CONTEXT SWITCHING CHECKLIST FOR TEAM LEADERS

Find out what keeps breaking focus

Use one copy per team. Tick each item once you've checked it and recorded what you found.

Team / locations

Trial owner / start date

01 Identify the interruptions

- ☐ Ask teammates what pulls them off task most often. Include alerts, duplicate updates and habitual checks.
- ☐ Pick the type of work that suffers most, such as reviews, writing or debugging.

02 Capture a baseline for one normal week

- ☐ Count planned focus blocks and how many a message or alert interrupts. Note the source.
- ☐ Estimate time to resume in bands of under 2 minutes, 2–5 minutes or more than 5 minutes.

03 Check how urgent work reaches the team

- ☐ Record when each urgent issue is raised, who acknowledges it and whether the response is on time.
- ☐ Check who covers escalations during each working window and at time-zone handovers.

Most common interruption / work affected

Set rules that protect focus time

Share the rules before the trial. Give everyone a clear place to check updates and raise urgent issues.

04 Give urgent issues one route

- [ ] Define urgency by what happens if the issue waits. Choose one channel, a primary owner and a backup.
- [ ] Ask senders to state who is affected, what action is needed and when. Link to the relevant record.

05 Batch routine updates and agree response windows

- [ ] Put FYIs in a shared space or digest. Keep final decisions in one place and link back to the source.
- [ ] Give requests a named owner and a deadline with a time zone. Agree when routine replies are due.

06 Protect focus blocks

- [ ] Agree when people can set their status to Do Not Disturb and mute routine alerts.
- [ ] Keep escalation coverage active and make sure colleagues know who is on duty.

07 Make work easy to pick up again

- [ ] Before stepping away, note what is done, what is still open and what to do next.
- [ ] Keep the restart note with the draft, ticket or project record so it can support a handover too.

Urgent channel / coverage owner / routine response window

Run the trial and decide what to keep

Use the new rules for one week. Compare similar work and note any launch, outage or staffing changes.

08 Compare the same three measures in both weeks

- [ ] Compare the share of focus blocks interrupted. Divide interrupted blocks by planned blocks.
- [ ] Compare time-to-resume bands and the share of urgent requests acknowledged on time.

09 Test the handover

- [ ] If no real escalation occurred, send a clearly labelled test and check it reaches the person on duty.
- [ ] If the response was late, check whether the channel, coverage or handover needs to change.

10 Record the decision

- [ ] Keep the rules that helped. Adjust the rules that still let routine updates interrupt focused work.
- [ ] Name the owner of the next change and set a date to check the results again.

Trial results / baseline week vs trial week

Interrupted blocks: _____ / _____ vs _____ / _____ Typical time to resume: _____ vs _____

Urgent replies on time: _____ / _____ vs _____ / _____ Test escalation result: _____

Rule to keep or change / owner / next review date