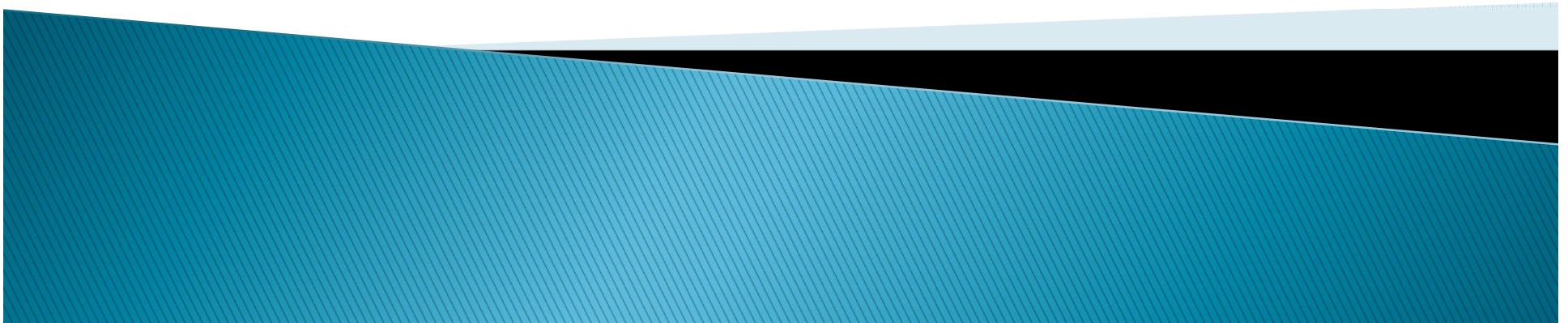


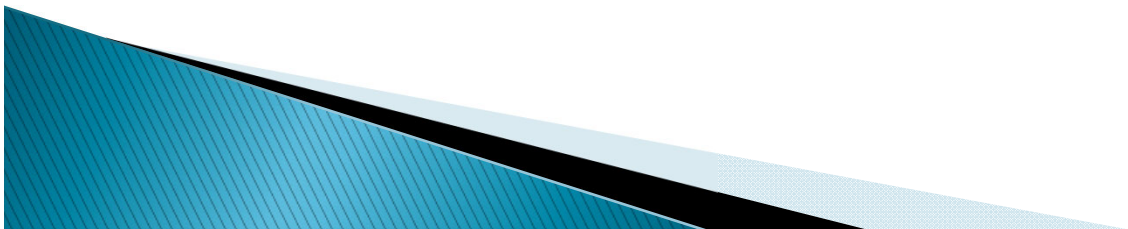
# Multi-tasking: Science and Impacts

Source: Nicklaus Prieto “Debunking the Myth of Multitasking at the Office.  
April 21, 2014  
[www.docstoc.com](http://www.docstoc.com)



# Science

- ▶ Performing two or more tasks. The brain splits job w/two frontal lobes.
- ▶ Okay with simple tasks–walking and chewing gum
- ▶ More complex tasks brain prioritizes to what it perceives is most complex task and minimizes smaller tasks.
- ▶ Multi–tasking two or more complex tasks–one or other suffers.
- ▶ “Continuous partial attention” jumping from one task to another stunts progress on more difficult tasks.
- ▶ Studies indicate introduction of a third task will often lead to completely forgetting the “backburner” task.

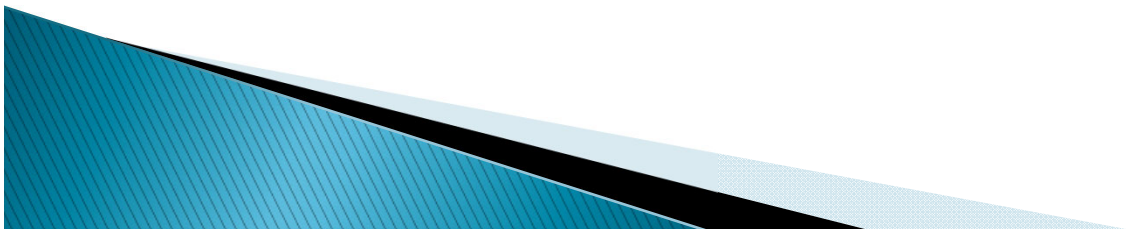


# Side Effects on People

- ▶ We are actually less productive shifting back and forth on tasks.
- ▶ Studies indicate that multi-tasking depletes productivity by 40% and increases task time by 50%.
- ▶ Makes focus much more difficult.
- ▶ Actually decreases IQ by 15%.
- ▶ Multi-taskers often feel out of control.
- ▶ Ironically, Constant multi-taskers are not as good at multi-tasking as infrequent multi-taskers. They have difficulty distinguishing Important from trivial data.

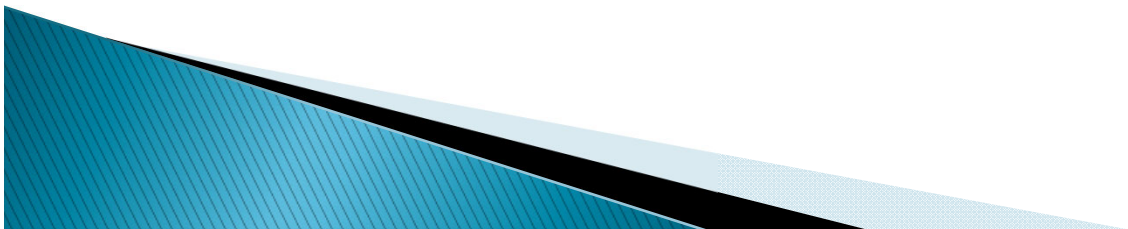
# Impacts on the Workplace

- ▶ Multi-tasking managers spend less quality time with people.
- ▶ “Organizational multi-tasking” leads to more delays, interruptions and decreases in quality work.
- ▶ Prioritization of work gets lost. Everything is a priority.
- ▶ Organizations lose up to 27% productivity due to multi-tasking.



# Ideas for Mitigating Multi-tasking

- ▶ Disconnect Yourself. “I am spending the next hour on..”
- ▶ E mail is a huge distraction. Set aside times to do e mail. Thirty minutes, morning, noon and night?
- ▶ Plan tasks and when possible set “realistic deadlines. Know when you will work on something when you set the deadline.
- ▶ Create your Island.



# Notes

