

How to make friction work for you

Friction is anything that slows work down or makes it harder than it needs to be.

It can be unhelpful but it can also be useful when it creates moments to pause, reflect and think more carefully – because faster doesn't always mean better.



Deeper dive

Three ways to make friction more useful

Spot sources of friction

Start by noticing when work feels frustrating, harder than it needs to be or just isn't working.

Ask yourself, *"When do I feel most frustrated in a week?" or "When is something not working but I'm not sure why?"*

Try to get specific about what's creating that feeling. Is it a meeting, process, person or way of working?

Then look for patterns in where friction shows up.

Get rid of bad friction

More isn't always better. Extra meetings, emails and people involved in decisions can make work slower and more complicated.

Try: Choosing one source of friction for you and look for something you could subtract.

This could look like: making a weekly meeting fortnightly, inviting fewer people to a conversation, or sharing a project idea on just one page.

Create good friction

Some friction can make your work better. Slowing down at the right moment can improve the quality of thinking and decisions.

Before a meeting: Try adding some good friction by asking for a clear decision and discussion agenda before it gets booked.

In a discussion: Try asking a friction-creating question. This could sound like: *"If we didn't do it this way, how else could we do it?"*

Coach yourself

What's one change I could try this week to reduce unhelpful friction?

