

Managing Interruptions at Work

For some people, a two-minute interruption can create a much longer restart cost.

1

THE INTERRUPTION

Message, phone call, colleague, alert or unexpected task breaks concentration.

2

CONTEXT IS LOST

The brain has to hold where the task was, what came next and what information mattered.

3

RESTART COST

Returning may involve rereading, reconstructing decisions or finding the previous train of thought.

4

ERROR RISK

Repeated switching can increase omissions, duplicated work and unfinished actions.

5

PROTECT FOCUS

Use focus blocks, visible availability signals or quieter work periods where possible.

6

BATCH DEMANDS

Grouping emails, calls or admin can reduce constant cognitive switching.

TAKEAWAY

Reducing unnecessary interruptions is not about avoiding teamwork - it is about designing concentration time into the working day.