

Deep Work — Focus System Framework

A structured model for distraction-resistant output.

What This Framework Is

This framework separates work into two categories: deep work, done in concentrated, distraction-free blocks that produce output hard to replicate quickly, and shallow work, the reactive, low-concentration tasks that fill a day without moving anything important forward. The system is about protecting enough time in the first category on purpose, since it rarely happens by accident.

The Core Mechanism

- 1. Fixed time-blocking.** Deep work needs a scheduled window on the calendar, not a “whenever I get to it” intention. Blocks that aren't scheduled get consumed by shallow work by default.
- 2. Friction removal before the block starts.** Phone, notifications, and open tabs need to be out of reach before the block begins. Removing them mid-block already costs the focus it's meant to protect.
- 3. Protect the ramp, not just the peak.** The first several minutes of a block are a ramp-up, not wasted time. Interrupting early in a block resets the ramp rather than just delaying the “good part.”

How to Apply This Week

1. Block two fixed deep-work windows on the calendar this week.
2. Define one single output each block needs to produce before it starts.
3. Name three specific distractions to remove before each block begins.
4. Log actual focused minutes against the planned block length.

Where This Breaks Down

The usual failure point isn't the block itself. It's treating “available” time as automatically deep. A two-hour window with the phone in the next room but notifications still live on a laptop, or a block scheduled but not actually defended against a colleague's “got a sec?”, produces the appearance of deep work with the actual output of shallow work. The block only counts once the friction is physically removed, not just intended to be removed.

Simple Tracker

Day	Planned Block	Actual Minutes Focused	Interruptions