



Say 'no' to interruptions, 'yes' to better work

Today's office workers are expected to multitask regularly, often juggling multiple projects and priorities over the course of a day. Studies have shown that the typical employee in an office environment is interrupted up to 6 times per hour, but how does that impact the finished product?

"People don't realize how disruptive interruptions can be," said the researchers at George Mason University, whose study was published in *Human Factors*.

The researchers found significantly lower quality in essays completed by the participants who were interrupted during the outline and writing phases than in essays of those who were not interrupted. In addition, those participants who were interrupted during the writing phase wrote considerably fewer words.

Interruptions lower the quality of the work, they said, and suggested ways to reduce the number of external interruptions: Turn off your cell phone and disable dings for incoming email. Close your door. Face away from office traffic patterns.