

# WAITING TIME BANDITS

EST. IMPACT: 30–60 minutes  
per week

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Waiting becomes a time bandit when it's vague and unbounded.

You send something out, need a reply, or are blocked by someone else.

Nothing is happening, but the task stays mentally open. You keep checking, wondering, and circling back.

*Time leaks through repeated “status checks.”*

## THE FIX

Every time a task leaves your control, do these three things immediately:

**1) Waiting on:** Convert the task into a named state.

Example: Waiting on Jack to review.

**2) Set a Trigger:** Assign a next action to the wait.

Examples: Follow up in two days,”

“If no reply by Friday, I will escalate.

**3) Schedule Follow-Up:** Pick the next time you will check in.

“I’ll check in on Friday.”

Let the waiting go until that follow-up, not sooner.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Collapse follow-ups into one daily or two weekly windows. Batch them on purpose to prevent constant checking.
- Ask for deadlines instead of status whenever possible. “When should I expect an answer?” gives a clear follow-up point.
- If the wait is low-value, drop it. Decide in advance: “If no reply by Friday, I’ll close this out.”

*The goal:* Fewer mental check-ins. Less random distraction.