

Put Yourself Where the Opportunities Are

Giving Your Attention More to Find

Getting clear on what you want changes what your attention notices, but that shift has one hard limit. Your brain can only flag what actually reaches your senses, so if the thing you are looking for never crosses your path, no amount of clarity will bring it into view. Most people spend their days in the same rooms, with the same people, reading the same feeds, which means their attention keeps sorting through the same small pile of possibilities.

This report is about making that pile bigger. The nine tips that follow show you how to put more of the world in front of your attention, from telling the right people what you are after to cutting the noise that crowds out useful signals. None of them take much time, and most can be started this week.

Tip 1: Tell People What You Are Looking For

Your own attention is one scanner, but every person who knows what you want becomes another one working on your behalf. Friends, coworkers, and acquaintances encounter things you never will, and they can only pass along what they know you care about. Pick three people this week and mention, in plain terms, the specific thing you are hoping to find, then ask them to keep an ear out.

Tip 2: Break One Routine a Week

Routines are efficient because they show you the same things every day, and that is exactly what makes them poor at surfacing anything new. A different route, a different coffee shop, or a different lunch spot puts fresh people and details within reach of your attention. Choose one small routine each week and change it on purpose, then note anything you encounter that you would otherwise have missed.

Tip 3: Go to Rooms Where It Gets Discussed

Opportunities cluster in places where people talk about them, whether that is a trade meetup, a hobby group, a class, or an online community. Showing up in those rooms means relevant conversations happen within earshot instead of somewhere you will never hear about. Find one gathering connected to what you want, in person or online, and attend it at least twice before deciding whether it is worth your time.

Tip 4: Ask Better Questions in Ordinary Conversations

Small talk usually stays on the surface, so it rarely turns up anything useful. A question like "What are you working on lately?" or "How did you find that?" invites people to share details that your attention can actually catch. In your next few casual conversations, replace one throwaway question with an open one, and listen closely for anything that connects to your goal.

Tip 5: Follow Up on Weak Connections

The people you see every day tend to know the same things you do, while people on the edges of your circle move through entirely different worlds. A former colleague, a neighbor you chat with occasionally, or a friend of a friend can open doors your close circle cannot. Send a short, friendly message to two people you have lost touch with, asking what they have been up to lately.

Tip 6: Cut One Input That Crowds Your Attention

Your attention has limited room, and endless feeds, notifications, and background noise take up space that could go toward noticing something useful. When every spare minute is filled with scrolling, the real openings in your day have nowhere to land. Identify one input that eats time without giving much back, such as a particular app or alert, and remove or mute it for the next two weeks.

Tip 7: Read Outside Your Usual Sources

If you only read what your usual sites and feeds serve up, you keep meeting the same ideas and the same kinds of opportunities. Material from a different industry, region, or point of view brings in possibilities your regular sources would never show you. Once a week, read one article, newsletter, or book chapter from a source you would not normally pick, and jot down anything that sparks an idea.

Tip 8: Say Yes to Small Invitations

Many openings arrive disguised as minor, slightly inconvenient invitations: a coffee, a last-minute event, or a request to help with something outside your usual lane. Declining by default keeps life comfortable, but it also closes off situations your attention never gets a chance to scan. For the next month, say yes to at least one small invitation you would normally turn down, and treat it as an experiment rather than a commitment.

Tip 9: Stay Visible Where Your Target Lives

Being present in the right places only helps if people there actually notice you and remember what you do. Visibility turns you from a quiet observer into someone others think of when a relevant opportunity comes up. Share what you are working on in the groups and spaces tied to your goal, whether through a helpful comment, a short post, or simply introducing yourself to the organizer.

Key Insight

Clarity tells your attention what to look for, but it can only search what is in front of it. Widen where you go, who you talk to, and what you read, and you give your attention far more to find.

Fast Action Steps

These two actions are the quickest way to start expanding what reaches you. Each one takes only a few minutes to begin.

Action 1: Tell Three People

Write down one specific thing you are hoping to find, then choose three people from different parts of your life to share it with this week. The wider the spread of people you tell, the more ground your extra scanners will cover.

Who are the three people you will tell, and what exactly will you ask them to watch for?

Action 2: Pick One Room to Enter

Find one group, event, or community connected to what you want, and put the next meeting or visit on your calendar now. Committing to a date is what turns a good intention into real exposure.

What room will you enter, and on what date will you first show up?

Recommended Reading

These books offer deeper perspective on building connections, widening your exposure, and making room for useful chance encounters.

Recommended reading:

- The Luck Factor by Richard Wiseman
- Never Eat Alone by Keith Ferrazzi
- Friend of a Friend by David Burkus
- The Start-Up of You by Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha
- Range by David Epstein
- Show Your Work! by Austin Kleon
- Indistractable by Nir Eyal

Next Step

Pick one tip from this report and put it into practice before the week is out. The more places your attention can search, the more it will find, and the more chances you will have to act on what turns up.

Seeing It Everywhere

A Simple Experiment That Proves Your Attention Decides What Shows Up

About This Worksheet

Your brain does not show you everything around you. It lets a thin slice through and screens out the rest, and it decides what gets through based on what you have marked as important. That idea is easy to nod along to and just as easy to doubt, so this worksheet asks you to test it instead. Over three ordinary days you will collect your own evidence, and by the end your notes will tell you whether the world changed or your attention did.

Nothing here requires you to believe anything in advance. Answer honestly, count honestly, and write in your own words. There are no right answers, and a result that surprises you is just as useful as one that confirms what you expected.

Exercise 1 takes a few minutes. Exercise 2 runs quietly in the background of your normal routine for three days, so start it when you have a few regular days ahead of you.

Exercise 1: You Have Seen This Before

You have almost certainly run this experiment before without meaning to. Start by recalling times something seemed to show up everywhere right after it started to matter to you.

Objective

Identify real moments from your own life when something seemed to multiply as soon as you started paying attention to it.

Instructions

Think back over the last few years. Common examples include a car you were thinking of buying, a word you had just learned, strollers once a baby was on the way, or a product a friend had just recommended. Use one row per memory, and answer the last column honestly.

What You Started Caring About	What Suddenly Seemed Everywhere	Was There Actually More of It?

Before you knew why this happens, you probably had some explanation for it.

Your answer: How did you explain it to yourself at the time?

Exercise 2: The Three-Day Count

Now run the effect on purpose, using a target so ordinary that nothing about it could be drawn toward you.

Objective

Measure the gap between how often you think you encounter something and how often you actually do once you are looking for it.

Instructions

Pick one target from the list below, or something equally ordinary that you could pass on a normal day. Choose quickly, then write your estimate before you start looking around.

- A specific car color, such as yellow or bright green
- A particular dog breed
- A company logo you rarely think about
- A handwritten or hand-painted sign

Record your target and your honest guess below.

My target: _____

Sightings I think I had in the past three days: _____

Now count. Keep a running tally on your phone or a scrap of paper, and fill in each row at the end of the day.

Day	Where You Were	Sightings
Day 1		
Day 2		
Day 3		

Exercise 3: Read Your Results

Your numbers are in. Put them side by side and look at what they actually show.

Objective

Decide, based on your own evidence, what changed during the three days: the world or your attention.

Instructions

Add up your three daily counts and write the total next to your estimate. Then check only the statements that are honestly true of your experience.

My estimate: _____

My three-day total: _____

- ☐ I counted more than I estimated
- ☐ It felt as though my target had suddenly become more common
- ☐ My target was almost certainly there before I started counting
- ☐ My counting did not add a single new one to the world

If your total beat your guess, nothing around you increased. Your attention did that work, and the same screening is running right now on things you never chose to look for.

Reflection: What else might your attention be screening out of an ordinary day?

You Are Done: What Comes Next

You have now watched the effect twice: once by accident in your own memories, and once on purpose with a target you picked almost at random. Nothing you counted was created by your counting. It was already there, and your attention let it through the moment you told it to. These pages are yours to keep, and you can rerun the count with a new target whenever you like.

- ☐ I recalled at least two times something seemed to be everywhere
- ☐ I wrote my estimate before I started counting
- ☐ I counted my target for three full days
- ☐ I compared my estimate with my actual total
- ☐ I can explain in my own words why the count changed

Next Step

You just aimed your attention at something meaningless and watched it work. Manifestation for Skeptics shows you how to aim the same mechanism at something you actually want, and what to do when it starts showing up.