



REDUCING THE IMPACT OF THOSE INEVITABLE INTERRUPTIONS!

A Single 60-minute Webinar

1) **Which of the following interruptions negatively impact your work on a day-to-day basis?**

- _____ "Visitors" to your workspace
- _____ Phone calls – including cell phone/text messaging
- _____ Chitchat
- _____ Email including IM
- _____ Disorganized work area – always looking for something. Find and use a system that works for you – at least for priority items.
- _____ Putting out fires – why are there so many fires? Can someone else handle some? Would additional training help? Are some "fires" repetitive?
- _____ Social networking – how much is really work-related?
- _____ Surfing – for work?
- _____ Trying to remember things – keep notes in a spiral notebook.
- _____ Carelessness – record your time wasted due to carelessness and in what areas you tend to be careless. Tackle one area to focus on "being in the moment" when you are working in that area.
- _____ Failure to listen – practice listening skills by summarizing and repeating what someone says to you.
- _____ Procrastination – work backward.
- _____ _____

2) Keep a _____ to discover your real problem areas.

3) Always consider whether you are using the interruption as an _____ to stop what you are doing. Which of ***your interruptions*** do you use as an excuse to stop what you're doing?

IN PERSON:

- _____ Determine if the interruption is unnecessary or necessary, but untimely.
- _____ If necessary, but untimely, suggest a later meeting and give time limits.
- _____ Ask at the beginning why someone has come to see you.
- _____ Stand when they enter the room.
- _____ To avoid your visitor becoming too comfortable, suggest a meeting in their office.
- _____ Avoid, or at least limit, chitchat.
- _____ Get up and leave!
- _____ Make sure your chairs aren't too comfortable.
- _____ Check your watch or the wall clock.
- _____ Raise the flag ~ consider an internal signal system to let others know when you need uninterrupted time.

ON THE PHONE:

- _____ Stand during the phone call.
- _____ Have an agenda when you make a call.
- _____ Don't prop your feet up or get "real comfortable."
- _____ Have something in front of you that needs to be done.
- _____ Always have a pen and paper ready.
- _____ Make an appointment to return calls when possible.

COMMENTS/ACTIONS YOU CAN USE ON THE PHONE OR IN PERSON:

- _____ "I'm in the middle of something right now – can I get back to you at ...?"
- _____ Begin with "I have about 5 minutes before I..."
- _____ In the middle of a conversation that has gotten off track: "You were saying..." or "Now what was that you mentioned about..."

EMAIL:

- _____ Turn off the incoming-mail alert. YIKES!!!
- _____ Schedule specific times to deal with your email – preferably no more than 3-4 times per day.
- _____ Keep your email files uncluttered. Spend a few minutes at the end of every day to clear/delete/file unnecessary emails; handle any "at once" emails by the end of each day.

I will reduce the impact of interruptions by: _____
