## **Body Doubling**

## **What is it?**

## A productivity strategy focused on having someone present with you to help you stay focused and accountable to the task you attend to.

This strategy has also been referred to as “leveraging others” and “motivation contagion”.

**How can it help?**

**(1) There’s social or peer pressure.**

It doesn’t always have to be a bad thing! When there are people around you working, it acts as a nudge or encouragement to do so, as well. For once, the desire to fit in can work in our favor.

**(2) Having a set time to meet up and body double with someone can act as an implementation intention** or an “if…then…” statement about a task you want to complete.

Just creating an implementation intention for a task or habit has been shown to more than double the chance you’ll actually do it. But combined with the other factors that make doubling effective, it becomes even more powerful.

**(3) It can also help you get focused again if you do get distracted.**

A common body double ritual is telling each other what you’re working on. So, if you end up getting distracted and forgetting, there’s someone right there to remind you and encourage you to get back to it.

**(4) It can just make boring work more fun**

Which means you’re more likely to actually do it, you’re more likely to be in a good mood afterwards, and all those other benefits of fun.

**(5) It can also be amazing for motivation and your confidence in your work**, if you and your body double make sure to support and encourage each other. That encouraging outside voice can help combat the negative self-talk we tend to run on replay in our heads.

**(6) It can lead to casual collaboration.** If they’re knowledgeable enough about what you’re working on, you can ask for their advice or feedback. Even if they’re not, if you get stuck somewhere, you can “talk it out to them.” This is commonly known as “rubber ducking.” Sometimes you just need to talk “at” someone for a bit to arrive at the solution on your own.

**Potential Downsides to Consider**

* **Logistics.** If you work at odd hours, are in a different time zone than your coworkers or peers, or have an unpredictable schedule, arranging times to meet with your body double can get complicated.
* **Distraction.** Of course, your body double is only human, just like you. While the goal is to help each other focus, sometimes you can end up distracting each other too.
* **Pressure.** While it's designed to add just a bit of social pressure, for those of us with social anxiety, it can end up being too much to focus on work.

Ultimately, there’s no harm in trying it out a few times to see if it works for you.

**You may need to make some adjustments to how or when you do it or who you body double with before you get into the right groove.**

**How to Get Started**

While these are good guidelines, feel free to adapt it to what works for you and your accountability partner.

1. **Find a body double** -
2. **Start with people you already know.**

You can see if any friends, roommates, classmates or family members are interested in body doubling

1. **Look to the YSU community.**

Attend tutoring/review sessions/study groups, Study Tables, Learning Communities

**(c) The internet**

There are multiple options for virtual body doubling too, from video calls, “study with me” YouTube videos, and accountability sessions inside larger online memberships

1. **Agree on a time to body double with your partner.** Try doing it for an hour at first, and you can make your sessions longer or shorter as needed.
2. **Set some ground rules,** like whether you'll take breaks (the Pomodoro technique is helpful here), if you'll have background noise, if you'll talk to each other, and whether you should call each other out if you notice each other going off-track.
3. **Choose a specific task or activity** you want to focus on during the body doubling session. Sharing it with your body doubling partner can help increase accountability even more.
4. **Get started.** It can be helpful to have lofi or [focus music](https://workbrighter.co/brain-fm/) playing or a Pomodoro timer in sight.
5. **Take breaks** as needed.
6. **Celebrate any progress you made** before ending the session to help boost your motivation and mood.

This resource was adapted from <https://workbrighter.co/body-doubling/>