

# The Indispensable Assistant

## OVERVIEW

There's no question that skilled, empowered administrative professionals and support staff members are vital to a successful team. But what is it that makes them so valuable—or indispensable—to their organizations? Quite simply, they see their work as more than just “a job” and are motivated to learn the time and task management techniques necessary for getting the most out of each day.

In this powerful workshop, we offer proven techniques for becoming more productive, more valuable and more effective for your organization. We'll gear the program to offer specific solutions for coordinating your organization's unique projects and priorities, getting and staying organized and handling the pressure of multiple deadlines and bosses. These new skills will inspire you to greater self-confidence so you can work more independently and solve problems more confidently.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Organize and control multiple projects and priorities even when reporting to multiple bosses
- Keep the office running smoothly when the boss is away
- How to delegate effectively

- Communicate assertively to get the help and resources needed to get the job done
- Commonsense ways to turn stress into positive energy

## COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

### How to get organized and stay that way

- Are you on a path to success? Successful assistants need a strong foundation to build professional skills
- Using the 80/20 rule to schedule your most important tasks
- Avoid falling into the trap of working more and accomplishing less
- How to create a daily action plan— Perform two easy tasks at the end of each day and save hours (and headaches) the next day
- Schedule for a last-minute crisis
- Use the part of your day that most people waste
- Organize your work area for improved efficiency
- When less truly is more—how to practice the art of paper purging

### Time management solutions that work

- Discover the “Golden Rules” of time management
- Enlist your co-workers' help on a project by finding a common goal
- Specific methods for shaving time from routine jobs

- Pinpoint time-wasters in your workflow system, including the biggest self-generated time waster
- Parkinson's Law—reclaim wasted time by applying its universal lessons
- When taking a well-deserved break can actually save you valuable time
- Steps to streamline paperwork by using the “handle it once” rule
- Dealing with correspondence—shortcuts you and your boss can work out together

### Managing multiple projects and priorities

- Tips from professional project managers that you can use to plan, implement and complete your projects
- Why “going public” with a deadline will help you make it
- How to set a deadline—the key to effective project management
- A formula for ranking your priorities by importance and urgency
- The “divide and conquer” approach: How to cut unwieldy projects down to size
- How to set the BEST goals to focus your time and energy
- Why people who write it down are more successful than people who don't

## COURSE OVERVIEW

### How to handle the interruptions that sabotage your productivity

- Avoid constant interruptions (even from the boss) and secure more time for completing tasks
- The signals that politely but firmly let a co-worker know you don't have time to chat
- Steps to avoid telephone interruptions
- Implementing the “quiet hour” to guarantee blocks of uninterrupted time
- Recommendations for dealing tactfully with people who slow you down
- Remedies for “hurry sickness”—How to concentrate on one thing at a time and get it done
- How a few minutes in the morning can save many interruptions throughout the day
- REACT—Five steps to managing demands when saying “No” isn't an option

### Stress management techniques

- Recognize and deal with the most common causes of work-related stress
- How your physical environment contributes to stress—tips for stress-proofing your work space
- Ideas you can share with your boss to reduce stress throughout the department
- Strategies for avoiding job frustration and burnout
- Using stress as a motivator for getting things done
- Why leisure time is important—simple, effective relaxation exercises you can use anytime, anywhere

- Increase your personal resilience to change

### Assertiveness skills that help you get the job done

- Personal power—where it comes from and how to use it
- How preparing a script ahead of time can help you be more assertive
- Identify and eradicate the nonverbal cues that undermine your assertiveness
- Diplomatic ways to let supervisors and co-workers know you can't take on any more
- How to gracefully let your boss know when you've been given conflicting priorities
- Steps to saying “No” without being offensive or feeling guilty
- Time-tested strategies for negotiating what you want

### Working together: The manager/assistant team

- Make yourself an indispensable part of the management team
- Play the valuable role of liaison between the manager and other team members
- Concrete ideas for smoothing and improving your partnership with your boss—Eliminate the gray areas of responsibility and authority in your position
- Important keys to maintaining an excellent working relationship with your boss
- How to bring sensitive problems and issues to your boss's attention
- Essential habits of effective “multi-manager” assistants: Communication is the key to establishing channels among multiple supervisors

### Delegation—the way to multiply your effectiveness

- Strategies for successful delegation—even if you think there's no one to delegate to
- Avoid the most common delegation drawbacks
- How to delegate the right jobs to the right people
- Surprising ways your boss can help you accomplish more

## TRAINING DELIVERY

- Pre-training: Tailoring and customization of content
- Delivery of training using presentation, small group exercises, case studies, role-plays, games, etc.
- Post-training: Follow-up within 30 days to review information, provide coaching, set goals, etc. (optional)