



Where Did the Day Go?

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You arrive at your office. You sit down at your desk. You're ready to work. Your goal today is to complete your project. You pull out the paperwork for the project while your computer powers up. You see the voicemail light blinking on your phone. You listen to your messages, and you have three requests for information. As you listen, you see that your email Inbox has ten new emails. You scan the messages and note that nine can wait. One will only take a few minutes, so you take care of it and get it off your plate. **Twenty minutes later** you are ready to start the project you had planned to work on first thing today.

As you continue to gather the information together, you think: Before I start this project, I'll quickly return those voicemail message, then I'll get to my project. After retrieving the information and making the phone calls, **15 minutes** have passed. Now you can get down to your project. Your first thought is: Now, do I have all the information? Yes (**5 minutes later**), and you work on your project for **forty-five minutes** until an urgent email catches your attention. You think: It will only take a few minutes to answer, then I'll get back to my project. **Ten minutes later**, the urgent (but not necessarily important) email is taken care of, and you return to your project: Now, where was I? **More minutes** pass before you are completely focused on the project.

An **hour** passes when someone stops by with a request. You stop working on your project, because the request is small and will only take a few minutes. **Fifteen minutes later** and you return to your project: Where did I leave off? **Five minutes** pass as you dig out the newly buried file, review where you left off, and start working. An **hour** later, and it's time for lunch.

You return from lunch. There are more emails and voicemails. It's **half an hour** already into the afternoon, and you haven't picked up the project yet. You finally get those interruptions out of the way. Again: Now where was I? A **few more minutes** to collect your thoughts on where you left off, and you are on your way to finally completing the project.

An **hour later** and the mail is dropped on your desk. A **few minutes** to look through the pile, and you can get back to work. There's just one thing in the mail you need to take care of, and it will only take a few minutes. **Ten minutes later** and the item is sorted out. Returning to the project: Now where was I? A **few more minutes** to gather your thoughts and notes and you are off and running again.

Half an hour later and you get interrupted when the phone rings. Just a **couple of minutes** to answer and handle the request. A **few more minutes** to get back on track. **Twenty minutes** later someone stops by your office with another request. You'll take care of it tomorrow. You really need to finish the project. A **few more minutes** gets you back to where you left off with the project.

Suddenly, it's the end of the day. Where did the day go? You had the best intentions but are still not finished with your project. Does this sound like a typical day for you?

"A few more minutes" adds up. The average executive loses 150 hours per year to interruptions. If you lose only 15 minutes per day (much less than the average) at a salary of \$50 per hour, your cost is \$3,250 per year. If you multiply that by the number of employees you have, what is the cost to your company? This figure does not include the cost of lost opportunities or clients.

You need a system that allows you to handle all those interruptions and keeps you on track. Your effectiveness is related to working on important items, not just urgent items. An effective system keeps you focused, so you don't lose precious minutes or opportunities and helps you attain long-term growth and job satisfaction.

**Be rewarded with more free time and
REAL accomplishments
that help grow your business.**

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