

The Empty Inbox Myth

C1 Advanced · Work · about 2 min of audio

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Name _____

Date _____

Part 1 — Fill the gaps while you listen

1. An empty inbox looks like _____ of control, yet it may simply record how quickly someone has mistaken motion for progress.
2. At a small design office, one editor cleared messages before lunch, then discovered the urgent brief buried beneath polished _____.
3. By noon, the inbox was _____, while the report still lacked its central comparison.
4. This mismatch persists because messages arrive with visible edges, whereas difficult tasks resist a _____ moment of completion.
5. Each reply offers a tiny verdict, a neat timestamp that can be mistaken for proof of _____.
6. Yet concentrated work often appears, from outside, almost _____ still, a page open, a pencil untouched, one question under scrutiny.
7. That stillness is not laziness, but the interval in which competing _____ are tested against evidence.
8. Teams that prize instant replies can therefore reward the fastest interruption rather than the most _____ judgment.
9. A better measure might be whether the day's _____ survive a second reading, not how little red remains onscreen.
10. An inbox is useful as a doorway, but no doorway deserves to be mistaken for the _____.

Part 2 — Write every sentence you hear

1. _____

2. _____

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Answer key

Part 1 — the missing words

1. evidence 2. acknowledgments 3. immaculate 4. satisfying 5. usefulness 6. embarrassingly 7. explanations 8. consequential 9. decisions 10. destination

Part 2 — the full transcript

1. An empty inbox looks like evidence of control, yet it may simply record how quickly someone has mistaken motion for progress.
2. At a small design office, one editor cleared messages before lunch, then discovered the urgent brief buried beneath polished acknowledgments.
3. By noon, the inbox was immaculate, while the report still lacked its central comparison.
4. This mismatch persists because messages arrive with visible edges, whereas difficult tasks resist a satisfying moment of completion.
5. Each reply offers a tiny verdict, a neat timestamp that can be mistaken for proof of usefulness.
6. Yet concentrated work often appears, from outside, almost embarrassingly still, a page open, a pencil untouched, one question under scrutiny.
7. That stillness is not laziness, but the interval in which competing explanations are tested against evidence.
8. Teams that prize instant replies can therefore reward the fastest interruption rather than the most consequential judgment.
9. A better measure might be whether the day's decisions survive a second reading, not how little red remains onscreen.
10. An inbox is useful as a doorway, but no doorway deserves to be mistaken for the destination.

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