



A Checklist for Taming Office Interruptions

- ☐ Your **colleagues in the office have been made aware** of the serious consequences that interruptions have for productivity.
- ☐ Your office has established **physical no-interruption zones**, such as a dedicated physical space or an agreement to respect time blocked out on calendars as “no interruption.”
- ☐ Your office has agreed upon **visual signals** that indicate when you are not to be disturbed.
- ☐ You have checklists that describe **critical but easily overlooked tasks** for work processes that are prone to interruption.
- ☐ You have **organized your workspace** to make it easier to pick a task back up after being interrupted (“5S” is a common and powerful tool for this).
- ☐ You have **adjusted the settings on your electronic devices and apps** to eliminate cues (beeps, lights, icons, etc.) to engage in low- or no-value activities.
- ☐ You have found ways to make **using your devices and/or apps slightly more difficult**—just enough that checking them is no longer habitual but now takes conscious effort.
- ☐ You have **created opportunities for the necessary occasional diversions** from work that have less potential to degenerate into long periods spent on unproductive apps. Examples might be keeping an enjoyable book or magazine nearby.