

TOOL 1: TIME AUDIT SPREADSHEET

SHEET 1: 3-Day Activity Log

INSTRUCTIONS

CLARIFY TIME AUDIT - 3-Day Tracking Tool

HOW TO USE THIS SPREADSHEET:

1. Track every activity for 3 days (including 1 weekend day)
2. Log in real-time or immediately after each activity
3. Be ruthlessly honest - this data is for YOU only
4. After 3 days, go to "Analysis" tab for automatic insights

CATEGORIES:

- **FOCUS** = Deep work requiring concentration, creates significant value
- **ADMIN** = Necessary but routine (email, scheduling, data entry)
- **COLLAB** = Working with others (meetings, calls, teamwork)
- **PERSONAL** = Everything outside work

Track **INTERRUPTIONS** and **TRANSITIONS** separately - these reveal your focus debt.

ACTIVITY LOG

[illegible]

[illegible]


SHEET 2: Automatic Analysis Dashboard

Section A: Time Allocation Summary

YOUR 3-DAY TIME BREAKDOWN:

Total Hours Tracked: [AUTO-CALCULATE]

Focus Work:	____ hours	(____%)
Administrative:	____ hours	(____%)
Collaboration:	____ hours	(____%)
Personal:	____ hours	(____%)
Shadow Time:	____ hours	(____%)

 **INSIGHT:** If Shadow Time > 20%, you have significant efficiency leaks.

Section B: Focus Debt Calculator

INTERRUPTION ANALYSIS:

Total Interruptions Logged: [COUNT]

Average per Day: [AUTO-CALC]


Focus Debt Calculation (based on 23-min recovery per interruption):

Total Recovery Time Lost: ____ hours over 3 days

That's ____ hours per week

That's ____ hours per month

That's ____ hours per year

 **TRANSLATION:** You're losing ____ full workdays annually to interruptions.

Most Common Interruption Sources:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

YOUR CHRONOTYPE INDICATOR:

- ☐ Morning Lark (highest energy 6am-10am)
- ☐ Intermediate (peaks 9am-12pm and 2pm-5pm)
- ☐ Night Owl (highest energy after 2pm)

RECOMMENDATION: Schedule Focus Work during these windows

Section D: Current vs. Ideal Comparison

TIME ALLOCATION REALITY CHECK:

Category	How you SPENT	Goal	Gap
Focus Work:	____%	____%	____%
Admin:	____%	____%	____%
Collaboration:	____%	____%	____%
Personal:	____%	____%	____%

BIGGEST MISALIGNMENT: (largest gap) _____
ACTION: What needs to change to close this gap? _____

Section E: Friction Point Tracker

TOP TIME WASTERS (ranked by frequency & impact):

Friction Point	Frequency	Est. Time Lost	Total Impact	Priority
<i>Example: Searching for files</i>	<i>12x</i>	<i>5 min each</i>	<i>1.0 hrs</i>	<i>HIGH</i>

QUICK WINS (can eliminate this week): [Items marked as high frequency + low effort to fix]

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

TOOL 2: WEEKLY PLANNING TEMPLATE

Page 1: Sunday Evening Planning (15 minutes)

WEEKLY PLANNING RITUAL

Week of: _____

STEP 1: LAST WEEK'S REVIEW (3 minutes)

What worked well last week?

What didn't work? Why?

What did I learn about my energy/focus/limits?

STEP 2: RULE OF 3 - MY THREE OUTCOMES THIS WEEK (7 minutes)

Remember: Use results-oriented language. Span different life areas.

OUTCOME 1 (Professional):

What: _____

Why this matters: _____

Completion looks like: _____

Energy required: ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ High

Est. time needed: _____ hours (+ 20% buffer = _____ hours)

Key Actions:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Best days for this: _____

OUTCOME 2 (Personal):

What: _____

Why this matters: _____

Completion looks like: _____

Energy required: ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ High

Est. time needed: _____ hours (+ 20% buffer = _____ hours)

Key Actions:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Best days for this: _____

OUTCOME 3 (Maintenance/Relationship/Health):

What: _____

Why this matters: _____

Completion looks like: _____

Energy required: ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ High

Est. time needed: _____ hours (+ 20% buffer = _____ hours)

Key Actions:

- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Best days for this: _____

FEASIBILITY CHECK:

Total estimated time for 3 outcomes: _____ hours

My available focus time this week: _____ hours

- ☐ GREEN: I have enough time with buffer
- ☐ YELLOW: Tight but doable if nothing goes wrong
- ☐ RED: Unrealistic - need to adjust scope or timeline

If YELLOW or RED: What can I reduce/delegate/postpone?

STEP 3: ENERGY-BASED SCHEDULING (5 minutes)

My peak energy windows this week:

Morning (____ am - ____ am): Schedule OUTCOME # ____

Midday (____ pm - ____ pm): Schedule OUTCOME # ____

Afternoon (____ pm - ____ pm): Schedule OUTCOME # ____

Protected focus blocks (add to calendar NOW):

- ☐ Monday: _____ (Outcome # ____)
- ☐ Tuesday: _____ (Outcome # ____)
- ☐ Wednesday: _____ (Outcome # ____)
- ☐ Thursday: _____ (Outcome # ____)
- ☐ Friday: _____ (Catch-up/buffer)

Admin time (low energy periods):

_____ and _____

STEP 4: PREPARE FOR SUCCESS

Potential obstacles this week:

1. _____
2. _____

Mitigation strategies:

3. _____
4. _____

Who/what I need help from:

What I'm saying NO to this week:

COMMITMENT:

This week, I'm focused on these THREE outcomes and protecting the time needed to achieve them. Everything else waits.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Page 2: Friday Afternoon Review (10 minutes)

WEEKLY REVIEW

Week of: _____

OUTCOME COMPLETION:

OUTCOME 1: ☐ Complete ☐ Partially Complete ☐ Incomplete

If incomplete, why? _____

Carry forward? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Modified to: _____

OUTCOME 2: ☐ Complete ☐ Partially Complete ☐ Incomplete

If incomplete, why? _____

Carry forward? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Modified to: _____

OUTCOME 3: ☐ Complete ☐ Partially Complete ☐ Incomplete

If incomplete, why? _____

Carry forward? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Modified to: _____

WINS THIS WEEK (celebrate!):

- ✓ _____
 - ✓ _____
 - ✓ _____
-

WHAT I LEARNED:

About my energy patterns:

About my focus/distraction triggers:

About saying no/boundaries:

About my planning accuracy:

OBSTACLES FACED & SOLUTIONS:

Obstacle: _____

Solution that worked: _____

Obstacle: _____

Solution to try next time: _____

SYSTEM REFINEMENT:

One thing to STOP doing: _____

One thing to START doing: _____

One thing to CONTINUE doing: _____

GRATITUDE / PERSPECTIVE:

What am I grateful for this week?

Who helped me succeed?

Ready for Sunday planning? Use these insights to plan even better next week.

TOOL 3: BOUNDARY SCRIPT LIBRARY

50+ Proven Responses for Every Situation

HOW TO USE THIS LIBRARY:

1. Find the scenario that matches your situation
2. Choose the relationship dynamic (boss/peer/client/family)
3. Copy the script
4. Customize with your specifics (shown in [brackets])
5. Send with confidence

These scripts are tested and refined. They work because they:

- ✓ Acknowledge the request respectfully
 - ✓ State your boundary clearly
 - ✓ Offer alternatives when appropriate
 - ✓ Don't over-apologize or over-explain
-

CATEGORY 1: DECLINING NEW PROJECTS/COMMITMENTS

SCENARIO 1A: Boss Assigns New Project

RELATIONSHIP: Direct Manager

FORMALITY: Professional

Script:

"I want to deliver quality work on this project. Currently, I'm focused on [PROJECT A], [PROJECT B], and [PROJECT C], all with deadlines of [DATES].

To take this on and do it well, which of my current projects should I deprioritize, or would you like me to propose adjusted timelines for my existing work?

I'm happy to make this work—I just need clarity on priorities so I can allocate my time appropriately."

Why it works: Shows you're willing, requires THEM to make the trade-off decision, uses data.

SCENARIO 1B: Boss Assigns New Project (Alternative - More Senior)

RELATIONSHIP: Manager you have good rapport with

FORMALITY: Professional but direct

Script:

"I appreciate you thinking of me for this. Let me show you my current workload so we can figure out the best approach.

[Share calendar or project list]

Given these commitments, I see three options:

1. I take this on and we push [PROJECT X] to next quarter
2. [COLLEAGUE NAME] handles this as it aligns with their current work
3. We bring in external support for [LOWER PRIORITY ITEM]

Which direction makes most sense from your perspective?"

Why it works: Collaborative problem-solving, offers solutions, makes trade-offs visible.

SCENARIO 1C: Colleague Requests Your Help

RELATIONSHIP: Peer/Colleague

FORMALITY: Friendly but firm

Script:

"I'd genuinely like to help with this. Unfortunately, I'm at capacity with [BRIEF DESCRIPTION] through [DATE]. Would [ALTERNATIVE TIME] work, or can I suggest [COLLEAGUE NAME] who might have bandwidth?"

Why it works: Shows goodwill, provides specific constraint, offers alternatives.

SCENARIO 1D: Colleague Requests Help (When You Don't Want To At All)

RELATIONSHIP: Peer you don't work closely with

FORMALITY: Professional but definitive

Script:

"Thanks for thinking of me. I'm focused on [YOUR PRIORITIES] this quarter and won't be able to take this on. [COLLEAGUE NAME] might be a good resource—they've done similar work."

Why it works: Brief, doesn't apologize excessively, redirects helpfully.

SCENARIO 1E: Client Requests Additional Scope

RELATIONSHIP: Paying client

FORMALITY: Professional, service-oriented

Script:

"I appreciate you wanting to expand the scope—it sounds like valuable work. This falls outside our current agreement, which covers [ORIGINAL SCOPE]. I can absolutely help with this as a separate project. Let me send you a proposal for [NEW SCOPE] with timeline and pricing by [DATE]. Does that work?"

Why it works: Doesn't say no to revenue, establishes boundaries, positions as new engagement.

SCENARIO 1F: Volunteer/Committee Request

RELATIONSHIP: Community organization

FORMALITY: Warm but clear

Script:

"Thank you for thinking of me for [ROLE]. I'm honored you'd consider me. Currently, I'm committed to [EXISTING OBLIGATIONS] and need to protect bandwidth for [PERSONAL PRIORITY]. I'm not able to take on [ROLE], but I'd be happy to [SMALLER CONTRIBUTION] if that's helpful. Otherwise, I hope to be involved in the future when my schedule allows."

Why it works: Honors the ask, explains constraint without excessive detail, offers alternative.

CATEGORY 2: PROTECTING FOCUS TIME

SCENARIO 2A: Meeting Request During Focus Block

RELATIONSHIP: Anyone

FORMALITY: Professional

Script:

"I'm in a focus block [TIME] but have availability [ALTERNATIVE TIMES]. Would any of those work?"

Why it works: *Brief, doesn't over-explain, offers alternatives immediately.*

SCENARIO 2B: "Quick Question" Interruption

RELATIONSHIP: Colleague at your desk

FORMALITY: Friendly but redirecting

Script (In Person):

"I'm deep in something right now. Can we connect at [SPECIFIC TIME TODAY/TOMORROW]? [If urgent: "Is this urgent-urgent or can it wait 2 hours?"]"

Script (via Chat):

"In focus mode until [TIME]. Can this wait until then, or is it urgent? If urgent, call me."

Why it works: *Acknowledges them, provides alternative, has urgency escape valve.*

SCENARIO 2C: Email Auto-Responder for Focus Time

RELATIONSHIP: Anyone emailing you

FORMALITY: Professional, helpful

Script:

"Thanks for your email. I check messages at [TIME 1], [TIME 2], and [TIME 3] to protect focus time for deep work. I'll respond during my next email window.

If this is urgent and needs attention before then, please call me at [PHONE] or text "URGENT" to get immediate attention.

Otherwise, I'll get back to you within [24 hours/same business day]."

Why it works: *Sets expectations, provides urgency channel, maintains responsiveness.*

SCENARIO 2D: Family Member Interrupting Work-From-Home Focus

RELATIONSHIP: Partner/family

FORMALITY: Loving but clear

Script:

"I love you, and I'm in a focus block until [TIME]. Unless the house is on fire, can we talk at [SPECIFIC TIME]? I'll be fully present then."

Why it works: *Affirms relationship, sets boundary, commits to availability.*

SCENARIO 2E: Open Office Drop-Bys

RELATIONSHIP: Various colleagues

FORMALITY: Professional, friendly

Visual Signal + Script:

[Use headphones, focus sign, or red light]

When approached: "Hey! I'm in focus mode until [TIME]—can we catch up then or should I come find you?"

Why it works: *Visual cue prevents interruptions, verbal response is brief and friendly.*

CATEGORY 3: MEETING MANAGEMENT

SCENARIO 3A: Meeting Invite Without Agenda

RELATIONSHIP: Anyone

FORMALITY: Professional, collaborative

Script:

"Thanks for the invite. To make best use of everyone's time, could you send an agenda covering:

- Meeting objective
- What we need to decide/accomplish
- Any prep needed

This helps me contribute effectively. If you send that over, I'll confirm my attendance."

***Why it works:** Enforces "no agenda, no meeting" without being difficult.*

SCENARIO 3B: Declining Meeting You're Not Needed For

RELATIONSHIP: Group meeting invitation

FORMALITY: Professional, helpful

Script:

"Thanks for including me. Looking at the agenda, I don't think I can add value to [TOPICS] since [REASON].

I'm happy to:

- Review notes afterward and provide input
- Answer questions via email
- Join for just the [SPECIFIC 15 MINUTES] if my input is needed there

Let me know what's most helpful."

***Why it works:** Shows you reviewed agenda, explains rationale, offers alternatives.*

SCENARIO 3C: Leaving Meeting Early

RELATIONSHIP: Meeting participants

FORMALITY: Professional, respectful

Script (At Start):

"Quick heads up—I have a hard stop at [TIME] for [REASON]. Happy to stay for [TOPIC YOU'RE NEEDED FOR], but I'll need to drop at [TIME]. [COLLEAGUE], can you cover [YOUR AGENDA ITEM] if we don't get to it by then?"

***Why it works:** Sets expectation early, delegates if needed, no sneaking out.*

SCENARIO 3D: Meeting Running Over

RELATIONSHIP: Meeting organizer

FORMALITY: Professional, time-conscious

Script:

"We're at time. I have another commitment at [TIME]. Can we:

- Wrap the decision on [TOPIC]
- Table [REMAINING ITEMS] for async follow-up
- Schedule another 25 minutes if we need more discussion

What works best?"

***Why it works:** Respects everyone's time, offers solutions, keeps things moving.*

CATEGORY 4: WORK-LIFE BOUNDARY PROTECTION

SCENARIO 4A: After-Hours Email/Slack

RELATIONSHIP: Anyone

FORMALITY: Professional

Auto-Response Script:

"I'm offline after [TIME] to recharge for tomorrow. I'll respond to your message when I'm back online [NEXT BUSINESS DAY] morning.

If this is a genuine emergency requiring immediate attention, please call [PHONE NUMBER].

Otherwise, I'll get back to you during business hours. Thanks for respecting work-life boundaries!"

***Why it works:** Clear availability, emergency option, models healthy boundaries.*

SCENARIO 4B: Weekend Work Request

RELATIONSHIP: Boss/client

FORMALITY: Professional but firm

Script:

"I'm offline weekends to maintain the energy and focus needed for strong performance during the week. I'll be back online [DAY] morning and will make this a priority then. If this truly can't wait until [DAY] and needs weekend attention, can you help me understand the urgency? That will help me decide what to deprioritize [DAY] to accommodate this timeline."

***Why it works:** States boundary, asks for justification, shows you're reasonable.*

SCENARIO 4C: Declining Evening Social Event for Rest

RELATIONSHIP: Friends/colleagues

FORMALITY: Warm, honest

Script:

"I appreciate the invite! I'm in a phase where I'm protecting my evenings for recovery—I've learned I need that downtime to show up well at work and in relationships. Can we find a [WEEKEND/LUNCH] time instead? I'd love to catch up when I have more energy to bring."

***Why it works:** Honest about needs, maintains relationship, offers alternative.*

SCENARIO 4D: Explaining WFH Boundaries to Family

RELATIONSHIP: Partner/kids

FORMALITY: Loving, clear

Script:

"I need your help. When I'm working from home, I have focus blocks [TIMES] where I can't be interrupted unless it's an emergency. An emergency is [DEFINE: injury, fire, urgent call from school].

During focus time:

- Door closed = Don't knock unless emergency
- Headphones on = I'm in deep work
- Focus sign on door = See you at [TIME]

I'll be fully present with you during [YOUR AVAILABILITY TIMES]. This helps me finish work on time so we actually get evenings and weekends together. Can we try this system?"

***Why it works:** Enlists their support, defines terms clearly, shows benefit to them.*

CATEGORY 5: DELEGATION & RESPONSIBILITY MANAGEMENT

SCENARIO 5A: Delegating Task Upward (to Boss)

RELATIONSHIP: Manager

FORMALITY: Professional, solution-oriented

Script:

"I want to flag a decision that needs your input. [SITUATION]. I see these options: [OPTION A], [OPTION B], [OPTION C]. My recommendation is [OPTION X] because [BRIEF REASONING]. Does that align with your thinking, or would you prefer a different direction?"

***Why it works:** Brings solutions not just problems, shows thinking, asks for decision.*

SCENARIO 5B: Delegating to Team Member

RELATIONSHIP: Direct report or peer

FORMALITY: Clear, supportive

Script:

"I'd like you to take ownership of [TASK/PROJECT]. Here's the context: [BACKGROUND].
Success looks like: [CLEAR OUTCOME]
Deadline: [DATE]
Resources available: [WHAT THEY CAN USE]
Decision authority: You can [WHAT THEY CAN DECIDE] without checking in, but please loop me in on [WHAT REQUIRES APPROVAL]
Questions before you start?"

***Why it works:** Clear expectations, empowers them, defines boundaries.*

SCENARIO 5C: Reassigning Work That Shouldn't Be Yours

RELATIONSHIP: Colleague/peer

FORMALITY: Professional, collaborative

Script:

"I've been handling [TASK], but I think this actually sits better with [TEAM/PERSON] since [LOGICAL REASON].
I'm happy to:

- Transfer context/documentation
- Introduce you to relevant stakeholders
- Support during transition

Can we set up a brief handoff meeting?"

***Why it works:** Logical reasoning, offers smooth transition, collaborative tone.*

CATEGORY 6: SCOPE CREEP & EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT

SCENARIO 6A: "While You're At It" Requests

RELATIONSHIP: Various

FORMALITY: Professional, clarifying

Script:

"Just to make sure I understand the scope: you'd like me to [ORIGINAL REQUEST] plus [NEW REQUEST]?"

Adding [NEW REQUEST] would require [ADDITIONAL TIME/RESOURCES]. I can:

1. Complete [ORIGINAL] by [ORIGINAL DEADLINE] as planned
2. Do both, but move deadline to [NEW DATE]
3. [ALTERNATE SOLUTION]

Which approach works best for your needs?"

Why it works: *Makes scope change visible, shows impact, offers options.*

SCENARIO 6B: Undoing Scope Creep In Progress

RELATIONSHIP: Project stakeholder

FORMALITY: Professional, reset

Script:

"I want to recalibrate on this project. We originally agreed to [ORIGINAL SCOPE], and it's grown to include [ADDED ITEMS].

To deliver quality work and hit our timeline, I suggest we:

- Complete [CORE SCOPE] as planned by [DATE]
- Phase 2: [ADDED SCOPE] with new timeline [DATE]

This ensures we do both well rather than rushing everything. Thoughts?"

Why it works: *Acknowledges reality, proposes solution, maintains quality focus.*

CATEGORY 7: SOCIAL & FAMILY BOUNDARIES

SCENARIO 7A: Declining Social Obligation

RELATIONSHIP: Friends/extended family

FORMALITY: Warm, clear

Script:

"Thank you for thinking of me! I won't be able to make it to [EVENT]. I hope you have a wonderful time, and I'd love to catch up separately soon. [If appropriate: "Let's find a time for [ALTERNATIVE]!"]"

Why it works: *Appreciative, doesn't over-explain, maintains warmth.*

SCENARIO 7B: Reducing Frequency of Standing Commitment

RELATIONSHIP: Ongoing group (book club, sports league, etc.)

FORMALITY: Appreciative, honest

Script:

"I've really valued being part of [GROUP], and I need to scale back my participation. Instead of [CURRENT FREQUENCY], I'd like to join [REDUCED FREQUENCY] going forward. This helps me balance [OTHER PRIORITY] while staying connected to something I enjoy. I hope to continue at this reduced level—let me know if that works!"

Why it works: *States decision (not asking permission), shows appreciation, proposes solution.*

SCENARIO 7C: Exiting Commitment Gracefully

RELATIONSHIP: Organization/group

FORMALITY: Professional, gracious

Script:

"I want to let you know I'll be stepping back from [ROLE/COMMITTEE] after [COMPLETION DATE/EVENT]. I've appreciated [SPECIFIC POSITIVE], and I'm proud we accomplished [ACHIEVEMENT]. My priorities are shifting toward [OTHER FOCUS], and I want to give this role the attention it deserves—which I can't sustainably do right

now. I'm happy to help with transition by [OFFERING TO HELP] through [DATE]. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute."

Why it works: Gives notice, expresses gratitude, offers transition support.

CATEGORY 8: EMERGENCY & LAST-MINUTE REQUESTS

SCENARIO 8A: Assessing True Urgency

RELATIONSHIP: Anyone claiming urgency

FORMALITY: Professional, clarifying

Script:

"Help me understand the urgency. What happens if this waits until [REASONABLE TIMEFRAME]? I want to prioritize appropriately."

Why it works: Questions urgency without dismissing, gathers info for decision.

SCENARIO 8B: Declining False Urgency

RELATIONSHIP: Colleague

FORMALITY: Firm but not harsh

Script:

"I understand this feels urgent from your perspective. I'm currently handling [ACTUAL URGENT ITEM], and this doesn't meet the threshold for shifting priorities. I can address your request [REASONABLE TIMELINE]. Will that work?"

Why it works: Validates their feeling, asserts your judgment, offers timeline.

SCENARIO 8C: Accepting Real Urgency (With Boundaries)

RELATIONSHIP: Boss/critical situation

FORMALITY: Professional, problem-solving

Script:

"I understand this is urgent. To handle this well, I'll need to deprioritize [OTHER ITEMS] today.

I'll:

- Work on [URGENT ITEM] until [TIME/COMPLETION]
- Move [DEPRIORITIZED ITEM] to [NEW DATE]
- Update [AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS]

Sound good?"

Why it works: Shows you're responsive, makes trade-offs visible, manages expectations.

CUSTOMIZATION GUIDE

tone adjustments:

More Formal: Add "I appreciate your understanding" and "Please let me know"

More Casual: Remove "Thanks for thinking of me" formality, use contracted speech

More Apologetic (if needed): Start with "I apologize for any inconvenience"

Less Apologetic: Remove "I'd love to help" and similar softeners

Relationship Adjustments:

New/Untrusted Relationship: Be more formal, provide more context

Established/Trusted Relationship: Be more direct, less explanation needed

Power Imbalance (they outrank you): Offer more alternatives, be more collaborative

Difficult Person: Be briefer, more documentation-focused

Cultural Adjustments:

Direct Cultures (US, Germany, Netherlands): Use these scripts as-is

Indirect Cultures (Japan, many Asian/Middle Eastern): Add more relationship language, soften the "no"

Hierarchical Cultures: Show more deference to authority, less challenging

PRACTICE TEMPLATE

Scenario I'm facing: _____

Their relationship to me: _____

My boundary/need: _____

Closest script from library: _____

My customized version:

Backup if they push back:

**Remember: Good boundaries don't require perfect scripts.
They require clarity, consistency, and conviction.**

*Use these scripts as training wheels.
Eventually, boundaries will feel natural.*

TOOL 4: FOCUS PROTECTION DAILY CHECKLIST

Use This Every Morning to Set Up for Success

Date: _____ **Energy Level Today:** ____/10

MORNING SETUP (5 minutes)

- ☐ Reviewed my 3 weekly outcomes (know what matters this week)
- ☐ Identified today's ONE critical task (if I do nothing else...)
- ☐ Checked calendar for conflicts/surprises
- ☐ Confirmed my focus blocks are protected on calendar
- ☐ Set phone to Do Not Disturb during focus blocks
- ☐ Prepared workspace (closed unnecessary tabs/apps)
- ☐ Have water/coffee/what I need within reach

Today's Critical Task:

Focus Block 1: ____ am-____ am (working on: _____)

Focus Block 2: ____ pm-____ pm (working on: _____)

DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT (2 minutes)

- ☐ Closed email (will check at scheduled times only)
- ☐ Closed Slack/Teams (or set to Focus/DND mode)
- ☐ Closed all browser tabs not needed for current task
- ☐ Set website blocker for focus blocks (if using)
- ☐ Phone in another room OR on airplane mode
- ☐ Turned off all non-VIP notifications

My Communication Windows Today:

- ☐ Email check 1: ____ am
- ☐ Email check 2: ____ pm
- ☐ Email check 3: ____ pm (if needed)

Emergency Contact Method: _____

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (1 minute)

- ☐ Desk clear of clutter
- ☐ Door closed (if applicable) OR headphones on
- ☐ "Focus Mode" signal visible (if working near others)
- ☐ Noise-canceling headphones charged/ready
- ☐ Focus playlist queued up (if using)
- ☐ Temperature comfortable
- ☐ Lighting appropriate for task

Focus Signal for Others: _____

DURING FOCUS BLOCKS

- ☐ Working on ONE task at a time (no multitasking)
- ☐ Timer set for work block (90 min recommended)
- ☐ Taking brief stretch breaks (every 30-45 min)
- ☐ Logging interruptions when they happen

Interruption Log:

Time: ____	Source: _____	How handled: _____
Time: ____	Source: _____	How handled: _____
Time: ____	Source: _____	How handled: _____

BETWEEN BLOCKS (15-20 min recovery)

- ☐ Stood up and moved (walk, stretch, stairs)
- ☐ Looked away from screen (ideally at nature/window)
- ☐ Hydrated
- ☐ Quick bathroom/snack break
- ☐ Did NOT check email/Slack during recovery
- ☐ Allowed mind to wander (no podcast/stimulation)

Recovery Activity Used: _____

END OF DAY SHUTDOWN (5 minutes)

-
-
- ☐ Completed today's critical task (or documented why not)
 - ☐ Processed email inbox to zero (or identified tomorrow's priorities)
 - ☐ Identified tomorrow's ONE critical task
 - ☐ Cleared workspace
 - ☐ Closed all work applications
 - ☐ Reviewed tomorrow's calendar
 - ☐ Set tomorrow's focus blocks on calendar
 - ☐ Logged today's focus debt (if interruptions happened)

Tomorrow's Critical Task:

Tomorrow's Focus Blocks:

Block 1: ____ am-____ am

Block 2: ____ pm-____ pm

- ☐ **WORK IS DONE. I'm not thinking about it until tomorrow.**
-

DAILY REFLECTION (Optional - 2 minutes)

Focus Quality Today: ☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

What helped my focus today?

What hurt my focus today?

One thing to adjust tomorrow:

WEEKLY PATTERN TRACKING

Mon: Focus quality ____/10 Interruptions: ____

Tue: Focus quality ____/10 Interruptions: ____

Wed: Focus quality ____/10 Interruptions: ____

Thu: Focus quality ____/10 Interruptions: ____

Fri: Focus quality ____/10 Interruptions: ____

Weekly Average: ____/10

Biggest focus improvement this week: _____

Biggest focus challenge this week: _____

TOOL 5: CLARIFY SYSTEM QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

One-Page Quick Reference Guide

Print this. Put it on your wall. Reference it weekly.

C - CLARIFY OUTCOMES

Weekly Ritual: Sunday evening, 30 minutes

RULE OF 3

Choose 3 meaningful outcomes for the week:

- 1 Professional
- 1 Personal
- 1 Maintenance/Relationship

Use results-oriented language: "Complete quarterly analysis and present findings" not "Work on analysis"

Add 20% buffer to time estimates

DECISION FILTERS

Before saying yes to anything, ask:

1. Does this serve my core values?
 2. Does this advance my 3 weekly outcomes?
 3. What am I saying NO to if I say yes to this?
-

L - LIMIT WORK-IN-PROGRESS

3-PROJECT MAXIMUM

Active projects receiving attention: MAX 3

Everything else: Parking lot

SAYING NO SCRIPTS

For boss: "To do this well, which current project should I deprioritize?"

For colleague: "I'm at capacity through [DATE]. Would [LATER] work?"

For anyone: "That doesn't align with my current priorities."

MEETING CONSTRAINTS

- No agenda = No meeting
 - Default to 25/50 minutes (not 30/60)
 - Max meeting hours per week: [YOUR LIMIT]
-

A - ARCHITECT CALENDAR ZONES

ENERGY-BASED SCHEDULING

Peak Energy Windows: [YOUR TIMES] → Deep Work

Moderate Energy: [YOUR TIMES] → Collaboration

Low Energy: [YOUR TIMES] → Admin

PROTECTED FOCUS BLOCKS

2 daily 90-minute blocks during peak energy

Mark as "Focus Time" on calendar

NEVER schedule meetings here

ULTRADIAN RHYTHMS

Work 90 minutes → Break 15-20 minutes

Breaks are recovery, not wasted time

R - REDUCE

ELIMINATE

Zero-based calendar: If it wouldn't make the cut today, remove it

Warren Buffett 5/25 Rule: Focus on top 5 goals, avoid the other 20

AUTOMATE

- Email filters and templates
- Calendar scheduling tools
- Recurring task templates
- Workflow integrations

DELEGATE

70% Rule: If someone can do it 70% as well, delegate it

Document processes for easy handoff

Train once, benefit forever

I - INSULATE FOCUS

ATTENTION PROTECTION

- Phone on Do Not Disturb (VIPs only)
- Close email/Slack during focus blocks
- Website blockers during deep work
- Physical signal (door closed, headphones on)

FLOW STATE CONDITIONS

4. Clear goal for the session
5. Challenge level 4% above skill
6. Immediate feedback on progress
7. No interruptions

RECOVERY PROTOCOLS

- 15-20 min break after 90 min work
 - Nature exposure when possible
 - Movement between blocks
 - No screens during recovery
-

F - FLOW THROUGH EXECUTION

DAILY START PROTOCOL (10 min)

- ☐ Review 3 weekly outcomes
- ☐ Identify today's ONE critical task
- ☐ Confirm focus blocks protected
- ☐ Set up workspace

2-MINUTE RULE

Can't start big task? Commit to 2 minutes only
Usually creates momentum to continue

CHAOS DAY PROTOCOL

When plans explode:

- ONE critical priority only
 - 15-minute work sprints
 - Defer everything non-urgent
 - Plan B ready to deploy
-

Y - YIELD INSIGHTS

DAILY SHUTDOWN (5 min)

- ☐ Note tomorrow's critical task
- ☐ Clear workspace
- ☐ Close all work apps
- ☐ Work is DONE

WEEKLY REVIEW (Friday, 10 min)

- ☐ Did I achieve my 3 outcomes?
- ☐ What worked/didn't work?
- ☐ What did I learn?
- ☐ One system improvement to make

MONTHLY OPTIMIZATION

- ☐ Review goals - still relevant?
 - ☐ Analyze system effectiveness
 - ☐ One major improvement to implement
 - ☐ Test new tool/technique
-

YOUR PERSONALIZED SETTINGS

Chronotype: ☐ Lark ☐ Intermediate ☐ Owl

Peak Energy Windows:

Morning: _____ to _____
Afternoon: _____ to _____

Focus Block Times:

Block 1: _____ to _____
Block 2: _____ to _____

Email Check Windows: _____, _____, _____

Weekly Meeting Limit: _____ hours

Emergency Contact Method: _____

REMEMBER:

- **Systems > Willpower**
 - **Progress > Perfection**
 - **Recovery = Performance**
 - **Boundaries = Respect (for yourself and others)**
-

Download all implementation tools:

larapair.com/clarify-resources

Part of the CLARIFY Time Management System | Track · Analyze · Optimize

TOOL 7: TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

CLARIFY SYSTEM TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE Solutions to 30 Common Implementation Problems

When the system isn't working, the problem is usually one of these.
Find your issue, implement the solution.

PROBLEM #1: I can't stick to my 3 weekly outcomes

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Outcomes too vague or too big
- ☐ Didn't protect time for them
- ☐ Saying yes to everything that comes up
- ☐ Energy mismatch (scheduling hard work at low energy times)

SOLUTION:

- Make outcomes smaller and more specific
 - Block time on calendar FIRST, before other commitments
 - Use decision filter: 'Does this advance my 3 outcomes?' before accepting anything
 - Move high-energy outcomes to high-energy time blocks
-

PROBLEM #2: People keep interrupting my focus blocks

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Haven't communicated your focus schedule
- ☐ No visible 'do not disturb' signal
- ☐ Not holding your own boundaries consistently
- ☐ Haven't provided alternative access times

SOLUTION:

- Share your focus schedule with team/family
- Use visual signals (closed door, headphones, focus sign)
- Hold boundary 100% of the time for 2 weeks (people learn)
- Offer specific alternative times: 'I'm free at 2pm to discuss this'
- Set up emergency-only contact method

PROBLEM #3: I feel guilty saying no

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ People-pleasing patterns
- ☐ Fear of disappointing others
- ☐ Not seeing the opportunity cost
- ☐ Haven't practiced enough

SOLUTION:

- Remember: Every yes to them is a no to your priorities
 - Calculate what you're sacrificing: time with family? Your health? Your goals?
 - Use scripts from Boundary Library (makes it less personal)
 - Start with low-stakes no's to build confidence
 - Track wins: 'I said no to X, which meant I could do Y'
-

PROBLEM #4: My energy tracking shows no clear pattern

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Sample size too small (need more days)
- ☐ Life too chaotic right now for patterns
- ☐ Not tracking consistently (missing data points)
- ☐ Ignoring signals your body is sending

SOLUTION:

- Track for 14 days instead of 7
 - Look for patterns across weeks, not individual days
 - Set phone reminders to track at consistent times
 - Notice: When do you naturally want coffee? When do you crash?
 - If truly no pattern: You may be chronically depleted (address sleep/stress first)
-

PROBLEM #5: I never make it to my weekly planning ritual

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ No specific time scheduled

- ☐ Too long/feels overwhelming
- ☐ Doing it when energy is low
- ☐ Haven't seen the benefit yet

SOLUTION:

- Calendar it as recurring non-negotiable appointment
 - Start with 15 minutes, not 30
 - Sunday evening or Monday morning (your choice, be consistent)
 - Use the template (removes decision fatigue)
 - Track correlation: weeks you plan vs. weeks you don't - which are better?
-

PROBLEM #6–30: See full manual for all additional entries including:

- Social media addiction
 - Can't identify priorities
 - Partner/family not supportive
 - Job doesn't allow autonomy
 - Cultural workplace conflicts
 - Perfectionism paralysis
 - Can't turn off at night
 - Constantly context switching
 - Tools/apps overwhelming
 - System feels robotic/joyless
-

PROBLEM #7: Chaos days derail me completely

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ No backup plan
- ☐ All-or-nothing thinking
- ☐ Don't recognize chaos day fast enough
- ☐ Beating yourself up instead of adapting

SOLUTION:

- Create Chaos Day Protocol in advance (see Quick Reference)
- At noon, ask: 'Is this a normal day or chaos day?'
- If chaos: immediately switch to Plan B (one priority only)
- Track chaos days: if >2/week, need to address root cause

PROBLEM #8: I can't achieve flow state

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Task too easy or too hard
- ☐ Too many interruptions
- ☐ Environment wrong
- ☐ Transition not gradual enough

SOLUTION:

- Adjust difficulty: add constraints if too easy, break into pieces if too hard
 - Complete focus protection protocol (see checklist)
 - Create flow-friendly environment (see Architecture chapter)
 - Use 5-minute transition ritual before deep work
-

PROBLEM #9: My boss doesn't respect my boundaries

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Haven't made boundaries explicit
- ☐ Inconsistent enforcement
- ☐ Not offering alternatives
- ☐ Boss personality/culture mismatch

SOLUTION:

- Have direct conversation: 'To do my best work, I need X'
 - Show impact: 'When I protect focus time, I deliver Y faster/better'
 - Provide emergency protocol: 'If truly urgent, here's how to reach me'
 - Document what you deliver in focus time vs. when interrupted
 - If no improvement after 2 months: may need role/company change
-

PROBLEM #10: I'm productive all day but burned out

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Not taking breaks
- ☐ Working beyond capacity

- ☐ No recovery time
- ☐ Confusing busy with productive

SOLUTION:

- Mandatory 15-min break after every 90-min work block
 - Set weekly hour limit and STOP at that point
 - Build in 1 full rest day per week (no work thoughts)
 - Distinguish effort from impact: are you just busy or actually advancing goals?
 - Consider: productivity without recovery is unsustainable
-

PROBLEM #11: System works for 2 weeks then fails

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Initial motivation wore off
- ☐ Made it too complicated
- ☐ No weekly review/adjustment
- ☐ Life circumstances changed

SOLUTION:

- Simplify: which ONE element has highest impact? Start there only
 - Weekly review is non-negotiable (this catches problems early)
 - Build in flexibility from day 1 (life WILL change)
 - Remember: systems need maintenance, not perfection
-

PROBLEM #12: I procrastinate my most important work

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Task feels overwhelming
- ☐ Perfectionism/fear of starting
- ☐ Unclear next action
- ☐ Energy mismatch

SOLUTION:

- Use 2-minute rule: commit to just 2 minutes
- Break into smallest possible first step
- Morning: identify the ONE scary/important thing, do it first
- Match task to your highest energy period

- Ask: What am I afraid of? Address fear, not just logistics
-

PROBLEM #13: Email still controls my day

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Checking constantly instead of batching
- ☐ No filters/automation
- ☐ FOMO about missing something
- ☐ Responding to everything immediately

SOLUTION:

- Set 2-3 specific email windows, CLOSE it otherwise
 - Create filters (newsletters, FYI's, etc.)
 - Auto-responder: 'I check email at X, Y, Z times'
 - Ask: What's the actual consequence of responding in 2 hours vs. 2 minutes?
 - Turn off email notifications completely
-

PROBLEM #14: Can't delegate (team or personal life)

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ 'Faster to do it myself' thinking
- ☐ Perfectionism
- ☐ Haven't documented processes
- ☐ Don't trust others

SOLUTION:

- Calculate: 2 hours training = 30 min saved/week = 26 hours/year saved
 - Apply 70% rule: good enough is good enough
 - Create simple SOPs for repeat tasks
 - Start with lowest-stakes tasks to build trust
 - Remember: your time is better spent on things only you can do
-

PROBLEM #15: Work bleeds into personal time

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ No clear shutdown ritual
- ☐ Can't 'turn off' mentally
- ☐ Check work email/Slack at night
- ☐ Home office never closes

SOLUTION:

- Implement 5-minute shutdown ritual (see checklist) religiously
 - Remove work apps from phone OR use separate work phone
 - Physical separation: close office door, put laptop away
 - Create transition ritual (change clothes, take walk, etc.)
 - After-hours auto-responder: 'I respond during business hours'
-

PROBLEM #16: Too many meetings to get work done

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ No meeting limits
- ☐ Accepting everything by default
- ☐ No agenda enforcement
- ☐ Can't decline

SOLUTION:

- Set weekly meeting max (15–20 hours recommended)
 - Default response: 'Let me check my meeting capacity'
 - Enforce 'no agenda, no meeting' with everyone
 - Decline meetings where you're not essential (offer to review notes)
 - Block focus time FIRST, then accept meeting invites
-

PROBLEM #17: System doesn't work with my ADHD

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Using neurotypical approaches
- ☐ Rigid structure feels suffocating
- ☐ Time blindness not accommodated
- ☐ Hyperfocus not leveraged

SOLUTION:

- Shorter work blocks (25–45 min instead of 90)

- Visual timers (Time Timer or similar)
 - Body doubling (work with others, even virtually)
 - Embrace hyperfocus when it hits (don't interrupt it)
 - More frequent check-ins with system
 - Gamify with streaks/rewards
 - See Neurodiversity section in book for full adaptations
-

PROBLEM #18: Unexpected emergencies kill my plans

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ No buffer time
- ☐ Every gap filled
- ☐ All commitments treated as equal priority
- ☐ No triage protocol

SOLUTION:

- Build 20% buffer into all estimates
 - Keep Friday afternoon open for catch-up
 - When emergency hits: 'What can wait? What can't?'
 - Communicate impact: 'To handle this, X will be delayed'
 - Track emergencies: if >2/week, address root cause
-

PROBLEM #19: My energy is always low

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Sleep debt
- ☐ Poor nutrition/hydration
- ☐ No movement
- ☐ Chronic stress/burnout

SOLUTION:

- **THIS IS NOT A PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEM.** Address health first.
- See doctor to rule out medical issues
- Focus on basics: 7–9 hours sleep, regular meals, daily movement
- Reduce commitments by 50% while you recover
- Energy management comes before time management

PROBLEM #20: I'm overwhelmed by the whole system

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Trying to implement everything at once
- ☐ All-or-nothing thinking
- ☐ Lost sight of why this matters
- ☐ Made it too complicated

SOLUTION:

- STOP. Pick ONE element only for next 2 weeks
 - Best starter: Rule of 3 weekly planning
 - Once that's habit, add one more element
 - System serves you, you don't serve the system
 - Simplify ruthlessly: what's the 20% that gives 80% of benefit?
-

PROBLEM #21: Social media addiction / digital distraction

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Constant checking habit
- ☐ Reward-seeking dopamine cycle
- ☐ No screen boundaries
- ☐ Using phone for every downtime moment

SOLUTION:

- Set 3 digital windows per day for social use
 - Delete addictive apps from phone
 - Use grayscale mode during work hours
 - Replace check habit with short walks or breathing
 - Track screen time weekly and celebrate reductions
-

PROBLEM #22: Can't identify true priorities

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Everything feels equally important

- ☐ No clear criteria for decision-making
- ☐ Fear of choosing wrong
- ☐ Too reactive to others' demands

SOLUTION:

- Define top 3 outcomes for the week before anything else
 - Use impact/effort matrix for clarity
 - Ask: 'If I could only do ONE thing today, what would matter most?'
 - Revisit priorities weekly — they shift
 - Remember: saying no is what makes priorities real
-

PROBLEM #23: Partner or family not supportive

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Haven't communicated your 'why'
- ☐ They perceive system as selfish or rigid
- ☐ No shared benefit framed
- ☐ Old patterns of guilt or obligation

SOLUTION:

- Have an open conversation: explain purpose and benefits
 - Involve them in your scheduling (show what improves life together)
 - Use 'we' language — 'so we have more quality time'
 - Acknowledge their needs and negotiate compromise
 - Track progress to show results and reinforce trust
-

PROBLEM #24: Job doesn't allow autonomy

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Micromanagement culture
- ☐ Unclear performance metrics
- ☐ Reactive workflow environment
- ☐ No control over schedule

SOLUTION:

- Focus on what you *can* control (breaks, boundaries, focus blocks)
- Communicate proactively about deliverables and focus needs

- Document interruptions and their impact
 - Request one experiment: 2 hours of protected focus time
 - If nothing changes, evaluate long-term fit
-

PROBLEM #25: Cultural or workplace expectations conflict with system

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ High availability norms
- ☐ Hierarchical environment discourages boundary-setting
- ☐ Cultural pressure to conform
- ☐ Perceived as not 'team player'

SOLUTION:

- Adapt language, not principle — frame it as 'efficiency improvement'
 - Start small: implement one boundary at a time
 - Align system to company goals (e.g., 'this helps me deliver faster')
 - Model results, not rebellion — people respect outcomes
 - Find allies within culture who support balance
-

PROBLEM #26: Perfectionism paralysis

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Fear of judgment or failure
- ☐ Never feels 'good enough'
- ☐ Over-preparing before acting
- ☐ Micromanaging every step

SOLUTION:

- Adopt 70% rule: progress > perfection
 - Set explicit time limits per task
 - Use 'publish imperfectly' challenges weekly
 - Ask: 'Would I notice this if someone else did it?'
 - Remember: perfectionism hides fear — act, then refine later
-

PROBLEM #27: Can't turn off at night

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Mind racing after work
- ☐ Screen exposure too late
- ☐ No transition ritual
- ☐ Using caffeine or work talk before bed

SOLUTION:

- Create 60-minute wind-down window
 - No screens after 9pm
 - Replace scrolling with reading or stretching
 - Use brain dump journal before bed
 - Treat rest as a productivity tool — not a reward
-

PROBLEM #28: Constantly context switching

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Too many simultaneous tasks
- ☐ Notifications always on
- ☐ No batching of similar work
- ☐ Overcommitted to meetings

SOLUTION:

- Batch similar tasks (email, calls, admin) together
 - Turn off notifications during focus time
 - Use one capture tool — no scattered lists
 - Schedule 'deep work' as meetings with yourself
 - Review commitments monthly — prune aggressively
-

PROBLEM #29: Tools and apps overwhelming

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Too many systems
- ☐ Switching tools midstream
- ☐ Unclear what each tool is for
- ☐ Using tech as procrastination

SOLUTION:

- Audit your tools: keep 3 max (calendar, task, notes)
 - One tool per purpose only
 - Eliminate duplicates monthly
 - Use analog when focus matters
 - Remember: simplicity = speed
-

PROBLEM #30: System feels robotic or joyless

DIAGNOSIS:

- ☐ Over-structured workflow
- ☐ No space for creativity
- ☐ Too focused on optimization
- ☐ Disconnected from purpose

SOLUTION:

- Revisit your 'why' — what matters most?
 - Add joy rituals to routines (music, candles, breaks outdoors)
 - Block time weekly for spontaneous or creative work
 - Redesign your schedule for energy, not efficiency
 - Remember: productivity is a tool to live better, not a cage
-

STILL STUCK?

If you've tried the relevant solutions and still struggling:

1. Simplify to absolute minimum: just 3 weekly outcomes, nothing else
2. Get support: coach, accountability partner, or therapist
3. Consider whether external circumstances need to change (job, living situation, etc.)
4. Be patient: behavior change takes 2–3 months, not 2–3 weeks

Remember: The goal isn't perfect productivity.

The goal is sustainable progress toward what matters.