

# Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World by Cal Newport (Piatkus, 2016)

## Summary of Rule 1: Work Deeply chapter

**Goal:** To develop “routines and rituals” to maintain a state of deep concentration so that deep work “becomes a regular and significant part of your daily schedule”. There are six strategies outlined to achieve this.

### Strategy 1 - Decide on your type of depth philosophy



There are different ways of working deeply, dependent on the other demands you have on your time.

- 1. Monastic.** This involves doing deep work almost all the time. It requires working on one’s own or in a small group. It is also important not to have too many demands from clients or colleagues.
- 2. Bimodal.** This involves having clearly defined periods of deep work interspersed with other work. The minimum period is a whole day. The periods of deep work can vary - eg. a 4-day weekend or a whole month - or a combination of different time scales.
- 3. Rhythmic.** This involves having daily sessions of deep work scheduled for a set time each day. It is suitable for people who can’t devote full days to deep work and is the most common approach.
- 4. Journalistic.** This involves deep work being scheduled whenever there is spare time available. It can be planned in advance or done when the opportunity arises. This schedule requires the most discipline.

### Strategy 2 - Ritualise



It’s important to develop rituals that facilitate deep work by reducing the need for decisions and making productive actions automatic.

Here are some questions that need to be answered:

- your location and how long?
- your rules for working? eg. will you stop using the internet at work?
- what resources do you need eg. Coffee, room organisation, pens.

Finding the right rituals will need experimentation.

### Strategy 3 - Make grand gestures



A big change to your normal place of work indicates serious commitment to your brain. JK Rowling has written in a hotel suite and Bill Gates has gone away for a week of deep thinking in a secluded cabin.

### Strategy 4 - Don’t work alone



The theory of serendipitous creativity suggests that chance encounters with people can stimulate new ideas and collaborations. In addition, working with a colleague can help deep work.

### Strategy 5 - Execute like a business



It is important to (i) have ambitious goals, (ii) decide on measures that will help you reach them, (iii) record these measures on a public scorecard and (iv) have a weekly review of progress and plan for the week ahead.

### Strategy 6 - Be lazy



next day.

Having downtime is critical because it stimulates insights and recharges batteries. It’s important to have evenings free of work concerns . Critical to this is having an evening shutdown ritual which involves recording incomplete issues and planning for the