

# VACATION CHECK LIST

## PRE-TRIP PREP

- **PLAN VACATIONS AROUND THE "SEASONALITY" OF YOUR WORK.** Try scheduling longer trips for less busy periods of work, and "long weekend vacations" when work is busier.
- **PLAN DIFFERENT TRIPS TO MEET DIFFERENT NEEDS.** Family and extended family vacations are fun, but couples may also benefit from having a couples-weekend away.
- **INTENTIONALLY MINIMIZE THE UNEXPECTED.** Set expectations with clients a few weeks before you leave. Coordinate upcoming work and vacations with your team to help everyone turn off work on vacation.
- **UTILIZE BUILT-IN REVIEW TIME.** Is there a task a client or colleague needs to review? Give it to them before you leave so it can be waiting for you upon your return.
- **BLOCK OFF PRE- AND POST-TRIP "QUIET" WORKDAYS.** Avoid scheduling meetings/phone calls the day before you leave and the day you return to better manage the unexpected.
- **CREATE A "WHAT CAN WAIT" LIST.** A week before you go, create a list of what can be done after vacation, versus must be completed before you go. Use this to eliminate the "I'll get that one thing done" while on vacation temptation.
- **SCHEDULE POST-VACATION "CHECK IN" TIMES.** Set up meetings or calls to review the work you have delegated to others for the second or third day of your return.
- **DECIDE HOW "CONNECTED" YOU WANT TO BE.** If you can't fully disconnect, consider limiting emails or calls to the least disruptive part of the day. At a minimum, try to map out a few days to fully disconnect.
- **CAREFULLY DEFINE EMERGENCIES.** Think ahead about what challenges could arise and plan possible scenarios for how to address them. Clearly define emergencies to avoid everything becoming one.
- **SMALL STEPS TO START.** If your workflow feels highly unpredictable and/or it's hard for others to provide backup, maybe start by taking a few long weekends to practice fully disconnecting from work.

## POST-TRIP REVIEW

- **INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY.** Due to increased purpose and focus, sometimes just before leaving for vacation, a variety of tasks get completed more quickly. Did this happen to you?
- **NEW PERSPECTIVES.** Stepping away from work and your usual routines sometimes provides new and creative ideas going forward. Did any new ideas surface for you?
- **ASSESS WORKFLOW.** Was leaving and returning from vacation particularly challenging? This may be a sign you need to "recalibrate" workflow—change the pace and quantity of the work you do.
- **ASSESS DELEGATION.** Was the work you asked others to complete successfully accomplished while you were gone? If not, take time to address this when you return.
- **KEEP TRACK OF WHAT WORKED.** To minimize the stress and maximize positive outcomes, consider creating a list of ideas you can refer back to for planning your next vacation.