



Take a break: increased productivity thanks to aXbo power napping

Our society demands that we produce top performance and results quickly and consistently – all throughout the day. But if we were to listen to our natural biorhythms, this would be an impossible feat. As of November 1st, the aXbo sleep phase alarm clock is equipped with a new function, "PowerNap," for brief midday naps. Power naps have a rejuvenating effect. We spoke with Dr. Georg Dorffner, university professor and managing director of the Siesta Group Schlafanalyse, about power napping, the effects of power napping and the studies carried out on the topic.

Vienna, 31 October 2007 – The lights are dimmed, telephone calls are re-routed, and no meetings are scheduled: imagine reclining in your chair and taking a short relaxing break – right in the middle of the working day, and without a guilty conscience. This is the dream of many a hard worker, yet our achievement-oriented society demands from us that we work twelve hours a day or more, every day, and remain highly concentrated and in best form all day long. However, sleep research findings show that we experience a decrease in performance levels around noon. Sleep researcher Dr. Jürgen Zulley actually discovered this phenomenon over 20 years ago when he arranged for 450 volunteers to spend 4 weeks in a subterranean bunker. Without daylight or clocks, the test candidates soon lost all feeling for the time of day. "The test persons usually took a nap of around half an hour around noon under the assumption that it was already evening. This showed that if we obey our own inner clocks, we should in fact sleep twice a day."

Power napping puts us in a good mood and keeps us healthy

Midday naps are not really accepted in our society, yet they have the potential to increase the performance of employees considerably. Sleep researcher Dr. Jürgen Zulley, himself an enthusiastic midday nap-taker, has made it his mission to establish the right to a midday nap in the working world: "A brief midday nap not only makes us feel better, but also keeps us healthy. For example, the risk of heart attack is significantly decreased when we allow ourselves to take a brief break around midday."

Benefits for the economy

The Japanese were the first to recognize that midday naps contribute to enhanced performance levels. For generations, the midday nap has been an integral part of the daily office routine. And the Chinese have even anchored the right to midday naps in their constitution. In the U.S., power napping has become an important trend. Yet in this part of the world, sleep has yet to be associated in any way with the working world. Mario Filoxenidis knows this best: with his company Siesta Consulting, he is campaigning for the establishment of quiet rooms in companies and institutions. "Decision-makers want to hear that there will be a 20% return on investment when 5% is invested in working hours. And this may in fact be achieved. But when we talk about *rest periods* as 'investments,' even our best arguments cannot convince disbelieving managers, much less tackle culturally-grounded taboos."



What is important to heed in power napping

In order to achieve the desired restorative effect of a power nap, a few important rules must be obeyed. The duration of the nap is vital, but most essential is the moment of waking from the nap. If we sleep too long, or are woken at the wrong moment, the revitalizing effect may be nullified. "A midday nap should last no longer than 20 minutes in order to avoid entering the deep-sleep period and the onset of a low resting pulse rate, both of which would make waking up more difficult. Setting an alarm clock helps. The best thing to do is to seek out a place where one will not be disturbed during a brief nap – whether in bed, at one's desk, or on a special power nap daybed. In order to get the circulation going again, one should do light stretching exercises afterwards," recommends Dr. Zulley.

aXbo determines the perfect moment to wake up

Using the movement sensors and the software specially designed for power napping, the aXbo sleep phase alarm clock can determine the optimal moment to be woken, even from a short noon nap. "aXbo PowerNap functions according to the same principle as the basic function of the aXbo sleep phase alarm clock: using our bodily movements, the aXbo determines the exact time we should be woken," says Boris Eis, inventor of the aXbo sleep phase alarm clock. "Within this time period, the user will be woken without having entered his or her deep sleep period." Thanks to the power nap, a drop in performance levels at midday can be overcome. We feel rested, more productive, and ready to go in the afternoon.

Studies confirm the positive effects of aXbo power napping

The effects of aXbo's new power napping function have also been scientifically tested. In field trials, volunteers took power naps using an aXbo four times during the course of two weeks, taking careful note of their mental and physical states throughout. This data was compared with reference data on non-power nap times. The study was coordinated by the Siesta Group Schlafanalyse. "The results of this new study show that the average duration of a power nap using the aXbo sleep phase alarm clock is 10 minutes," explains professor Dorffner. "As well, evaluation of the questionnaires completed by the test persons shows that after a power nap with aXbo they felt significantly more active and motivated, and in general felt more cheerful."

Free updates available as of November 1st

All owners of an aXbo sleep phase alarm clock may update their own clock with the new additional PowerNap function – for free, and without requiring any additional devices. The USB cable which comes with the alarm clock and which is used for the analysis of sleep data may also be used to install the updates. Go to www.axbo.com to install.

How aXbo works

Every person goes through several sleep phases each night in which deep sleep, light sleep and dream periods alternate. Each of these phases is characterized by different body movements. On the basis of these movements alone the sleep phases can be differentiated from each other and thus the ideal time for waking can be determined – within the last 30 minutes before the desired waking time. The effect is waking up in the morning as if you had woken up naturally.



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Available online and at your local pharmacy

The sleep phase alarm clock aXbo may be purchased online at www.axbo.com and in all German and Austrian pharmacies at a price of 199 euros. In Austria, aXbo is also available at all Leiner and Kika branches. In Germany, aXbo can be purchased at over 70 bed and mattress stores. aXbo is shipped as a set for two.

Images:

Press-ready photos may be downloaded at www.axbo.com .

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