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## *Leave your phone outside*

How effective is a meeting interrupted by constant beeping, with its participants nervously glancing at their mobile phones or even unabashedly communicating with someone outside of the conference room? The growing trend of mobile distractions is contributing to a general dissatisfaction at workplaces.

– It is a relatively new phenomenon, which is why most organisations still lack clear rules regarding mobile phone use, Margareta Ivarsson explains.

Ivarsson, a consultant, author, and long-standing partner of Hanken Executive Education Vaasa, held an afternoon seminar in March, during which participants reflected on the benefits of sometimes working offline.

Ivarsson bases her offline advice on the concept of workfulness, which the telecom operator Telenor developed together with brain researcher Katarina Gospic.

Though Ivarsson endorses an effective approach, she explains that “the phone is like candy for the brain; it feeds us quick rewards and helps us avoid difficult things.” For a traditional meeting, she recommends that phones be left outside the conference room.

– Every time a phone vibrates, it steals away the concentration of everyone in the room.