

The Power of Focus

Protect time for your most essential work

June 12, 2025

Prepared for: NALP

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Speaker, Author & Founding President





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Does multitasking work?

Yes

0%

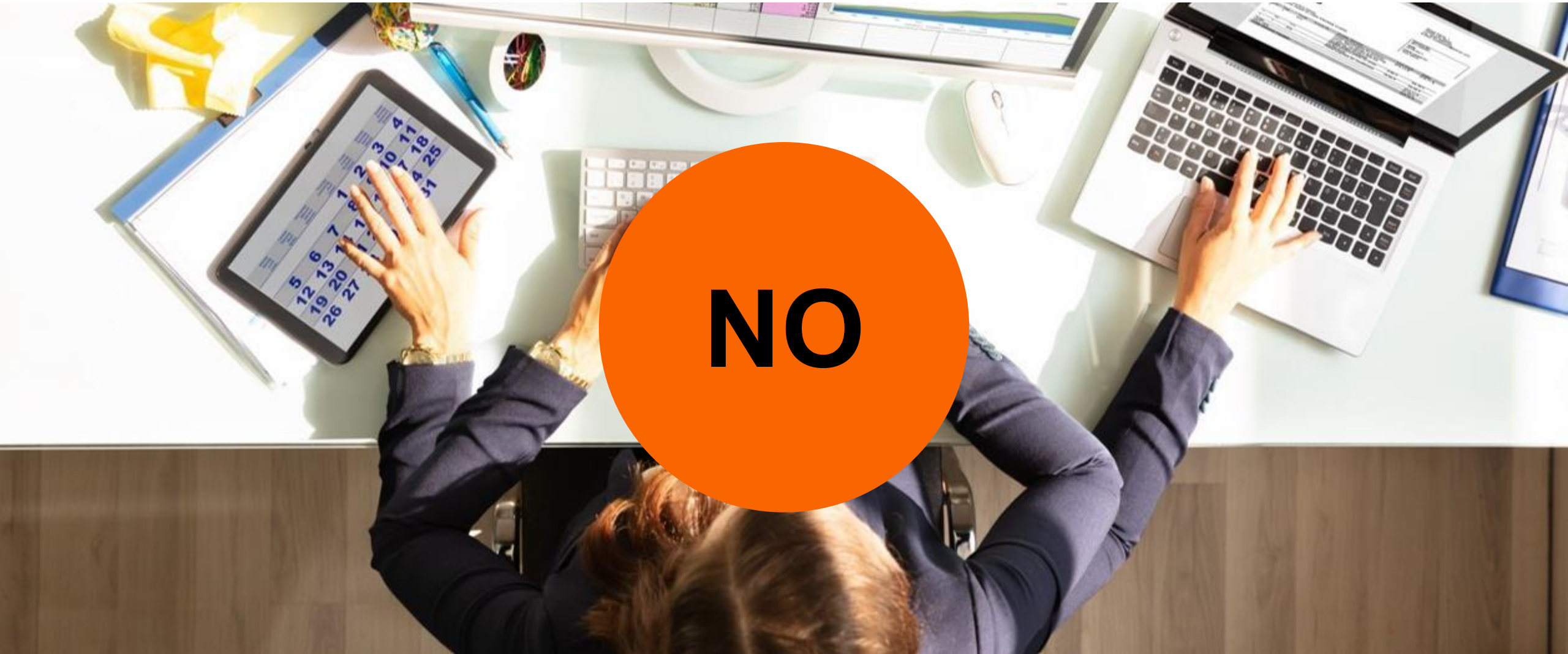
No

0%

Yes, but only when one task can be done on autopilot

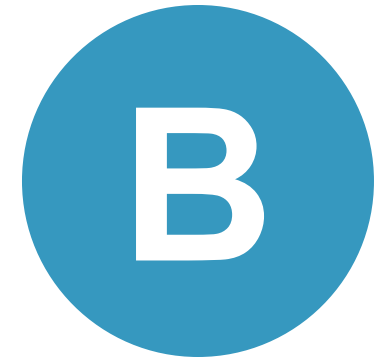
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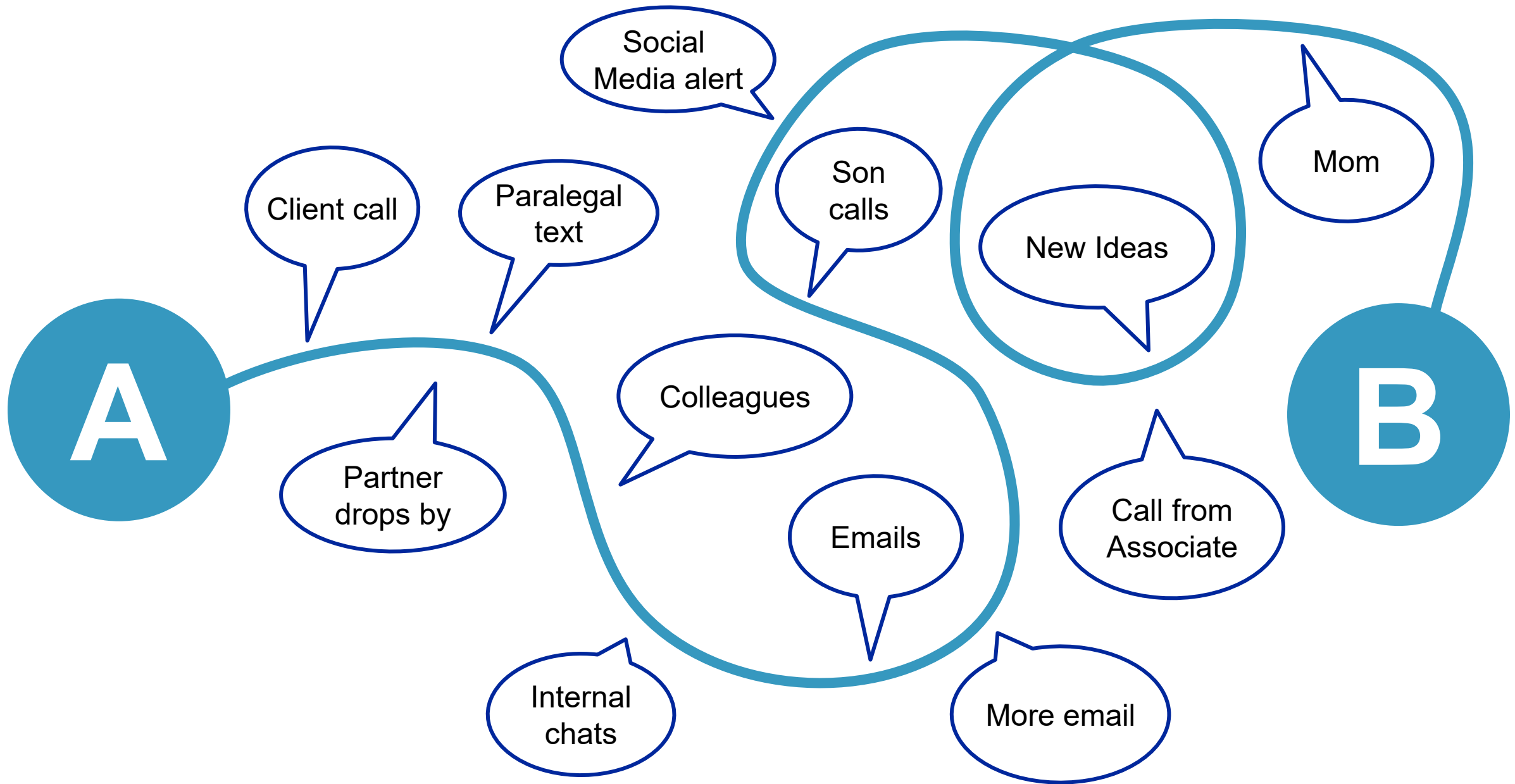
Does multitasking work?





The shortest distance between two points is a straight line.





How frequently is your focus interrupted?

All the time.

0%

Every few minutes

0%

A few times an hour

0%

A few times a day

0%

Rarely

0%

W O R K D A Y W A R R I O R

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Exercise adapted from The Myth of Multitasking by Dave Crenshaw

W O R K D A Y W A R R I O R

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Exercise adapted from The Myth of Multitasking by Dave Crenshaw

Focusing beats multitasking



Faster

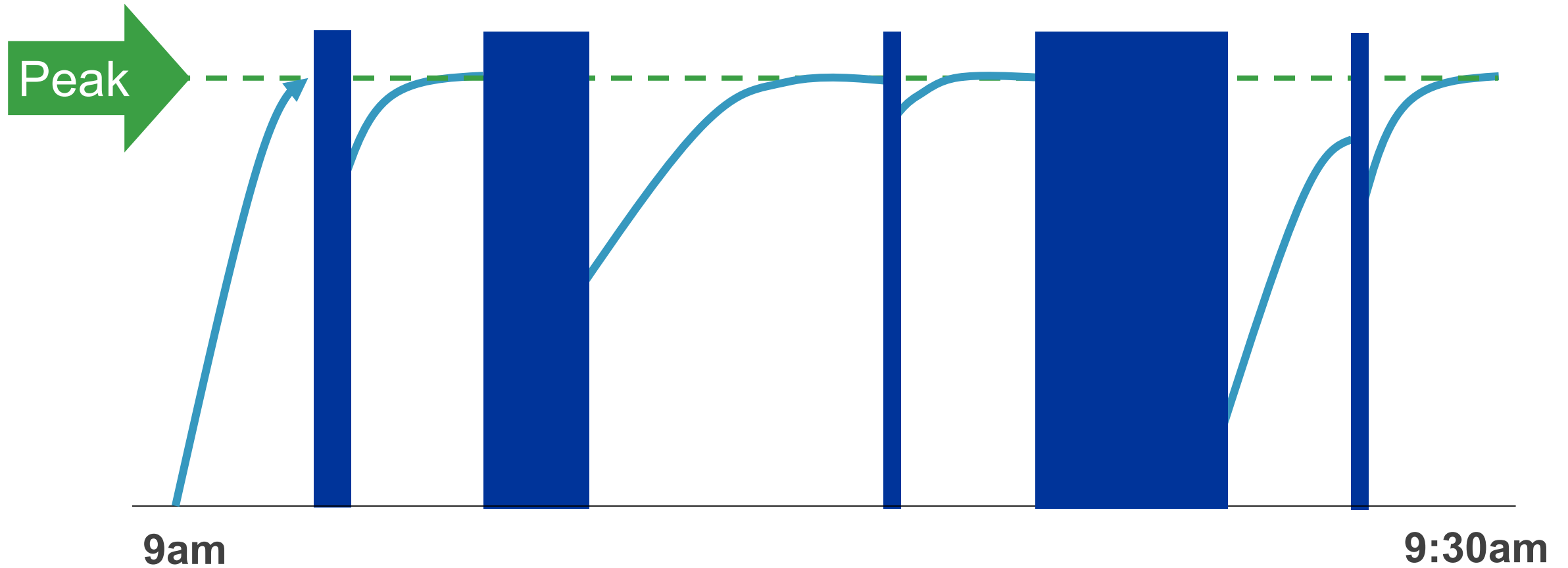


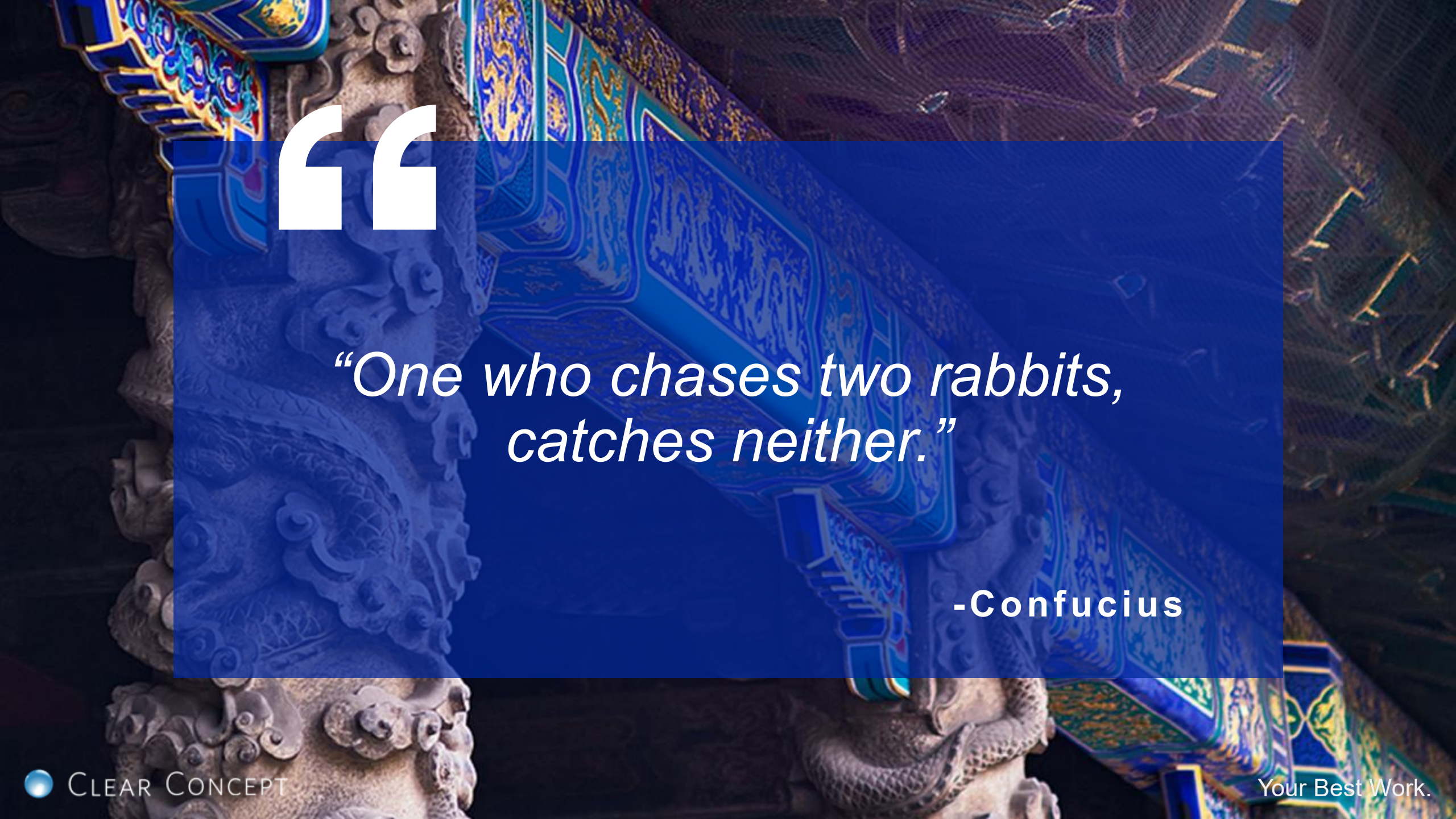
Better



Easier

Every 1-2 minutes

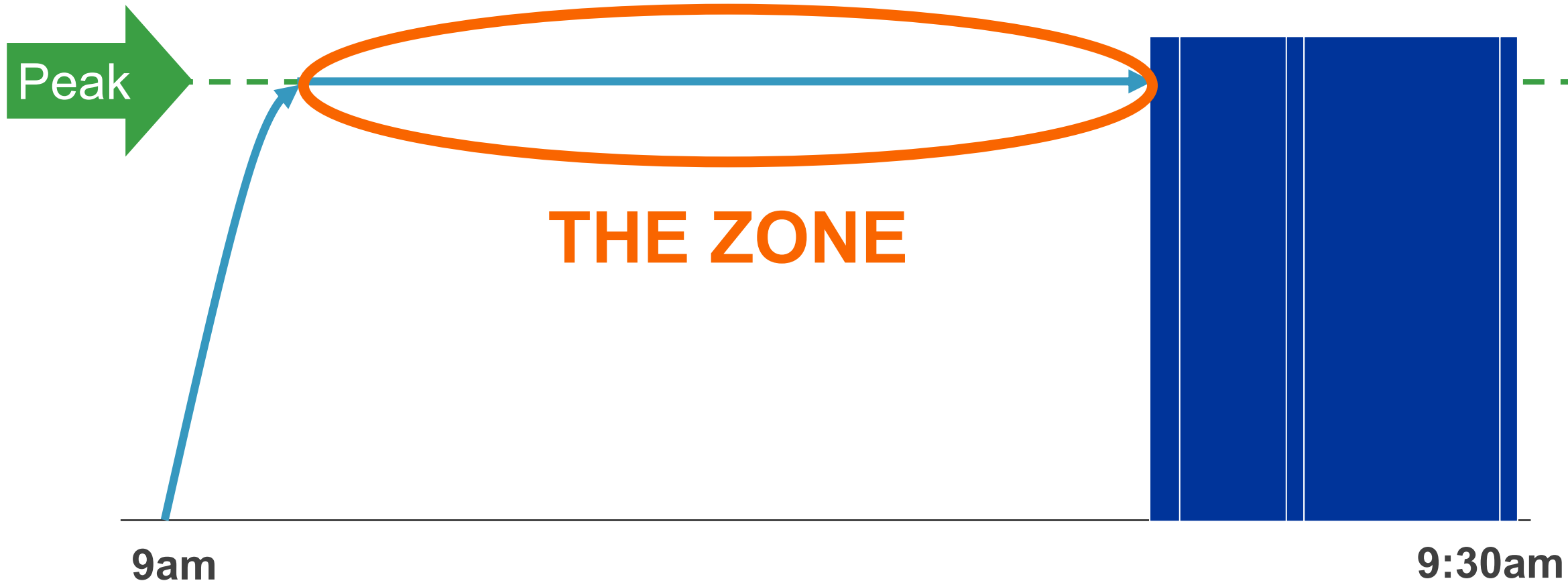




“

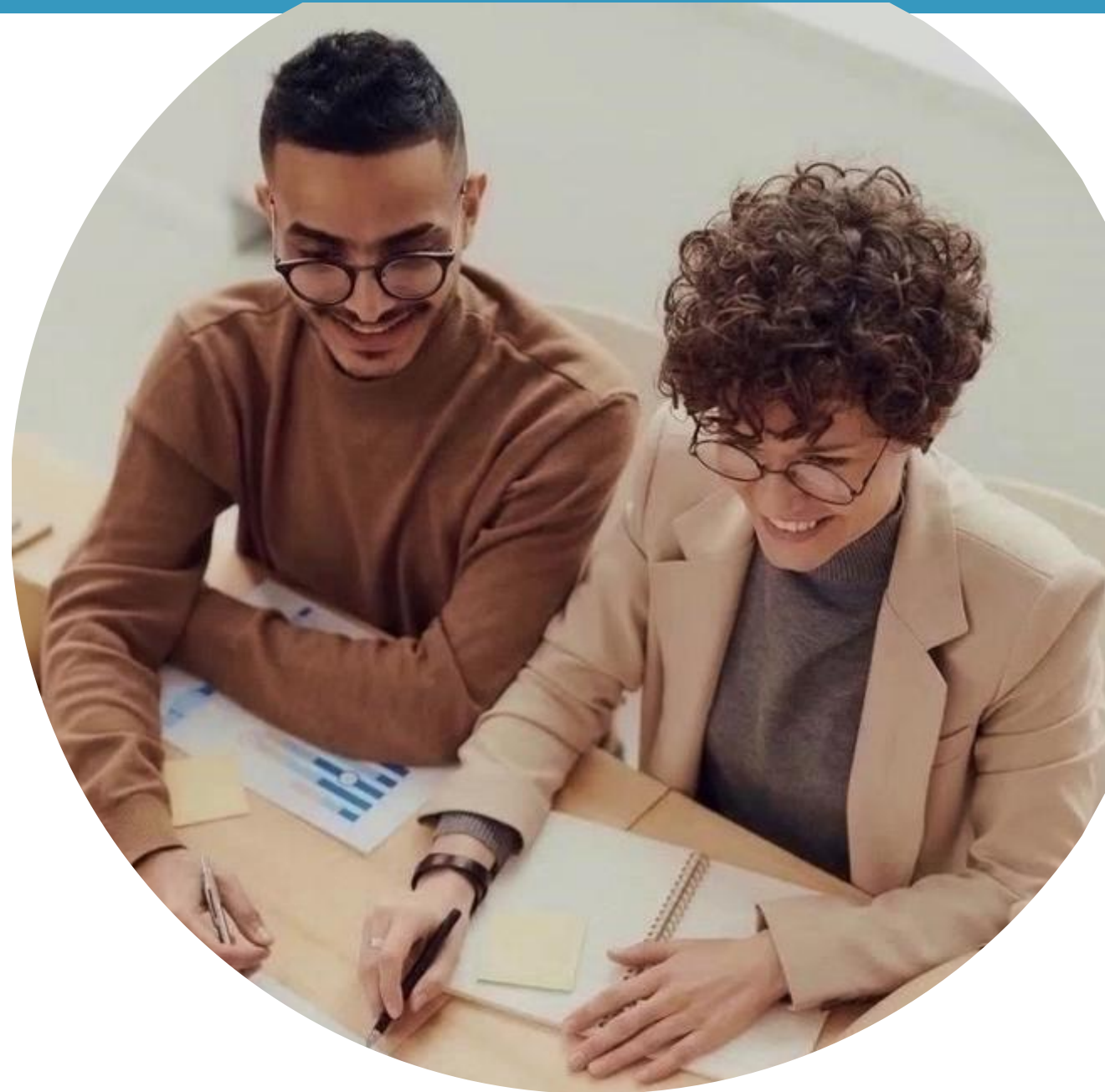
*“One who chases two rabbits,
catches neither.”*

-Confucius

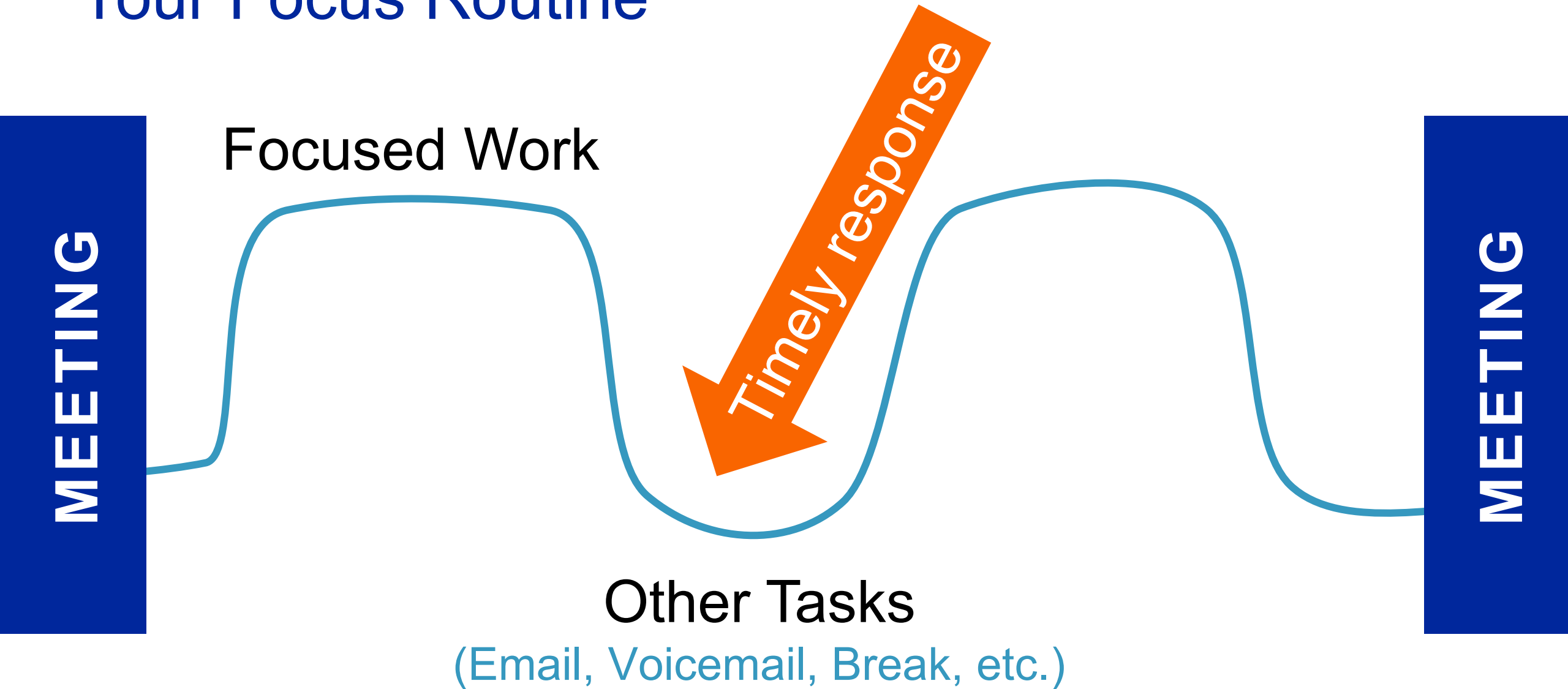


We already protect
focus time,
*when we meet
with others.*

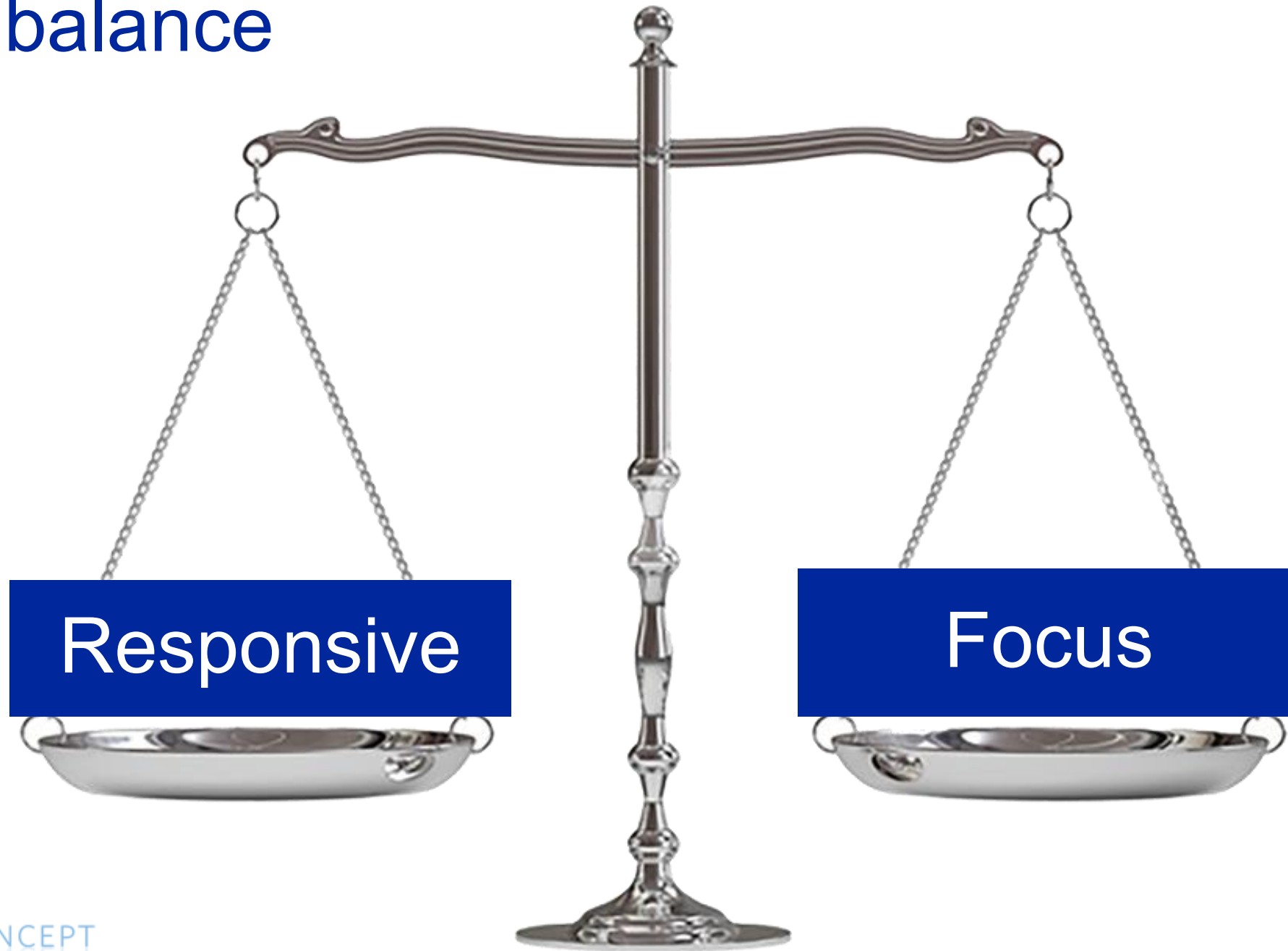
~~Email
Phone calls
Other work~~



Your Focus Routine

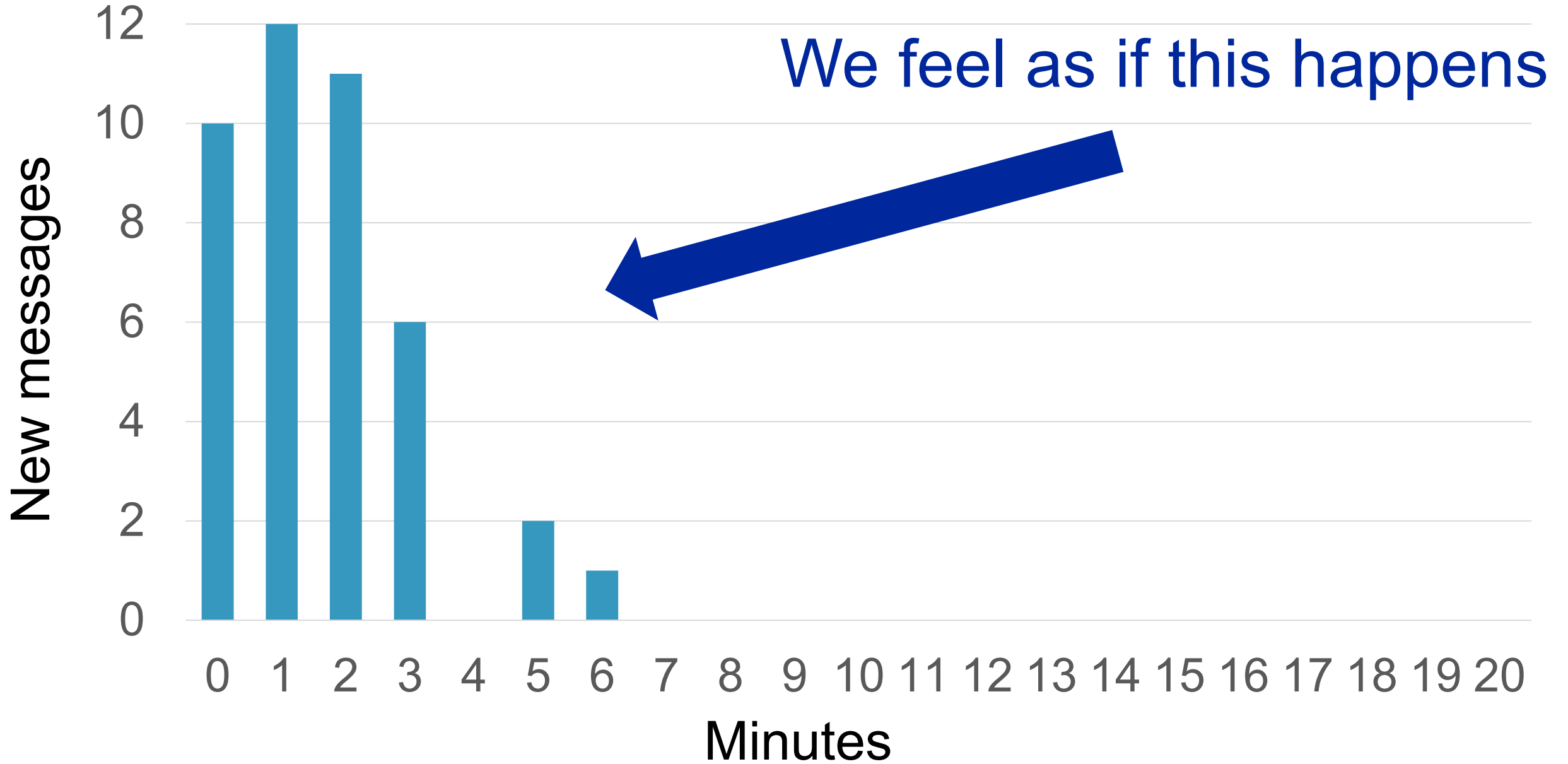


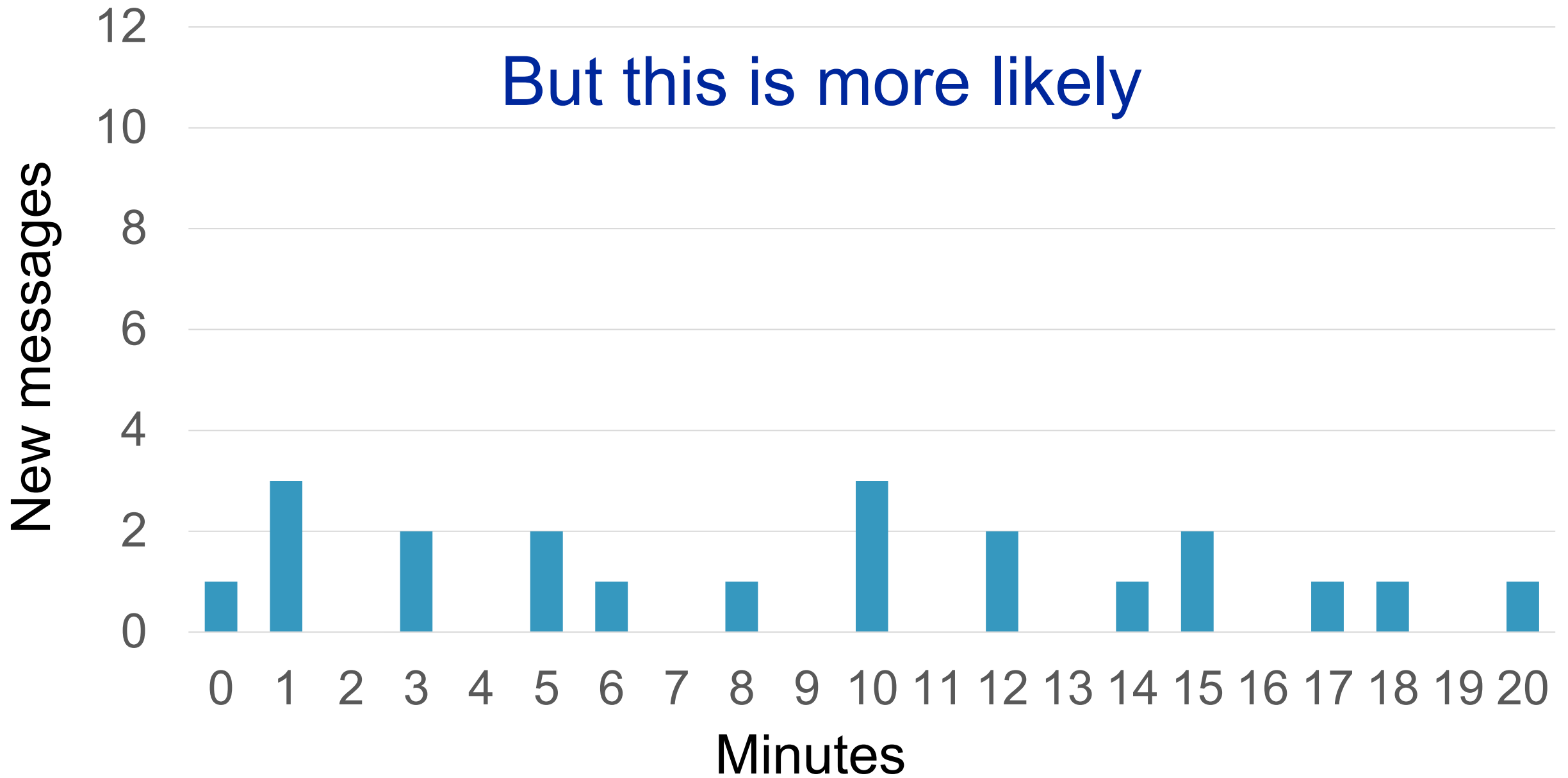
It's a balance



What is your ideal focus routine?







What is our biggest source of interruptions?

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

What is our
biggest source of
interruptions?



Is email interrupting you?

Or are you choosing
to check email?



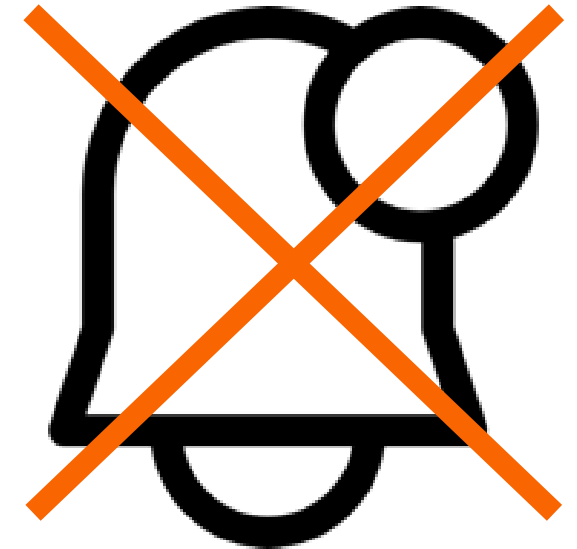
Remove the temptation

Message arrival



When new messages arrive:

- ☒ Play a sound
- ☒ Briefly change the mouse pointer
- ☒ Show an envelope icon in the taskbar
- ☒ Display a Desktop Alert



We have a
safety net

Urgency

Call

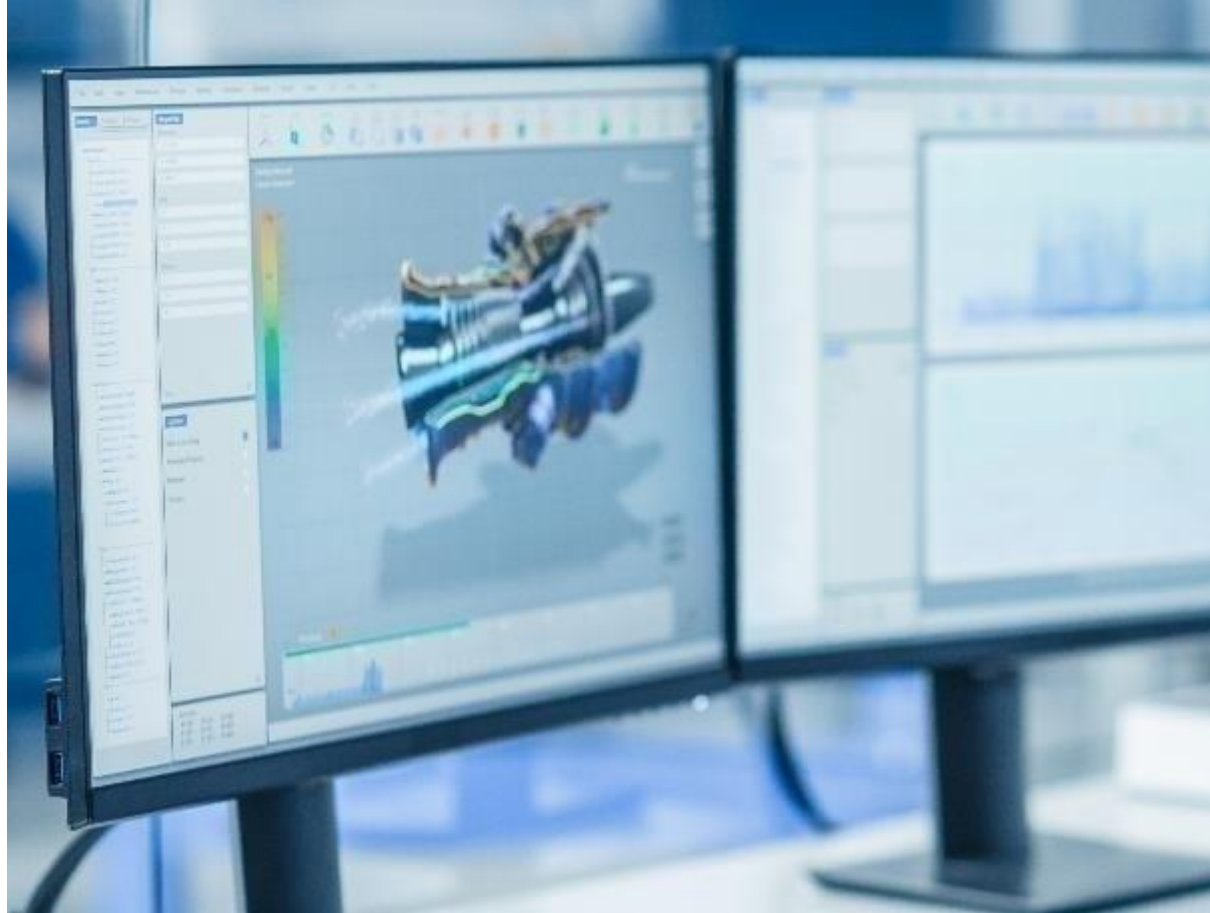
Text/Chat

Email

Should you keep email visible all day long?

~~Yes:~~

- ~~• Urgent~~
- ~~• Responsive~~



No:

- ✓ Focus work
- ✓ Timely
- ✓ Less task switching
- ✓ Higher quality
- ✓ Calmer
- ✓ One touch

How can you keep yourself focused?

1. Goal
2. Duration
3. Reward



The Pomodoro Technique

How to stay focused when you need email / internet



- Draft in Word
- Batch online tasks
- Commit to single tasking



The Zeigarnik Effect

- Single-task

- Close loops

Align your work to your energy

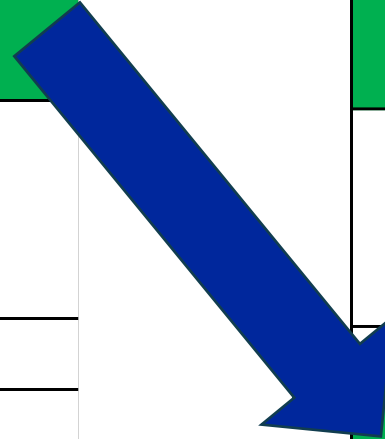


Block time for focus work

➤ Adjust as needed

8:30 - 9:00	Follow-up
9:00 - 9:30	Focus Work
9:30 - 10:00	
10:00 - 10:30	Focus Work
10:30 - 11:00	
11:00 - 11:30	Meetings & follow-up
11:30 - 12:00	
12:00 - 12:30	
12:30 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 1:30	Meetings & follow-up
1:30 - 2:00	
2:00 - 2:30	
2:30 - 3:00	
3:00 - 3:30	
3:30 - 4:00	
4:00 - 4:30	
4:30 - 5:00	Focus Work

Follow-up
Client Meeting
Focus Work
Meetings & follow-up
Lunch
Focus Work
Meetings & follow-up
Focus Work



Which is a better approach?

John

Multitasking

Response time:
~1 minute

Applicable to:
**Day before retreat;
Heading into court; etc.**

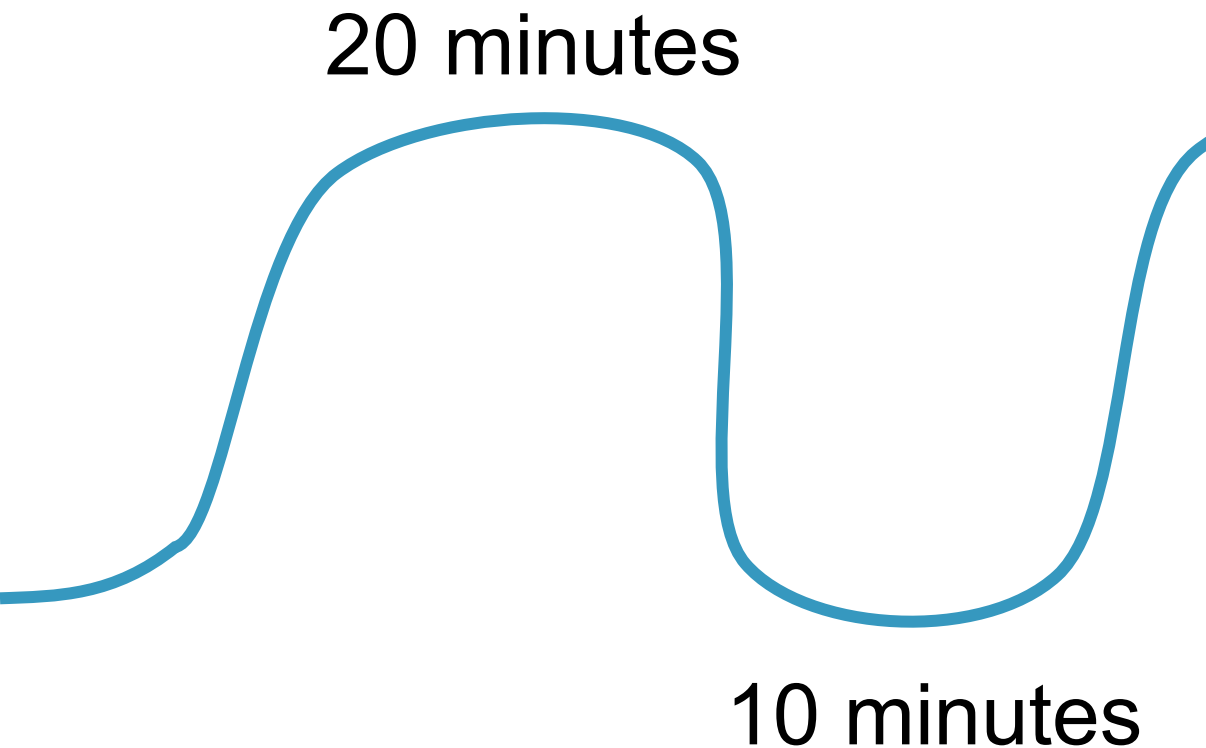
Asha

Focus

Response time:
~10-20 minutes

Applicable to:
Typical days

Will you join the 20-minute focus challenge?



- 20-minute focus sessions
- No alerts

Why:

↑ Efficiency

↑ Quality

↓ Stress

Will you join the 20-minute focus challenge?

Yes, I will protect more focus time each day

0%

I already do a great job of protecting focus time

0%

You don't understand who I work with...

0%

Where should you put your focus?



What are your three core priorities?

CORE PRIORITY A

1. Task
2. Task
3. Task
4. Task
5. Task
- ...

CORE PRIORITY B

1. Task
2. Task
3. Task
4. Task
- ...

CORE PRIORITY C

1. Task
2. Task
3. Task
4. Task
5. Task
- ...

Supporting

Supporting

Supporting

Personal

Supporting

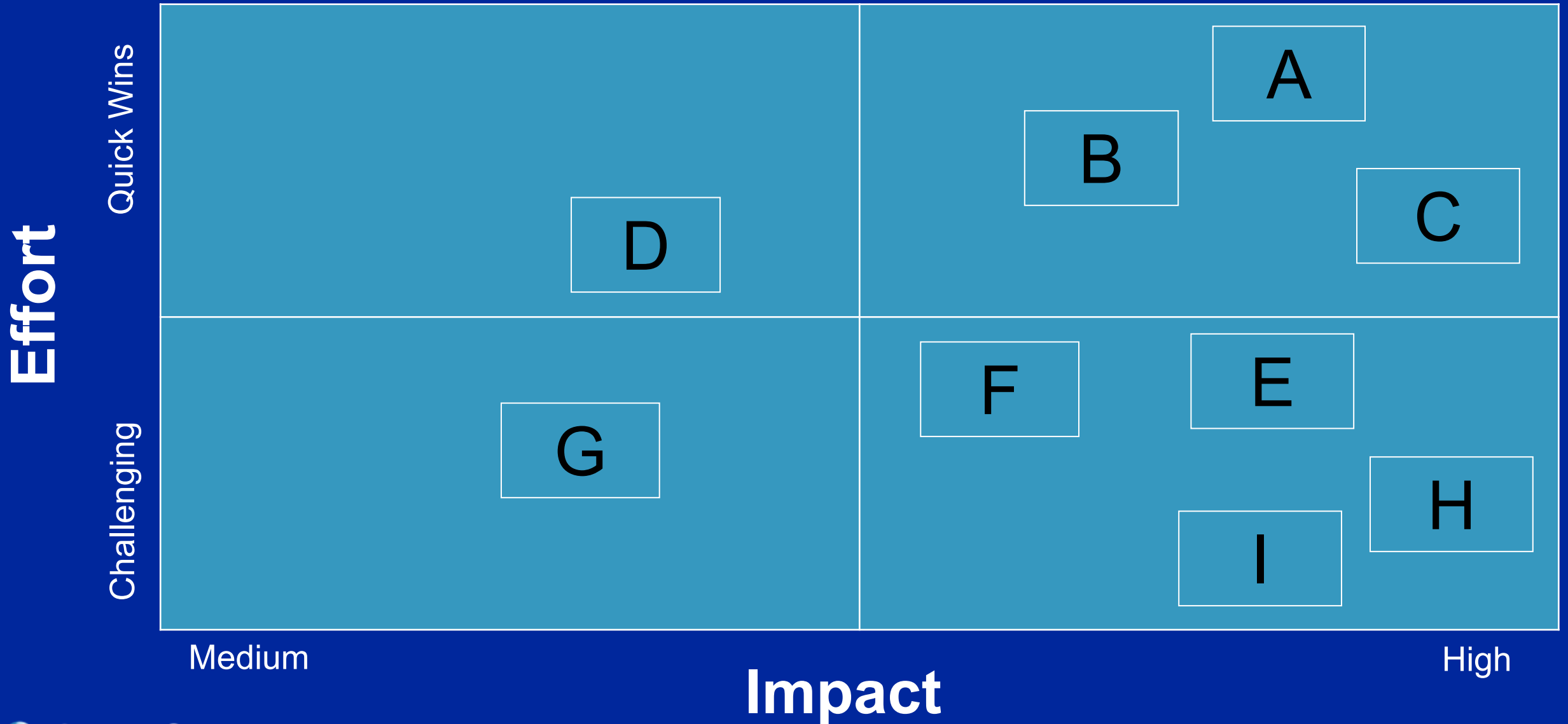
Supporting

Supporting

Personal

Future Priorities

What are you doing now / later / never?



How do you track your work?



- Hand-written list
- Post-it notes
- App
- Outlook Tasks
- OneNote
- Notebook
- Chat/text
- Inbox
- Flagged emails
- Unread emails
- Reminders
- Calendar
- Memory
- Other?

Multiple lists:

- Chaos
- Lost time
- Missing tasks

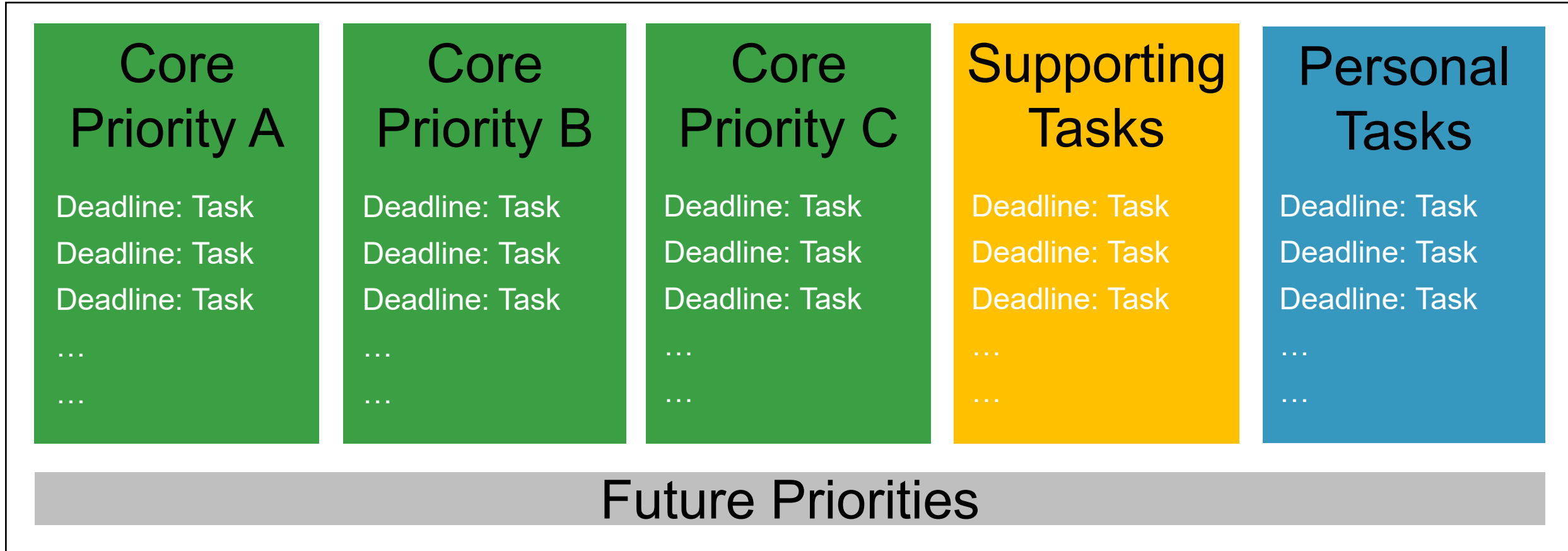
You need a better system

Main Action Plan

(MAP)

Your Main Action Plan (MAP)

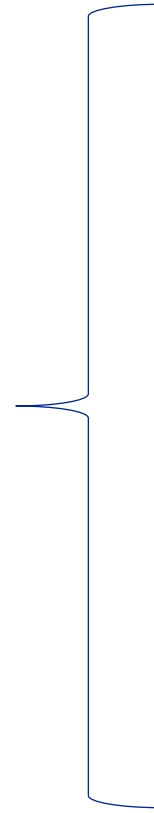
SAMPLE



✓ Complete ✓ Centralize ✓ Categorize ✓ Commit ✓ Consult

Your Main Action Plan (MAP)

Clear deadlines
=
Clear ranking



Programs

June 12	Draft summary
June 13	Update MP
June 16	Finalize document
June 16	Prepare for meeting
June 19	Send update
June 25	...

How would you rate your current priority management system?

1 (What system?)

0%

2

0%

3

0%

4

0%

5 (Complete; Central, Categorize, Commit, Consult)

0%

**Our memory
is not our MAP**

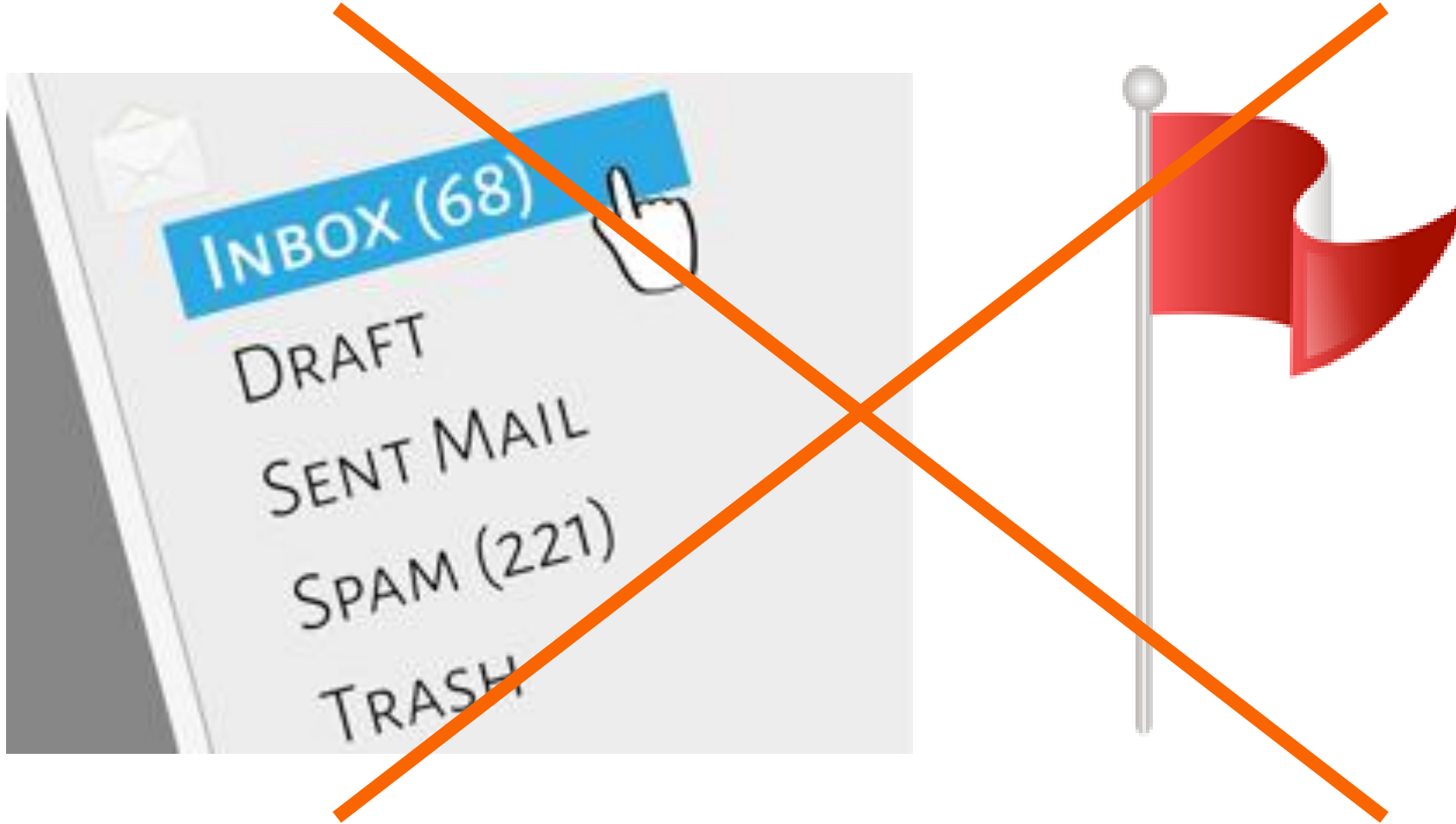
These are not our MAP



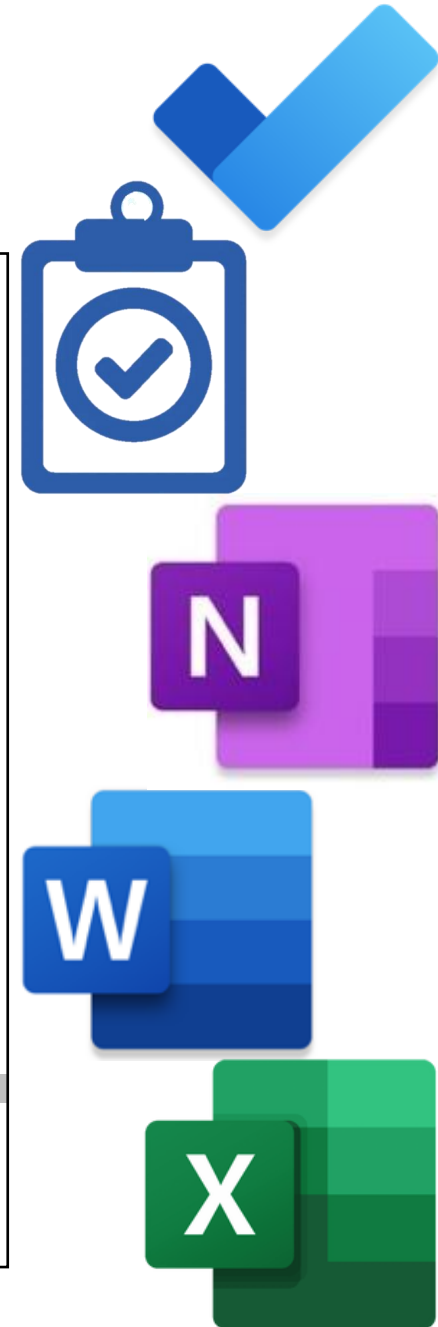
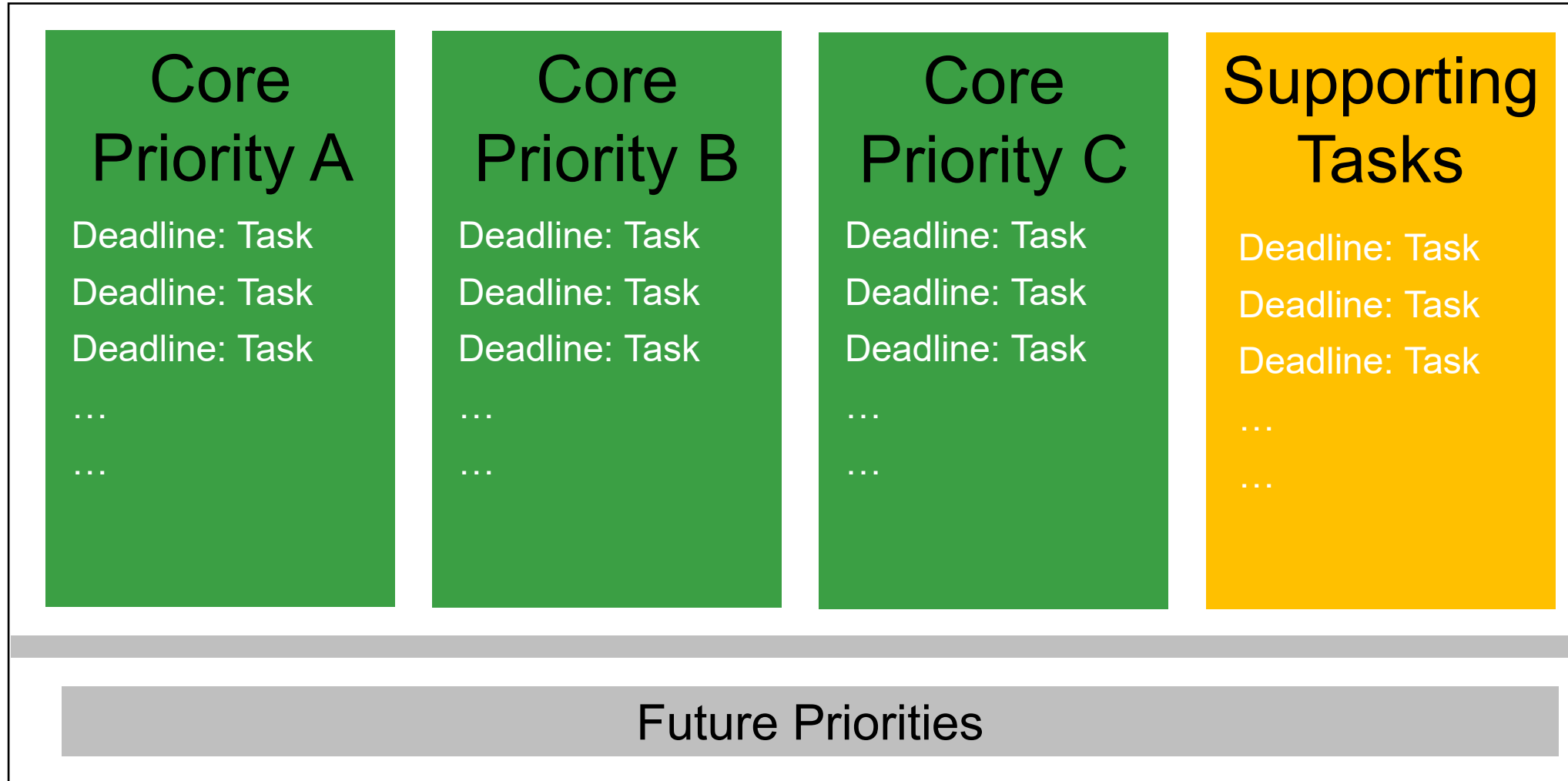
- No clear ranking
- No deadlines

- Not complete
- Not categorized

Our inbox is not our to do list



Where will you build your MAP?



Sample MAP – Outlook Tasks



Subject	Due Date	Categories ▲
▼ 1. CORE PRIORITY A: 3 item(s)		
Call client B to confirm documents are in order	Thu 2025-01-23	1. CORE PRIORITY A
Review budget for Project B	Thu 2025-01-16	1. CORE PRIORITY A
Book status meeting re: Project XYZ	Wed 2025-02-12	1. CORE PRIORITY A
▼ 2. CORE PRIORITY B: 2 item(s)		
Review Outlook Tips sheet	Mon 2025-01-20	2. CORE PRIORITY B
Schedule weekly matter team meetings	Wed 2025-02-12	2. CORE PRIORITY B
▼ 3. PERSONAL TASKS: 2 item(s)		
Book appointment at the mechanic	Tue 2025-03-04	3. PERSONAL TASKS
Download passport renewal forms	Wed 2025-01-22	3. PERSONAL TASKS

Sample MAP – Microsoft To Do



AG Ann Gomez
clearconceptinc@outlook.com

Search

My Day

Planned 9

All 9

Completed

Assigned to me

Flagged email

Tasks

Core Priority A 6

Core Priority B 1

Core Priority C

Supporting Tasks 2

Future Priorities

Personal Tasks

All

Sorted by Due Date ^ x

Core Priority A

Update report
Core Priority A · 📅 Fri, Oct 20

Summarize research
Core Priority A · 📅 Mon, Oct 23

Submit application
Core Priority A · 📅 Tue, Oct 24

Prepare draft budget
Core Priority A · 📅 Tue, Oct 24

Review presentation
Core Priority A · 📅 Thu, Oct 26

Prepare for meeting
Core Priority A · 0 of 3 · 📅 Mon, Oct 30

Core Priority B

Prepare for meeting
Core Priority B · 📅 Tue, Oct 31

Sample MAP – OneNote



MAIN ACTION PLAN ▾

1. CORE PRIORITY A

2. CORE PRIORITY B

3. CORE PRIORITY C

+

↗

2025.01.15 - Call Client B to confirm documents are in order

January 15, 2025 5:11 PM

Add Page

2025.01.15 - Call Client B to confirm documents are in order

2025.01.22 - Prepare analysis for meeting with Client H

2025.01.23 - Review budget for Project B

2025.02.04 - Call Sarah regarding speaking engagement with Client X

Which tool do you currently / plan to use for your MAP?

Outlook Tasks

0%

Microsoft To Do

0%

OneNote

0%

Simple list in Word, Excel, etc.

0%

An App

0%

Other?

0%

How to plan your day

Your Daily
Plan

Proactive

Your MAP

Reactive

- Email
- Meeting follow-up
- Calls
- New ideas
- Other

What will you do differently after today's session?

Nobody has responded yet.
Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

More productivity strategies

- Email management
- Proactive Routines
- Procrastination
- Simplify Filter
- Delegate
- Develop others



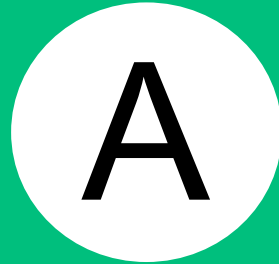
0 surveys completed

0 surveys underway

Take your training FAR



Feedback



Accountability



Reinforcement

- ☐ Adopt a focus routine
- ☐ Turn off your alerts
- ☐ Identify your 3 core priorities
- ☐ Build your MAP



Ann Gomez



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