Chapter Five Tip Sheet: Close the Loop
How do I make sure my workflow process is as efficient as possible?

1. Don't change things just to change them. If an existing system works reasonably well and you can't think of a better way to do it, then why fix it?

2. Learn the keyboard shortcuts for all your computer programs, and program macros for common tasks. You'll save a surprising amount of time.

3. If someone doesn't acknowledge a communication, repeat it. If they still don't respond, contact them through another medium. If they keep ignoring you, go over their head or around them.

4. Even if you can't tweak a particular process into usefulness, it may be possible to merge it with another idea that didn't quite work and come up with something that does.

5. If you can't clear a human bottleneck, look for a way to bypass him or her.

6. Make contingency plans for your own unavailability. Coordinate with a coworker to handle your part of a project if you're unavailable, and make sure your project resources are easily accessible and understandable.

7. To clear the path to greater group productivity, meet with your team only when absolutely necessary—and then only briefly.

8. Whenever you can spare a little extra time, polish one of your critical productivity skills. Focus on one at a time, and never accept just good enough as good enough.

9. Don't fear failure, but don't assume it's inevitable. Fortune favors the bold, so once you've made your basic preparations, dive right in and deal with the details as they arise.

10. Keep an eye on your productivity metrics. The numbers will tell you what works and what you'll need to fix.