

**EFFORT :**  
**8. THE POWER OF  
IF/THEN THINKING**

**HOW MUCH DO YOU  
AGREE WITH THE  
FOLLOWING STATEMENT:**

***"EVERY TIME I TRY TO  
WORK - SOMEONE OR  
SOMETHING DISTRACTS  
ME!"***



I WANNA BE PRODUCTIVE,



BUT MY PHONE WON'T LET ME.

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**WHAT ABOUT THIS STATEMENT:**

***"I SORT OF WANT TO PUT IN  
THE EFFORT, BUT WILL BE  
EASILY PUT OFF IF ONE THING  
GOES WRONG."***

***HOW OFTEN  
ARE YOU...***

***1. DISTRACTED  
BY A PHONE  
CALL OR TEXT?***

***2. DISTURBED  
BY FRIENDS  
COMING OVER?***

### 3. FAILING TO DO STUFF BECAUSE THE WEEKEND WAS JUST "TOO BUSY"?

## BIG IDEA

- × In the Book "Psychology of Action" (1996) Peter Gollwitzer and John Barge argue that these happen because you have low: **"Implementation Intention."**
- × They argue that successful students anticipate these problems and plan how to Respond to them.
- × They suggest that the answer is to Anticipate obstacles and build in pre-prepared solutions.
- × Using their method you can effectively beat self-sabotage before it even happens...

**CRISIS:**  
**"I REALLY NEED TO  
COMPLETE MY ONLINE  
RESEARCH FOR MY  
HISTORY EXAM."**

#### RESPONSE - STUDENT 1:

*"I'll get started on that first thing in the morning."*

- This is a really common internal dialogue – most of us do it!
- The problem is; it only needs one distraction to bring the whole plan to a standstill.
- The plan is a good one, but it doesn't account for any unforeseen changes.

#### RESPONSE - STUDENT 2:

*"I'll get started on that first thing in the morning. And....."*

...If I wake up late by accident, then I'll use my morning break to start instead.

...if I feel really demotivated, then I'll get some caffeine to give me a boost.

...if I get disturbed by friends, then I'll make an excuse and go to the library.

...if the internet is down, then I'll start by using my class notes and save the research till later.

#### IMPROVE YOUR IMPLEMENTATION INTENTION

*It's easy to see which student is most likely to succeed!!*

**NOW YOUR TURN...**

*Take 5 mins to think and make a list all the usual blockers you use.*

**THEN...**

*Spend 5 mins thinking through a solution you can COMMIT to for each one.*

*This will help you strengthen your Implementation intention.*

*You WILL put the effort in even if small things crop up!*

## IF/THEN PLANNING

Start by using a table like the one below.

After a while, you'll become good at internalising this kind of planning and won't have to write it down at all.

if...	Then...
if...	Then...
if...	Then...

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## FINAL THOUGHTS

- × If...then planning should start quite deliberately.
- × The grid should be used to record your intentions, then kept somewhere you can see it.
- × Try sticking it on the fridge or above your desk.
- × When obstacles arise then you can refer to your plan, to help you decide what to do!
- × After a while you'll become good at internalising this kind of planning.
- × And be able to do it more instinctively – a good place to be!

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