

The right to disconnect: Making it work for your team

Adaptive module

~20 min

Eleven European countries and Australia have put the right to disconnect into law: the issue is no longer one of individual comfort. One study adds a telling fact: the most exhausting part isn't replying in the evening but staying on alert, ready to reply. This module protects three windows (evenings, time off, and daytime focus blocks) and makes disconnecting part of the team culture, led by the manager.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 01 Understand what makes disconnecting difficult (internal and external pressure, remote work, culture, notifications) and what it costs.
- 02 Protect evenings and time off with closing rituals, following the example of pioneering organizations.
- 03 Negotiate daytime blocks for deep work, announced to the team, for better work quality and less mental fatigue.
- 04 Build a team culture of disconnecting: scheduled send, permission not to reply, respected time off, a team pact, and an end-of-day check-out.

WHO IT'S FOR

Committed people who want to protect their evenings, time off, and focus, and managers who set the tone.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

- 1 **Self-assessment:** on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
- 2 **Expert video:** 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
- 3 **Practice scenarios:** the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
- 4 **Dated commitment:** one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
- 5 **Memo to download:** key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

A SAMPLE PRACTICE SCENARIO

At 10:10 p.m., the manager of Élodie, a communications officer, writes to her that the second paragraph of the press release needs reworking. The manager gives no deadline; the press release goes out on Thursday, in two days. Élodie finished her day three hours ago. What does Élodie do with this message?

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Deep work – concept popularized by Cal Newport
- Three windows to protect for disconnecting – Afthonios method
- Team pact / end-of-day check-out – Afthonios method

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Gallup – “State of the Global Workplace”: 41% of employees report significant stress every day, with managers particularly at risk of burnout
- Australia – right to disconnect law (Fair Work Legislation Amendment), in force since August 2024 for large companies
- Eurofound – in the first half of 2024, eleven EU member states had regulations on the right to disconnect
- Volkswagen – email server switched off for non-management employees between 6:15 p.m. and 7 a.m.