

WEEK #2

Mind on Task — Staying Present

Being at work doesn't always mean your mind is on the work.

This Weeks Leadership Objective

Help every worker understand how easily our attention can drift away from the task at hand, recognize when their mind is no longer fully engaged in the work, and develop the habit of intentionally bringing their focus back before distraction leads to a mistake or incident.



Being Here Is Not the Same as Being Present

Good morning everyone.

Most of us have experienced a moment when our hands kept working but our mind was somewhere else.

We can be physically at the work face, wearing our PPE and holding the right tool, while our attention is on a conversation, a problem at home, or the next task.

The work may continue, but the connection between our mind and the task is broken.

That gap is where routine mistakes happen.

Ask the Crew

- Have you ever realized halfway through a task that you were operating on autopilot?
- What usually pulls your attention away?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Being present means noticing when attention drifts and deliberately bringing it back.

REMEMBER...

Your hands should never get ahead of your mind.



Attention Can Drift Quietly

Distraction is not always loud or obvious.

Our attention can be pulled away in three common ways:

Types of Distraction

External = Noise, movement, radios, phones, or activity around the task.

Internal = Thoughts about home, frustration, fatigue, or the next job.

Task Switching = Interruptions, changing steps, or trying to manage two things at once.

The danger is not having another thought.

The danger is continuing to work without noticing that our attention has moved.

Ask

Which type of distraction most often pulls your attention away from the work?

(Allow discussion.)

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Make it normal for workers to recognize and say when their attention has drifted.

REMEMBER...

Distraction begins before the mistake.



SAFETY LEADERSHIP SERIES

Mind Wandering. Hands Moving.

One of the most dangerous moments in routine work is when our hands keep moving but our mind has drifted somewhere else. This can happen during familiar tasks, repetitive work, cleanup, or material handling.

The task feels automatic.

Our body knows the motions.

We stop actively seeing what may have changed.

The danger is not routine work.

The danger is assuming routine work no longer needs our full attention.

Ask

What familiar task do you sometimes catch yourself doing on autopilot?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Interrupt autopilot with questions, peer checks, and deliberate pauses.

REMEMBER...

Familiar hands still need a present mind.



Check Your Focus

We check our PPE.

We check our tools.

We check our surroundings.

But how often do we check where our attention is?

Ask Yourself

- What am I thinking about right now?
- Am I still connected to the step in front of me?
- What changed since I last checked?

Crew Question

What are some early signs that tell you your attention is beginning to drift?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Use a simple focus check before starting, after interruptions, and before critical steps.

REMEMBER...

If your mind has moved, pause your hands.



Reset After an Interruption

Interruptions happen.

A radio call.

A question from another worker.

A missing tool or material.

Another crew entering the area.

The danger is not the interruption itself.

The danger is returning at the wrong step, missing what changed, or assuming we remember exactly where we left off.

Before Restarting

Stop and identify where the task paused.

Recheck the controls and conditions.

Confirm the next step with the crew.

Reposition yourself and your tools.

Discussion

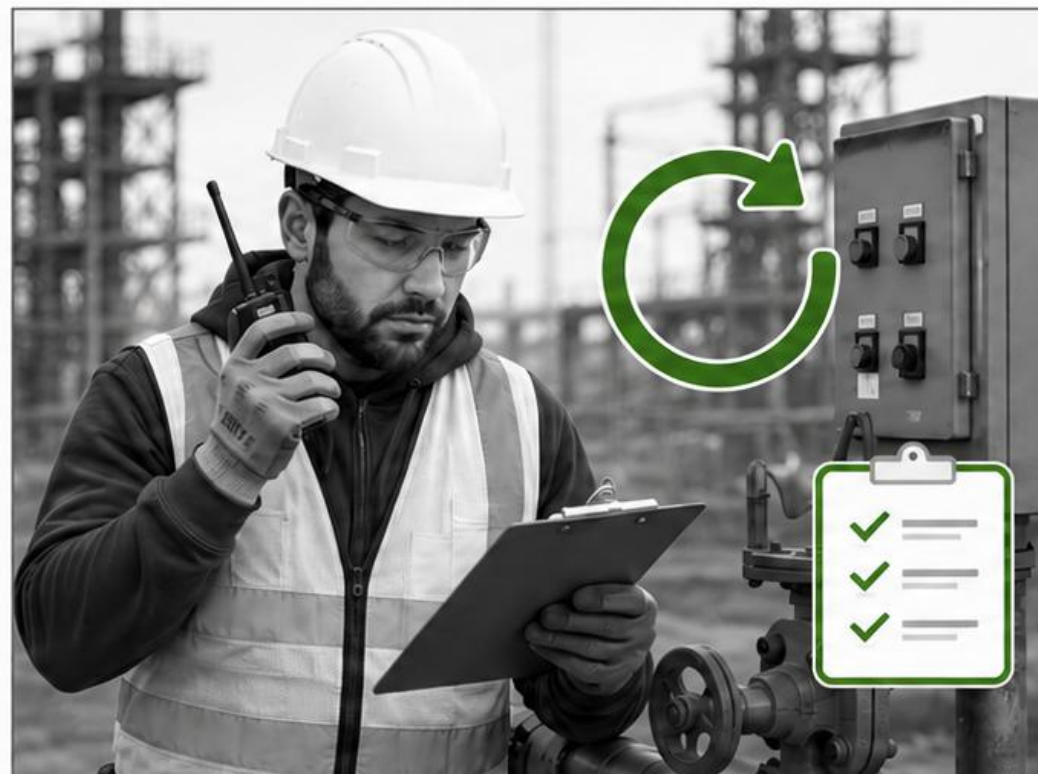
What practical reset can we use after an interruption?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Give workers the time to reset
before expecting the task to restart.

REMEMBER...

Restart the plan—not just the motion.



Help Your Partner Refocus

Focus is not only personal.

We often work close enough to notice when a partner's attention has changed.

They may repeat a question.

Skip a familiar step.

Stare past the task.

Miss information they would normally catch.

A respectful check-in can bring someone back before the task continues.

Try Asking

Are you good to continue?

Where are we in the sequence?

Do we need a quick reset?

Crew Question

How can we help someone refocus without embarrassing or blaming them?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Make refocusing a normal act of care—
not criticism.

REMEMBER...

Looking out for each other
includes attention.



One Task at a Time

Our attention has limits.

When we try to plan the next job, answer a radio, watch nearby movement, and complete the task in front of us, something receives less attention.

Multitasking is often rapid task switching.

Every switch creates a small gap where information, hazards, or the next step can be missed.

Before a critical or hands-on step, choose what deserves your full attention.

Focus Commitments

Finish or secure the current step before switching.

Stop your hands before answering an interruption.

Return to the correct step after the switch.

Ask for help when demands compete.

Ask

What competing demand can we remove from our work today?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Protect crew focus by reducing unnecessary task switching.

REMEMBER...

One task. One step. Full attention.



Strong Focus. Strong Crew.

A focused crew isn't built through luck.

It's built through clear priorities, deliberate resets, and people looking out for one another.

When we protect our own attention, we help everyone else perform more safely.

Discussion

What does a fully focused crew look and sound like on this site?

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Strong crews protect focus together—before work, after interruptions, and during critical steps.

REMEMBER...

Focused workers build focused crews.



Key Takeaways

Review

- Attention can drift without warning.
- Recognize the early signs.
- Pause your hands when your mind moves.
- Reset deliberately after every interruption.
- Help your partner refocus.

Weekly Challenge

Before starting or restarting every task this week, silently ask yourself:

“Where is my attention right now?”

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Review the lesson, reinforce the expectation, and challenge the crew to protect focus during one critical task today.

REMEMBER...

A quick focus check can prevent a lasting consequence.



One Last Thought

Before your hands move...

Before the next step begins...

Before you restart after an interruption...

Take a few seconds to bring your mind back to the task.

You do not need perfect focus all day.

You need to notice when attention moves—and choose to return.

LEADERSHIP TAKEAWAY

Leave your crew with one idea they can carry onto the worksite today: if your mind has moved, pause your hands and reset.

REMEMBER...

Your hands should never get ahead of your mind.



Any Safety Related Cares, Questions, Concerns?

