

How to Get Through Work on a Bad Day

Bad days happen to everyone. Learn ways to get through a difficult day at work and how you can prevent future bad days from happening.



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- Go for a short break to relieve stress and clear your mind.
- Get a fresh perspective through journaling or talking to a supportive supervisor.
- Identify the most important tasks to get done today and plan for a better day tomorrow.
- Problem-solve the reason for your bad day and brainstorm possible solutions.

Are you having a bad day at work? If so, you are not alone. In a recent [study by Woohoo inc.](#), 19% of respondents reported dealing with a bad day nearly every day, while 29% reported having one at least once a week.

Whatever is making your day terrible, understand these days happen to everyone, even if you love your job. Feeling frustrated or unhappy at work sometimes is normal. Continue reading to find out how to get through work during a bad day and ways you can prevent them from happening.

Take a Break

In the midst of a bad day, one of the best things to do is take a short break. Especially if you are dealing with a situation that has inspired heated emotions. Since feelings can often get the best of you, step away to avoid making a difficult moment even worse.

Annia Palacios, licensed professional counselor and owner of [Tightrope Therapy](#), says, “Physically stepping away from a stressful situation can help us reset our emotions and clear our minds.”

Choose a method that works best for you to clear your head and achieve emotional distance. Consider going for a short walk, getting coffee or a snack, or listening to music. Whatever you decide, don’t return to the situation until you’ve calmed down.

Talk It Out With a Close Friend or Family Member

One great way to relieve the stress of a bad day is to talk to a close friend or loved one. Doing so will [clear your head](#) and help you remove yourself from the situation a bit. In fact, by talking out your emotions, you are helping reduce the chance of a [heated response](#) to a difficult moment.

Although tempting, take caution with venting to a coworker. Unfortunately, this can backfire on you. Based on company policies, it may [result in job loss](#). Discretion is especially important if a colleague or client causes your bad day.

Speaker and author [Haley Perlus](#), Ph.D., says, “If you’re unable to call someone, you can also write down what’s bothering you. Writing it will help you relax and give your brain a moment to work through the problem point-by-point instead of racing a mile a minute.”

Change Your Perspective

Try to approach your bad day with a different point of view. When you’re upset or stressed, it’s easy to see everything as part of the problem. However, by looking at it with fresh eyes, you can [problem-solve better](#) and gain a fresh understanding.

If you have difficulty changing how you see your situation, try journaling. Get out a notebook and write out what’s bothering you. Break down the specific problems at hand to get a clear perspective. After, if you have a supportive manager, you can go to them to explain the situation and to explore possible solutions or ways to resolve the stressor.

Focus on the Positive

When you’re having a bad day, remember what you like about your job. Focus on positives like good coworker relationships and what you contribute to your company. Even remembering company benefits and perks can help, such as healthcare coverage, remote work flexibility, and others.

[Brain DeChesare](#), founder and CEO of Breaking Into Wall Street, says, “We can actually gain a lot of motivation by consciously reflecting on the things we’ve achieved that have led us to where we are today — not just remembering them, but really allowing ourselves to feel the sense of achievement.”

Even if it’s difficult, write out all the good things about your job and your accomplishments, no matter how small. Recognize how you’ve successfully navigated former bad days and gotten through them. By [being grateful](#), you feel more positive, which can help you handle future problems at work.

Prioritize What Is Most Important

To successfully get through a difficult day at work, focus on the most important tasks. Make a list of any pressing needs and prioritize those for the remainder of your day. Block out any distractions by listening to music, turning off chat notifications, or closing your office door, if you have one.

However, if you still feel overwhelmed, it is a clear sign you need to bring in [outside resources](#) or help from other colleagues. Plan your next day by identifying any remaining tasks that need finishing. Let your boss know as early as possible if you may not reach any upcoming deadlines.

How to Prevent Future Bad Days at Work

While it’s impossible to avoid bad days completely, there are ways you can prevent them. At the end of your day, reflect on the issues that triggered your difficult day at work. Take a note of any repeated patterns you recognize, or if it was just a one-off bad moment.

Licensed clinical psychologist [Shauna Pollard](#), Ph.D., recommends active problem-solving. “Sometimes, that means making changes within yourself, but it may also mean asking for additional support in the workplace or in your home environment,” she says.

Identify solutions that you can implement now, and which ones may need company approval. If problems persist, it may signify you need to [change jobs](#) or even careers. In addition, consider [changing your routine](#) to encourage positivity throughout your day, like adding in a relaxing bedtime ritual or regular exercise to reduce your stress level.



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