

Compensate

It may not be possible for an athlete to sprint five miles without stopping, but an athlete in training can. They go to a running track and sprint as fast as they can on the straightaways and then walk the curves. The principle that allows them to complete this workout is called **compensation**. Their bodies recover on the curves so they are able to put out maximum effort on the straightaway.

Most people work all day long and give little thought to compensation for the job demands. As a result, fatigue and discomfort accumulate. And as they do, the ability to put out the same effort decreases and the risk of injury increases.

If a pitcher is tired, his pitches start getting wild and the coach pulls him from the game. On the other hand, if an employee is tired and begins using their body less efficiently, they are not pulled off the job and told to take the rest of the day off. For this reason, it is critical to understand the need to compensate periodically throughout the day.



Effective methods for compensating during the day include:

- Periodic brief stretching.
- Changes in posture.
- Relaxation exercises.

It is not possible for people to stop working whenever they are fatigued, but it is possible for them to take just a few seconds to take a deep breath, perform a brief stretch, or alter their postures for a moment. These simple activities can substantially reduce the accumulation of fatigue and discomfort.

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Talking Notes

POINTS TO REVIEW

1. Our bodies are capable of doing a tremendous amount of work if we compensate for the demands throughout the day.

2. When you are tired, it is harder to do your work, and easier to get injured.

The more fatigued you become, the harder the work becomes and the greater the chance of injury. Compensating can allow your body to function more efficiently and make the work easier by allowing your body to recover from the work demands.

3. A few seconds of compensation goes a long way towards keeping your body healthy.

Periodically changing position or performing brief stretches can be accomplished in seconds. These activities will not slow you down and may improve your performance.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

**1. How do fatigue and discomfort affect your performance during work and recreational activities?
How can we improve this performance?**

2. Are there any jobs where a periodic, brief stretch or change of position is not possible?

3. Why don't people stretch or change posture more frequently?

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