

Managing Your Interruptions: It's Easier Than You Think!

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Foundation of Learning

- Share your experiences. They provide valuable insight.
- If you are doing something that gets the results you want, keep doing it.
- Take the information you learn here and put it into your own style.



Goals and Objectives

- Determining the Nature of the Interruption
- Taking Control of your Interruptions
- Owning your interruptions
- Techniques to Help You!!
- Establishing conditional interruptions
- Are YOU the cause of your own interruptions?
- Other Interrupters to Consider

Polling Question #1

I am interrupted at least 5 times per hour (on average) when I'm at work.

Yes

No



Polling Question #2

I have made a conscious effort to minimize my interruptions.

Yes

No



Polling Question #3

Often I am interrupted by someone with "an emergency" that needs to be handled NOW!

Yes

No



Polling Question #4

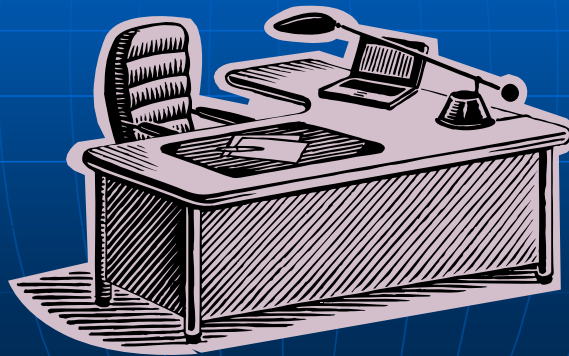
If I could turn off my computer, quite a few of my interruptions would go away.

Yes

No



Determining the Nature of the Interruption



Taking Control of Your Interruptions

1. Non-work calls to your cell phone
2. Co-workers or patrons stopping to *"chat"*
3. People coming into your office or to your desk



Taking Control of Your Interruptions

Here are some suggestions:

- Be honest
- Use verbal tactics and body language
- Place a clock strategically behind you
- Practice the "slow stroll"



Handling e-mails or instant messaging

One of the Top 3 Interruptions!

- Unless you need to regularly check e-mail in order to manage the tasks you're working on, I suggest checking it no more than 3 times a day
- Completely process your Inbox at the end of the day
- Keep your instant messaging turned off unless you use it in your work

Working on Multiple Projects

- Studies have shown that multi-tasking is actually counterproductive. Key in on one project at a time. You'll be more effective at getting it done in less time, and you'll do a better job on it. Your mental and creative energy will be focused and not distracted by what the other tasks may be demanding.

Also, the sense of accomplishment from completing one task will energize you for the next project.

Own Your Interruptions



Grade your interruptions
Create do-not-disturb time
Use a post-it note wisely
Plan for interruptions
Stop the interrupter

Techniques to Help You!!

- 1.Task-charting include Gantt and Pert Charts
- 2.Pareto Analysis
- 3.Force Field Analysis



Techniques to Help You!!

- Posting your schedule + discussing this with your peers can help eliminate up to 80% of the interruptions that you actually can avoid.
- Use an understood signal to limit interruptions
- If several people in your library are having problems with drop-in visitors, agree on a signal that says "Please don't interrupt unless it's an emergency."

The Open Door Policy



Establish conditional interruptions

For example

- Type 1 Issues
- Type 2 Issues
- Type 3 Issues
- Type 4 Issues



OK...I'm brave enough to ask...Are YOU the cause of your own interruptions?

Are you using interruptions as an excuse to avoid your work?

Do you start another project before completing the first?

Do you procrastinate?

Are you distracted?

For Managers to Consider



Other Interrupters to Consider

- Set Yourself up for Success
- Don't Worry About Hurt Feelings
- Stop Before They Start
- Define "Emergency"



Other Interrupters to Consider

- Are You the Best Choice?
- Stand Up
- Keep a Log
- The Internet



Other Interrupters to Consider

- Other projects
- Idea Flash
- Messy office
- Hunger, need cigarette, bathroom



Final Thought!

Remember that no one can interrupt you without some permission on your part. Think about that. The idea is to take control, be pro-active and pre-empt those interruptions ahead of time! Stop regarding your personal time as an endless source of "make-up" time or you will end up without much of a life!

Thanks for Attending

Training with Andrew at Your Cooperative!

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