>
To be a good leader, the ability to multi-task is essential.	Research shows that regular multi-taskers get less done. In reality, your brain finds it impossible to multi-task; it just switches attention from one task to the next. Information about the previous task is stored in your working memory. Unfortunately, working memory space is limited, leading to you failing to recall information and having to repeat work.
As a leader, you need to be on top of your game at all times. You should monitor emails at home, even if you don't respond to them.	Numerous research studies show that being constantly connected at all times is bad for you. Failure to unplug from your work and electronic devices may lead to reduced productivity and burnout. Make sure that you set clear boundaries between your work and your personal life.

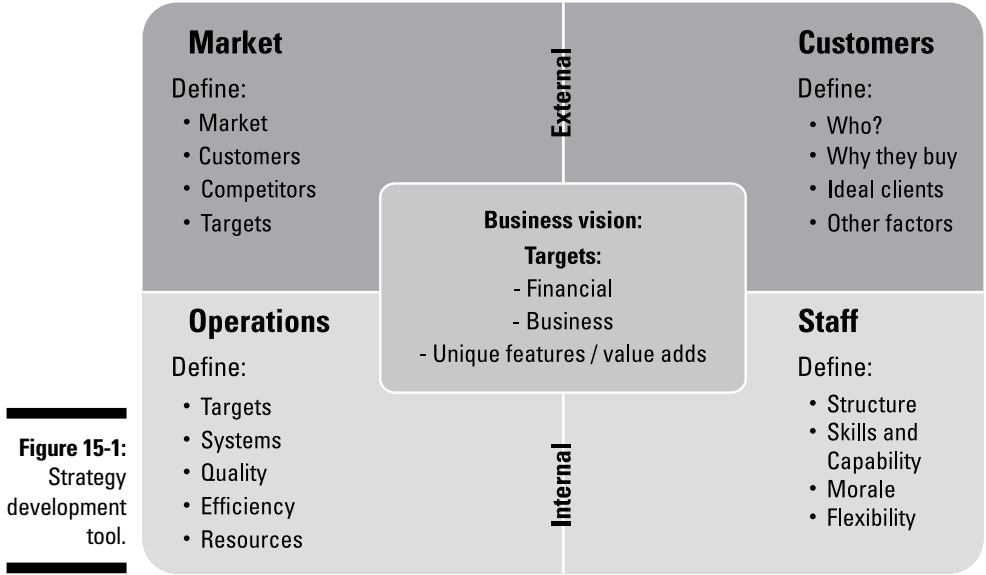


Figure 15-1:
Strategy
development
tool.

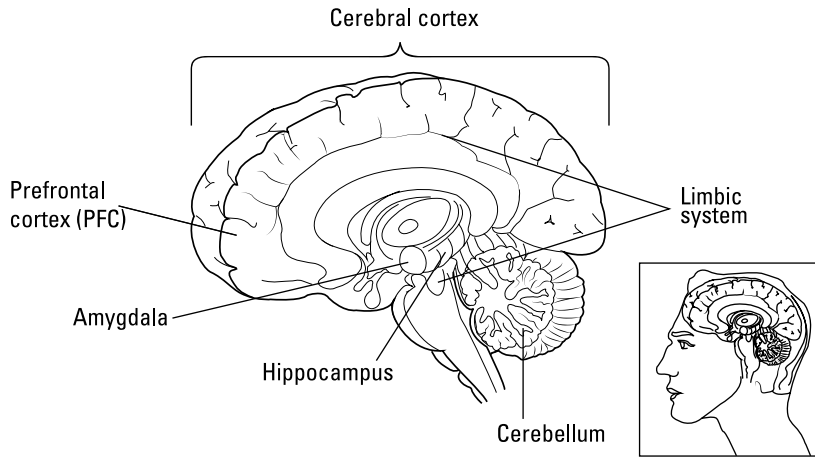
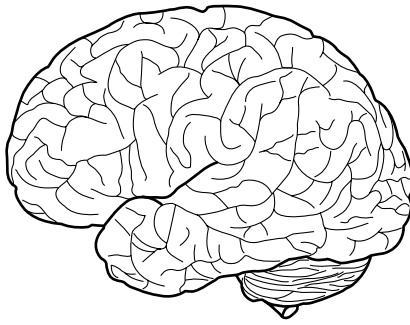


Figure 17-1:
Areas of
the brain
affected by
mindfulness.

Figure 17-2:
Brain
gyrification.



Appendix A

Answers to Learning Check Questions

This appendix presents the answers to the Mindfulness at Work Training (MAWT) learning check questions in Chapter 6.

Week 1 Learning Check

The answers to the week 1 learning check are as follow:

1. Mindfulness is ‘paying attention, on purpose, to the present moment without judgement’. Mindfulness is all about training your brain to become more aware of what is happening as it is happening. It cultivates awareness of your thoughts, emotions and body, and the interplay between them. Mindfulness is experiencing the present moment with openness and curiosity, without judging it as good or bad or trying to categorise it.
2. Mindfulness:
 - Can thicken those parts of the brain’s cerebral cortex responsible for decision making, attention and memory.
 - Reduces the tendency for the brain to default to habits and ways of thinking based on past experiences.
 - Helps you balance left- and right-brain activity.
3. The brain’s tendency to work on auto-pilot is a good thing because it frees your working memory to do more things. However, the brain working on auto-pilot is also a bad thing because people make decisions and act based on old information, which may or may not be relevant or appropriate.
4. Being in the present allows you to see things as they really are in this moment rather than how you *think* they are, which may be inaccurate. It allows you to make wiser decisions based on facts rather than passing thoughts.

Week 2 Learning Check

The answers to the week 2 learning check are as follow:

1. True. My body really can detect my thoughts before I have consciously registered them myself.
2. Approach mode is when you approach and explore things in the present moment with an open mind. It creates a happier, more open approach to work.
3. Avoidance mode is when you expend energy in trying to avoid thinking about or exploring emotions or situations, especially those you find difficult or challenging. Working in avoidance mode can lead to a downward mood spiral.

Avoidance mode is the human brain's default mode for most people – your brain tries to maximise reward and minimise threat so you may often avoid approaching things you find difficult or challenging.

4. False. At times many people become bored or frustrated with mindfulness practice. That's fine; just keep working at it. Each time you practise, you're strengthening your brain's ability to be mindful. Doing exercises in the gym may feel boring but you still get results – the same goes for mindfulness.
5. False. The sensations you feel can vary from day to day, minute to minute. Some people never feel any sensations in certain parts of their body, which is fine. Focusing your attention on a specific part of the body and seeing what (if anything) you notice is what's important, not the feeling itself.

Appendix B

Summary of Research

The following table summarises a small selection of research into the impacts of practicing mindfulness.

Research paper	Summary
Dane E, 2010. Paying Attention to Mindfulness and its effect on Task Performance in the Workplace. <i>Journal of Management</i> 37(4), 997-1018.	This research into mindfulness in a work context suggests that mindfulness widens your attentional breadth, allowing you to be aware of a lot of things simultaneously.
Dane E, Brummel BJ, 2013. Examining workplace mindfulness and its relations to job performance and turnover intention. <i>Human Relations</i>	This research conducted in a dynamic the service Industry environment suggests workplace mindfulness improves job performance and reduces staff turnover.
Ostafin BD & Kassman KT, 2012. Stepping out of History: Mindfulness improves insight problem solving. <i>Consciousness and cognition</i> , 4(5).	Researchers studied the impact of mindfulness in problem solving. The findings are the first to document a direct relation between mindfulness and increased creativity.
Reb J, Narayanan J, & Chaturvedi S, 2012. Leading mindfully: Two studies of the influence of supervisor trait mindfulness on employee well-being and performance. <i>Mindfulness</i> .	This research examines the influence of leaders' mindfulness on employee well-being and performance. Mindfulness training reduced employee emotional exhaustion and increased employee work-life balance. It improved employee performance and staff engagement. It improved job satisfaction and overall job performance.
Reb J, Narayanan, J, & Ho ZW, 2013. Mindfulness at Work: Antecedents and Consequences of Employee Awareness and Absent-mindedness. <i>Mindfulness</i> , forthcoming.	Using two samples, the study suggests that mindfulness improves employee well-being, job satisfaction, and job performance.

(continued)

(continued)

Research paper	Summary
Zhang J, Ding W, Li Y, & Wu C, 2013. Task complexity matters: The influence of trait mindfulness on task and safety performance of nuclear power plant operators. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i> 55, 433-439.	This study involving 136 Chinese nuclear power plant operators concluded that people who practice mindfulness are more likely to maintain an open and present-focused awareness and attention.
Davidson, R.J., Kabat-Zinn, J., Schumacher, J., et al. (2003) Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. <i>Psychosomatic Medicine</i> , 65, 564–570	This research involved employees at a biotech company who had their brains scanned to investigate the effects of mindfulness training on their brain. The study showed significant increases in left Prefrontal Cortex activation, an area of the brain associated with approach mode of mind. They also found significant increases in immunity. The course resulted in participants feeling more positive, more energetic, more engaged in their work and less stressed.
Stanley and Jha (2009) Mind fitness: Improving operational effectiveness and building warrior resilience. <i>Joint Force Quarterly</i> , 55, 144-151.	31 US Marines took part in 8 weeks of mindfulness based mind fitness. The research suggests mindfulness training improves well-being, and reduces negativity and rumination. It also reduces emotional reactivity.
Bostoket et al (2013) Can finding head-space reduce work stress? Randomised controlled workplace trial of mindfulness app. <i>Psychosomatic Medicine</i> 75 (3) A36-A37	120 employees used a self-administered mindfulness training app 45 day programme of 10-20 minutes practice. This resulted in significant improvements in job control, reduced anxiety and depression.
Beckman, H. B., Wendland, M., Mooney, C., Krasner, M. S., et al. (2012). The impact of a program in mindful communication on primary care physicians. <i>Academic Medicine</i> , 87(6), 1-5.	This research conducted on physicians suggests that training in mindfulness can significantly reduce exhaustion and burnout experienced by many physicians and can improve their well-being and empathy with others.
Smith et al (2011) Mindfulness is associated with fewer PTSD symptoms. . . In urban fire-fighters. <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i> 79(5) 613-617	This research involved 124 fire fighters who were taught mindfulness. It suggests that mindfulness reduced PTSD, and depression, and increases well-being and resilience.

Research paper	Summary
Limm, H., Gundel, H., Heinmuller, M., Marten-Mittag, B., Nater, U. M., Siegrist, J., & Angerer, P. (2011). Stress management interventions in the workplace improve stress reactivity: A randomized controlled trial. <i>Occupational and Environmental Medicine</i> , 68, 126–133. doi:10.1136/oem.2009.054148174	This study involved lower or middle management employees. It suggests that mindfulness can decrease stress reactivity and sympathetic nervous system (fight or flight) activation.
Hölzel, B.K., Carmody, J., Vangel, M., Congleton, C., Yerramsetti, S.M., Gard, T., and Lazar, S.W. (2011) Mindfulness practice leads to increases in regional brain grey matter density. <i>Psychiatry Resource</i> 2011 2011 Jan 30;191(1):36-43. Epub 2010 Nov 10.	This research involved scanning the brains of participants of an 8-week mindfulness training course. Results included changes in participant's brain areas that are associated with attention, learning and memory processes, emotion regulation and perspective taking.
Gaëlle Desbordes, Lobsang T. Negi, Thaddeus W. W. Pace, B. Alan Wallace, Charles L. Raison and Eric L. Schwartz (2012) Effects of mindful-attention and compassion meditation training on amygdala response to emotional stimuli in an ordinary, non-meditative state	A 2102 Massachusetts General Hospital study showed that eight weeks of mindfulness training shrunk the amygdala, the portion of the brain modulating response to fear and stress. These effects continued even when not actively practising mindfulness.