



WISHING OUR MUSLIM READERS
"SELAMAT HARI RAYA AIDILFITRI"

VENTRAX BE TIME WISE
JUNE 2018 ISSUE

HOW TO CONCENTRATE

SCIENTISTS HAVE DISCOVERED EXACT LENGTH OF BREAK YOU NEED
FOR MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY

**THIS IS WHEN YOU NEED TO STOP WORKING – AND HOW LONG FOR – TO MAXIMISE
CONCENTRATION**

With nine out of ten UK workers admitting they **do not feel adequately prepared** to handle their workload, the pressure to successfully complete work on time and stress-free can be very difficult. The solution? Research has shown that regular breaks are the key to concentration and high levels of productivity.



REGULAR BREAKS IMPROVE MANAGERS' ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE

Srini Pillay, an assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, explains that mixing in periods of downtime with work is vital for brains to operate efficiently. She says when our brains are given time to adjust between being focused and unfocused on a task, they tend to be more efficient.

"What people don't realise is that in order to complete these tasks they need to use both the *focus and unfocus circuits in their brain*," says Pillay, author of productivity manual *Tinker, Dabble, Doodle Try: Unlock the Power of*

the Unfocused Mind.

So how often should managers take breaks?

THIS IS THE EXACT LENGTH OF BREAK YOU NEED TO CONCENTRATE

A study by social networking company The Draugiem Group measured what habits set their most productive employees apart by using a time-tracking productivity app.

They found that the top 10% of employees with the highest productivity didn't put in longer hours than anyone else. Many didn't even work standard eight-hour days. Instead, the key to their productivity was that for every 52 minutes of focused work, they took a 17-minute break.



By tackling duties in shorter bursts followed by a period of relaxation, exercise or reflection, employees experienced greater motivation and focus, as well as lower stress levels – and this is the key to achieving better results.

8 SOLID TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE TIPS EVERYONE SHOULD BE DISPLAYING AT ALL TIMES

1. Always identify yourself at the beginning of all calls.

A) When in the office, always answer a telephone by saying: "Hello/Good Morning, Accounting Department, Rita speaking."

B) From a cell phone, either simply say Hello, or state your name, Hello, Rita here. Do not answer by using words such as "yeah" or "yes."





discuss BEFORE you place a call.

C) When placing a call, always state your name along with the name of the person you are calling. Example: "Hello, my name is John Doe from XYZ Corporation. May I please speak with Ms. Jane Smith?"

2. Be sensitive to the tone of your voice. Do not sound overly anxious, aggressive or pushy. It is important your tone conveys authority and confidence.

3. Think through exactly what you plan to say and

Tip: Jot down the items you want to discuss and questions you want answered. In other words, anticipate and expect you will be placed into a voicemail system; plan your message to be as direct and specific as possible, asking the person to respond to specific alternatives or questions.

Do not say, "Hello, it's Rita, call me back." At least state the subject about which you want the person to call you back about.

4. Do not allow interruptions to occur during conversations. Do not carry on side conversations with other people around you. The person on the telephone takes precedence over someone who happens to walk in your office or passes by while you are on the phone.

Tip: If you must interrupt the conversation, say to the person, "Please excuse me for a moment I'll be right back." And when you return, say, "Thank you for holding."

5. Especially when leaving messages, speak clearly and slowly. Do not use broken phrases, slang or idioms. Always, always leave your return telephone number as part of your message, including the area code . . . and S-L-O-W-L-Y, including REPEATING your telephone number at the end of your message.

6. Build the habit of always turning off your cell phone ringer when entering a meeting, restaurant, theatre, training class, or other place where the purpose of your visit would be interrupted or others would be disturbed by hearing your cell phone ring. **Tip:** If you are expecting an important call, inform the caller you will be in a meeting during certain times and state you will monitor your message indicator for when it illuminates you will excuse yourself to leave the meeting and return the call.





7. Always speak into the telephone receiver with an even and low tone of voice. Especially when speaking on a cell phone out in public, be sure to monitor how loud you may be.

8. Do not allow yourself to be distracted by other activities while speaking on the telephone, such as rustling papers, chewing and eating, working on the computer, or speaking with someone else. Most importantly, do not use a hand held cell phone while driving. Get a headset or speaker phone for the car.

Tip: Always treat every caller with the utmost courtesy and respect by giving him/her your undivided attention.

COMPANIES THAT GET EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT – AND WHAT THEY DO RIGHT

COMPANIES SUCH AS GOOGLE AND VIRGIN ARE PRIME EXAMPLES OF EXTRAORDINARY EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT REAPING REAL BENEFITS. FIND OUT HOW THESE, AND OTHER LEADING COMPANIES, ARE GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THEIR EMPLOYEES



There is no such thing as perfection, which is true for employee engagement like everything else. The reason is that we live in a changing world where new challenges continuously require new thinking and actions. People are not all alike, so employee engagement also requires you to see your employees, really see them and get what makes them tick – and then to help them make themselves tick. Because employee engagement is not just down to the leader or company – each person is responsible for his/her own level of engagement.

Most companies that do it well have something in common – they understand that it's a driver of success and that it therefore needs to be a key business strategy, which is everyone's

responsibility (not just HR's or the leaders' responsibility). This strategy works best when it ***translates into behaviours and culture.***

They also know that they have to ***look after their employees so they can look after the customers.*** Or as Walmart's founder Sam Walton said: ***"the way management treats associates is exactly how the associates will treat the customers"***.

There are many good examples of companies that have achieved great results when it comes to an engaged culture and it's worth reflecting on what they do and why it works. Here are some we find particularly interesting, and here's why.



GOOGLE - TRANSPARENCY

Google have been ***very intentional*** about creating the ***culture they want.*** One aspect of that culture is their focus on transparency. The idea is to ***break down barriers, encourage creativity and collaboration.*** And employees, as a result, are ***feeling empowered by that transparency.*** ***Culture comes down to behavioural habits*** and Google, ***by creating a culture of transparency and freedom, creates habits of creativity.*** Formalising that people spend 20% of their time doing something outside their normal work function ***facilitates a creative culture.*** Ultimately ***culture is about "how things get done"*** and should not be left to chance, it's too powerful a force not to take control over – and Google has done this well.

In our experience, we see organisations that focus on transparency engaging employees more than those that don't. Employees want to be a part of something where there are no ***hidden agendas and they are experiencing an honest perspective*** whether that is good news or not. ***Informed employees feel valued and engagement typically follows.***



BEHAVIOUR

AMERICAN EXPRESS – FOCUS ON BEHAVIOURS

The company has for a long time had equal weighting between the fact that people achieve their goals and how they do it. It simply should not be possible to achieve top results, ratings, pay and potential bonus without considering the **impact of your behaviours**.

Behaviours are how we conduct ourselves, act and react, towards others. We've found that successful companies understand **how behaviours impact employees on an emotional level**, where much of engagement with an employer happens. They **therefore value how people do their job**. You can't have someone being a high performer but behaving really badly at the same time - it sends the wrong message. The high performers in companies where engagement is high, understand their impact and behave in a collaborative and respectful way.

JOHN LEWIS - EMPOWERING



John Lewis expresses a strong focus on people. One way of doing this is to **call their employees partners**. A word is not just a word; it is also the connection people make with that word, the **emotions that it awakens**. By calling them partners, the company is clearly expressing that there is a **shared responsibility for the customers and the outcomes of the company**. So

they focus on involving their partners in decisions and solutions, empowering them to create the best customer experience.

We see this a lot; that employees **who are invited to be involved** (not just served a "fait accompli") **also feel empowered and they take personal responsibility** – they know they can make a difference and it engages them to do more.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES - PURPOSE

This airline sees their purpose as connecting people with what's important to them. They don't just see themselves as transporters of people, but as enablers who **help people get to people or places they care about**. This may be seen as a small differentiation, but it can make a big

difference in how important an employee perceives his/her job. A strong, clear purpose connects emotionally with employees, it engages.

In our experience, ***purpose is becoming more and more important to employees***. To see that you are doing something more profound than just selling a product or service, ***makes you feel important. It's no longer enough to "just do a job", we're seeing that people want to make a difference, to contribute to something bigger than themselves.***

VIRGIN – LISTENING

This multi-industry organisation has a **habit of listening to its employees**, to show that ***they are***



valued, to listen to their opinions and take care of their ideas, to have healthy debates and continuously innovate. It's a win-win; the organisation keeps learning and employees feel important and engage with the organisation.

Listening is at the heart of engagement. In our experience, everyone wants to be seen and heard – it's a minimum requirement of leadership, yet often overlooked for the immense value it can bring. On top of it

simply being the right thing to do. We see that employees who feel listened to, want to reciprocate, they want to do their best, because they feel valued and important.

Employee engagement is the fuel of an organisation. And even if an organisation is good at it, we can all get better at it – and maximise that fuel.

HAPPINESS AT WORK - 12 SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE IT

If you are a relatively junior employee at your company, though you carry out a very important role, you may not always be recognised. You might also face some of the following challenges:

- ❖ Little fulfilment at work
- ❖ Long working hours
- ❖ Conflicting demands on your time and loyalty
- ❖ Little balance between personal life and work commitments
- ❖ Tight deadlines
- ❖ Time management pressures
- ❖ Strained relationships with the important people in your life
- ❖ Tight personal finances
- ❖ Lack of any say at work
- ❖ Internal politics and a rigid company structure
- ❖ Bullying within the workplace

You are therefore faced with a number of dilemmas in your workplace.

On the one hand you want to be involved in rewarding, enjoyable and fulfilling work, get recognition and promotion for your efforts, and be appreciated for the key role you play in the company.

On the other hand you want a balanced life with time for the things you really want to do with a full and interesting social life. Of course you want to have clarity about your career, job duties and you want to continue to be healthy, fit and stress free.

So what's the best way forward?! How can you too achieve a zen like happiness at work?

One key to resolving these seemingly conflicting challenges is to get clear about just ***how much you love the work you do***. Is what you do something you jump out of bed every morning, or would you rather be doing something else?

How motivated are you with your work? And how do you cope with the day to day routine office work?

A UK survey last year found that almost 2 out of 3 people are dissatisfied with their jobs. And I am sure there is a similar situation in the USA and other parts of the developed world. This means that they are either apathetic about finding what they really love doing or they are resigned to being in this situation.

No matter how good things are in other parts of your life such as family, social life and relationships, work is a major part of your life, and not to be neglected.

Since for now you have chosen to be in the job you are in, it is up to you for the time being to make the most of what you do. Of course in the long term, you can either change your job or even embark on a new career. But for now, you can get to love more of what you do right now.

Assuming that in the short term you are not able to change jobs, there are a number of things you can do to begin enjoying more of what you currently do. Ask yourself – is it the job or is it you? And what can you do to make your current work more enjoyable?

Stop acting the victim. YOU are responsible for your life and if you can't immediately change the job you are in, then it is up to you to make the most of it.

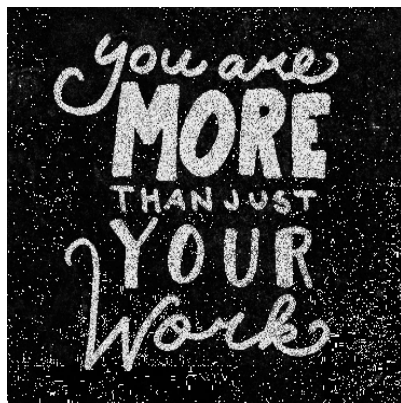


Here are some simple tips for getting to enjoy your current job.

1. On the way to your workplace, get yourself motivated to face the day. Think of how the work you have allows you to have your life outside of it, such as a great social life. A positive attitude will make the day more pleasant and productive.



2. Keep your work in perspective. You can only do the best you can in each situation. Look beyond yourself and your work, and consider the bigger picture. Do some voluntary work to gain a broader outlook. Find a way to contribute to society in general.



3. Remember that you are more than your work. Do not have your identity too strongly tied to the job you do. Give up thinking that your work life "should" be a certain way. Such expectations of what you were supposed to be, as set by your parents and teachers, stop you from enjoying what you currently do.

4. Plan your time. In your to-do list include long term projects as well as the more imminent things that need doing. Prioritise your to-do list – do the most

important things first. When performing any task, ask yourself – is this the best use of my time? Schedule in enough time for your studies etc.



5. Concentrate on the task at hand. Do not

let yourself be

distracted by worrying

about all the other things to be done or losing energy

over the undesirable situation you find yourself in. Stay

in the moment.

Be ruthless and take care of a task before it gets on a

possible procrastination list. For example, sort your

morning post immediately in one go – open it, file it, act on it or bin it there and then.

6. Clarify anytime you are not sure or where you are faced with conflicting demands. The more clear and upfront you are with your manager and the other people you work with, the better it will be for you in the long term.

7. Delegate wherever appropriate. Decide if there is anything that can be delegated, or that more fairly belongs to someone else's work load. Always remember the "3D" rule – do it, dump it or delegate it – never handle a piece of paper twice.



8. Have regular breaks. Get away from your normal workplace even if only



for five minutes. Try taking a break from the laptop, emails and do leave the mobile behind. Make sure that you do have that lunch break – it is not just for food but also for fresh air and a mental break.

Eat a healthy lunch and if you must snack, make sure it is healthy too – an apple rather than a bag of chips. Look for ways of energising yourself other than from adrenaline and caffeine.

9. Learn to relax no matter how challenging the work gets or how demanding your bosses become. At the end of the day it is only a job, and you are much more than that. In years to come, you will look back and wonder what the fuss was.



10. Contribute towards creating a pleasant work environment. Do not gossip in the office as it just creates negativity all around. Do not listen to any gossip either. Minimise your time with people that you do not resonate with or like.



Learn to have more fun at work. Laugh more and chill out. Perform with a more fun orientated approach.



11. Review your day before you leave for home. Look at what worked well, and what could be improved the next day. If you feel satisfied with the day's work, then why not reward yourself later that day. You deserve it.

12. Switch off once you leave work. You are already at work a third of your time, so do not continue to keep it buzzing in your head during your supposed free time. Mentally say good bye

to your work space the moment you leave for home.

See your work as a game. Life is meant to be fun and if you are going to spend a third of it at work, you might as well enjoy the game.



How to Better Manage Your Energy, Time and Attention to Achieve Peak Performance

You can only do effective and productive work if you know how best to manage your energy, time and attention. All three are absolutely essential if you want to be productive on a daily basis and succeed in your endeavours.

Tony Schwartz, author of "The Power of Full Engagement", recommends that we manage our energy for peak performance. Schwartz advises we treat our lives as sprints and recovery (recovery being key here!). "The number of hours in a day is fixed, but the quantity and quality of energy available to us is not," says Schwartz.

If you are good at managing your time but can't effectively use your energy on the right things, you will still fall short of great work. Some people are great at managing their time and have a lot of energy, but they're constantly distracted so they procrastinate and don't get a lot done.

Others have laser-like focus on the right things at the right time but they can't manage their energy. They do the right things at the wrong time. Productive people know how to effectively manage all three.

Manage Your Energy for Optimum Progress

When you throw more energy at your work without taking the time to recharge, or refresh, you're going to run out of fuel and burn out. Without real restoration and rejuvenation throughout the day, your productivity suffers.

Your energy, motivation, and will to work "dips" as the day progresses, it's important to plan accordingly and do your best and high-level work early in the day. ***Break your work into manageable tasks, and force yourself to single task on purpose within specific times.*** And plan breaks on purpose.



When you work too hard and throw too much energy at a task, you could burn out without achieving real progress. True productivity is determined by better energy management rather than simply cranking out more hours at your desk. It turns out our energy functions according to what psychophysicist Peretz Lavie called "ultradian rhythms," or natural cycles that take place during the day. People who work with instead of against their ultradian rhythm perform better.

If you push yourself to continue working during periods of low energy, you risk continued grogginess and low performance. If you experience a 3 pm slump every day, for example, trying to power through it will only do you more harm than good. You won't be working efficiently, your results will be poor. Instead, during a slump time, try taking a quick walk, starting a conversation with someone at the office, or even taking a power nap for 10 to 20 minutes if you can. It's critical that we acknowledge our body's natural rhythms and align our periods of work and relaxation with them to work in a sustainably productive way.



TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Time is a limited resource and it's constantly running on empty. You can't stop using it and you can't find more of it, but you need it to do absolutely everything. Benjamin Franklin was able to account for every minute of his day. He knew how to manage his time effectively.

"Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michael Angelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson and Albert Einstein," says H. Jackson Brown Jr.

You are probably efficient at what you do but not necessarily effective. The two are not the same. Someone who works hard or smart and is well organised but spends all their time on unimportant tasks may be efficient but not effective. To be effective, you need to be able to separate important tasks from urgent ones and focus on getting important activities done when you are most active.

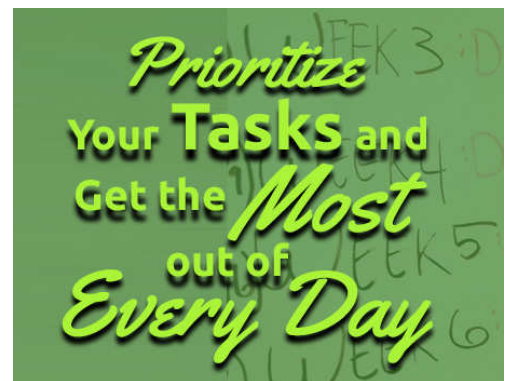
To make the most of your time every day, you should be able to prioritise your tasks. Managing your time isn't about squeezing as many tasks into your day as possible. It's about simplifying how you work, doing things better and faster, and knowing when to take a break and refresh.

URGENT TASKS ARE NOT NECESSARILY IMPORTANT!

Urgency wrecks productivity. Urgent but unimportant tasks are major distractions. Sometimes important tasks stare you right in the face, but you neglect them and respond to urgent but unimportant things. You need to reverse that. It's one of the only ways to master your time.

In "Habits of Highly Effective People", Stephen D. Covey discussed a system for managing time that was originally introduced by Dwight D. Eisenhower. This system splits up activities into four quadrants based on two factors: urgency and importance. Your ability to distinguish urgent and important tasks has a lot to do with your success.

Important tasks are things that contribute to your long-term mission, values, and goals. Separating these differences is simple enough to do once, but doing so continually can be tough.

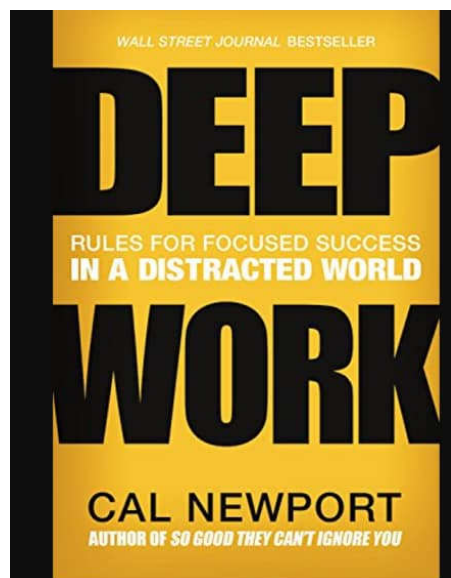


Identify areas of your life where you are wasting time and try to reduce these. A good way to do this is to log everything you do for a week in meticulous detail and then examine your record to see how you use (or misuse!) your time.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 AM							
7:30 AM							
8:00 AM							
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7:00 PM							

DAILY WORK SCHEDULE

Create a system for your work. Build routines to help you do your work better. A daily structure brings order to how you work. And when you create a routine that works, be resolute, be committed and be professional about it. Follow through.



Cal Newport, author of *Deep Work*, recommends building a habit of ‘deep work’ - the ability to focus without distraction. Newport also recommends ‘deep scheduling’ to combat constant interruptions and get more done in less time. Attention works much like a muscle: use it poorly and it can wither; work it well and it grows.

Attention is more than just focusing on completing a task. We use our attention to shape and frame life’s big picture as well.

Focus is indeed powerful. Sustained attention produces consistent results on a task over time.

The ability to single task without distractions is a critical component of success. As the saying goes, “The successful man is the average man focused.” In his book, *Focus: The*

Hidden Driver of Excellence, psychologist Daniel Goleman delves into the science of attention in all its varieties.

The antidote for mind wandering is meta-awareness, attention to attention itself, as in the ability to notice that you are not noticing what you should, and correcting your focus. “Mindfulness makes this crucial attention muscle stronger,” says Goleman.



Every time you sit down to plan out your day you're essentially deciding what you're going to pay attention to that day. Knowing your core values and having a blueprint for your goals creates focusing lenses that help direct your attention to what matters most while cropping out the superfluous and distracting. Distractions have always been a part of life. Seneca once observed, "There is never a time when new distraction will not show up."

We're subjected to thousands of distractions throughout the day. A study published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology found that you can be distracted simply by hearing or feeling your phone vibrate, even if you don't pick it up. Try putting your phone out of sight (and touch) for 10 minutes of uninterrupted productivity.

Modern technology has evolved to exploit our urgency addiction: email, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and more will fight to distract you constantly.

Socrates said, **"Beware the barrenness of a busy life."**

Use the 80/20 rule to your advantage. The rule says that 20% of the causes gives 80% of the effects. So always spend your attention on the top 20% things which give the most returns.

Be mindful of how you spend your time. Constantly check and reflect on how you spend your time (and energy and attention) throughout the day.



SDS BANKER'S CLUB

Date: 4th July 2018

Time: 6pm – 8pm

Venue: Bankers Club Kuala Lumpur
(Amoda Building) Jalan Imbi
Opposite Berjaya Times Square

Topic

Time Management: Increase Your Personal Productivity and Effectiveness

SDS PUCHONG

Date: 25th July 2018

Time: 6pm – 8pm

Venue: Ventrax Management Sdn Bhd
37 & 39 Jalan TPP5/I7
Taman Perindustrian Puchong
47160 Puchong, Selangor

Topic

How Can I Stop Procrastinating?





Timely Inspiration

Realise that your goals are the product of your values. Over time, your values may change. You are growing and constantly reaching out. You are not static and inflexible. Take time to rethink your values and goals. I suggest you work on your goals daily, but be sure to make time to review your goals alongside your values annually to ensure that your self-image constantly improves. Will Rogers put it well when he said, "Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there."

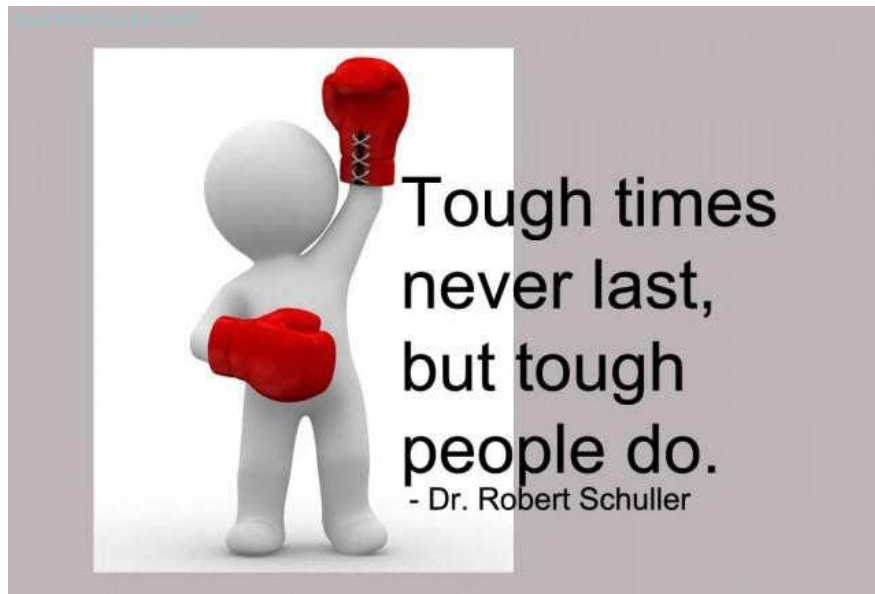
Why is self image important in time management? When you realise the kind of person you want to be, this itself will lead you to manage your time better.

BELIEF + VALUE + ATTITUDE = SELF IMAGE

(Extracts from "How long can you wait for results")



reflections



Good News!

We are now a registered
training provider with **HRDF**