

'Multitasking is a myth'

Corporate training



www.multitasken.com

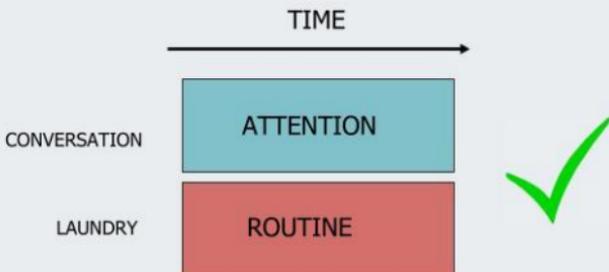
*Most employees try to multitask all day.
That's a shame because they let themselves
and others completely down.*

Behavior scientists of the Warwick business school say: **Multitasking is a myth!**

There is no problem when you want to combine a task which needs your attention with a task that you can do with your eyes shut.

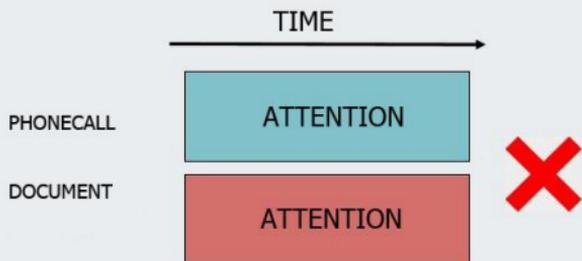
You can have a conversation while folding your laundry.

Real multitasking:



Working at a difficult document while making a phone call is more difficult because we have a limited working memory.

This kind of multitasking is not possible:



Your brains will start switching from one task to the other.

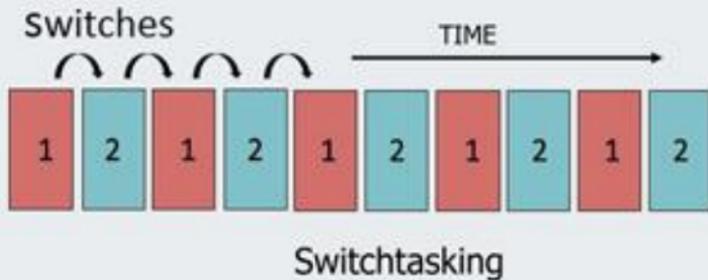
You are not multitasking but switchtasking!

You will switch from phone call to document and back. It goes very quick and it is not efficient at all.

So it's not multitasking, it's switchtasking!

You switch between:

- 1. The phonecall
- 2. The document



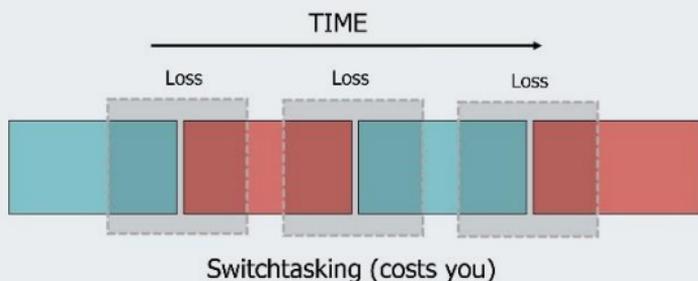
You pay a price for switchtasking.
In this example you won't hear everything the person on the other side of the phone says..

A lot of scientist all over the world this did research about multitasking:

According to the Harvard Business Review your productivity decreases with 40% if you do many things at once. So you need 40% more time to accomplish something.

Scientists of the University of Leeds say you make more mistakes when you switchtask..

At the University of California they say if you are working at a project at your computer and you answer the phone, after hanging up it will take several minutes before you are completely focused at you project again.



Our grandparents already told us:

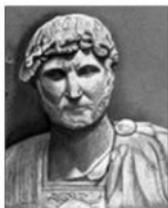
One thing at the time:

You will make less mistakes, it will cost you less energy and you will have much more spare time!

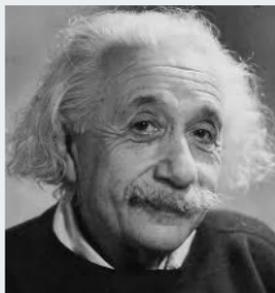
Is there anybody who does not want that?

“To do two things at once is to do neither”.

Publilius Syrus
1st Century BC



Every company, big or small, is depending on creative, problem solving people.
Every company is depending on innovation.
This all happens in the pre frontal cortex.
And this is exactly the place that is full when you do more things at the same time.
The pre frontal cortex has to be empty to be creative.
Einstein went out for a walk . Two hours a day.



Maybe you recognize this:

You are working at home at your laptop and your child comes home.

She start to tell you all kind of interesting thing about school.

You try to focus at the story of your child, but meanwhile your work is calling you.. your work wants your attention too..

So you hear from two sides.. me me me!!

Your mind is being teared apart..

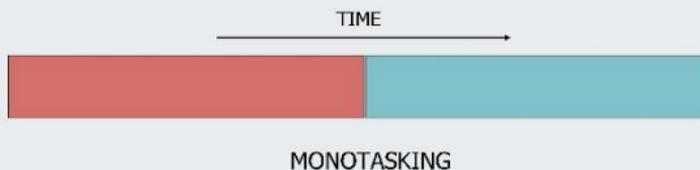
This is very stressful.

And... you don't give your child the idea she is not worth your full attention.

The price you pay for switchtasking:

- 40% less productive
- 3 - 4 times more mistakes
- Time consuming
- Stressful
- Less attention for relations
- Exhausting
- Less creativity

Switchtasking costs more time, causes more mistakes and is more stressful than if you would monotask (finish something before you start something new).



But, in these modern times we are often forced to do more things at the same time!

Switchtasking can be fun and is even addictive!!

It's your own choice to go switchtasking,
But don't do it if it causes danger, like driving in the car while texting, or when you are not allowed to make mistakes, like a surgeon.
Or when you are risking relationships, with your kids, customers or colleagues.

But if you know the costs of switchtasking, you can benefit from this.

Make sure you won't be interrupted when working on an important task. Put your telephone away, close social media and let it be known you do or do not want to be approached. Make this clear to those around you. Maybe you can put on headphones or hang up a "Do not disturb" sign.

Plan your social media moments and process them all together before beginning a task. Before a meeting or work session for example.

Make templates, know where things are and learn shortcuts. Then you can give all your attention to important tasks and not need to switch. Bring more routine into your processes.

Help your brain to remember its reflective moments. Take enough breaks for the insights to sink in. Organization is part of your work. It's a good idea to plan weekly personal maintenance to create an overview and a sense of calm.

Most people are at their best in the morning, so do the important things first and then check your inbox.

Keep spontaneous work in mind. If you know you spend 20 hours a week reacting to sudden issues, don't plan 40 hours of scheduled work.

If you know you have a task that requires a lot of concentration, do mind emptying exercises first so that no unrelated thoughts distract you.

If you have the tendency to multi-task, force yourself not to. Be strong and control yourself. Park the other tasks on notes to yourself, finish what you have started and then go back to them.

People who say they are good at multitasking, often have problems concentrating on one thing at a time.

The Pareto rule: You complete 80% of your work in 20% of your time.

Napoleon said before a major offensive: I have a lot to do, so I dress myself calmly.

People who try to multitask have problems with setting priorities. They are often ‘pleasers’ who can’t say No.

Structural low stress is not healthy. Interval stress is healthier, leaving time to recover in between.

The Eisenhower rule: What is important is rarely urgent and what is urgent is rarely important.

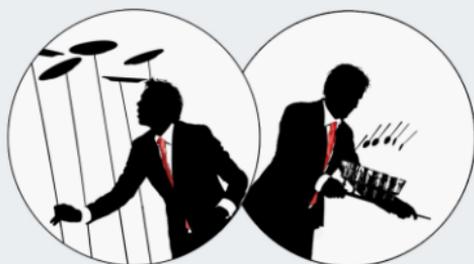
Compared to 1950 we now talk 50% quicker, sleep a half hour less, walk 10% quicker and live in a 24/7 society.



Sources:

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