Understanding Workplace Interruptions

Notice the interruptions that occur during your working day and how they affect your focus.

What interrupts my working day?

- [ ] Unexpected conversations
- [ ] Email notifications
- [ ] Phone calls or messages
- [ ] Unplanned meetings
- [ ] Last-minute requests
- [ ] Background conversations
- [ ] Switching between tasks
- [ ] Other interruptions

Which interruptions happen most often?

Which interruptions are hardest to manage, and why?

Interruptions can be part of teamwork. The aim is to understand which demands need an immediate response and which can wait.

Recognising the Impact of Interruptions

Consider what happens when your attention is pulled away from a task.

What might I notice after an interruption?

- [ ] Losing my place in a task
- [ ] Forgetting what I was doing
- [ ] Taking time to restart
- [ ] Missing important details
- [ ] Feeling mentally tired
- [ ] Making avoidable mistakes
- [ ] Feeling rushed or overwhelmed
- [ ] Needing to repeat work

How do interruptions affect my work or wellbeing?

Which tasks are most affected by interruptions?

Restarting a task can take time, particularly when it involves several steps or information held in working memory.

Understanding My Focus Needs

Identify the conditions that make it easier to concentrate and return to tasks.

What helps me stay focused?

- [ ] Quiet working areas
- [ ] Predictable routines
- [ ] Fewer digital notifications
- [ ] Short movement breaks
- [ ] Clear written instructions
- [ ] Planned focus periods
- [ ] A visible task list
- [ ] Agreed contact methods

Which parts of my work need the most uninterrupted time?

What would an easier-to-manage working day look like?

Focus needs vary. A useful strategy is one that fits both your working style and the practical needs of your role.

Developing Practical Strategies

Connect common interruptions with realistic ways to protect focus.

My interruption strategies

Interruption or difficulty	Strategy that might help	How I could use it

Which strategy could I try first?

My Workplace Focus Plan

Use this page as a practical summary for yourself or a workplace conversation.

My most common interruptions

Tasks that need protected focus

Strategies that help me concentrate

How colleagues can contact me

What helps me return to a task

What to do when something is urgent

Reviewing My Focus Strategies

Reflect on what is helping, what remains difficult and what you could try next.

Which strategies have helped me manage interruptions?

Which interruptions remain difficult?

Have I noticed changes in my concentration or workload?

What additional support or adjustments might help?

What would I like to try or discuss next?

Managing interruptions is a shared workplace responsibility.