

Improving employee productivity, using Microsoft Outlook

**Training on the ProWork® Outlook-based system, by Productivity Expert
Göran Askeljung**

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Problem Statement

Productivity in the modern office is low, and staff feels frustrated

There is a general feeling in large companies that knowledge worker productivity is low. Staff frustration is high from a feeling of too much work. E-mail is often blamed as the problem since volumes are so high. More importantly though most work tasks do not seem to be managed well. The symptoms are many:

1. Staff routinely complains of being overloaded with tasks, but on examination, their list does not seem unreasonable.
2. Managers complain that assigned tasks are not getting done. It is as if individual work assignments disappear into a black hole.
3. Staff seems too busy to reply to or act on most of the e-mails they get. Important e-mails with requests for a reply are ignored.

The underlying problem in some cases is that staff really is overloaded, but more often, staff is not trained in good e-mail and task management, and so uses precious time inefficiently, ineffectively, and stressfully.

Individual Symptoms typically are:

- Staff work late and feel they have far too much work to do
- Staff have a sense that there is no time in the day to get things done
- Staff leave important work uncompleted
- Staff focus only on the work that is right in front of them, and rarely plan tasks in advance
- Staff have no organized task management approach
- Rather than controlling e-mail, staff finds themselves barely reacting to e-mail.
- Buried in overflowing e-mail inbox are many requests for action that go unattended.

Microsoft Outlook-productivity training solves the problem

Modern offices have the tools already on their desks: Outlook

Nine Best Practices of Task and E-Mail Management, in Outlook:

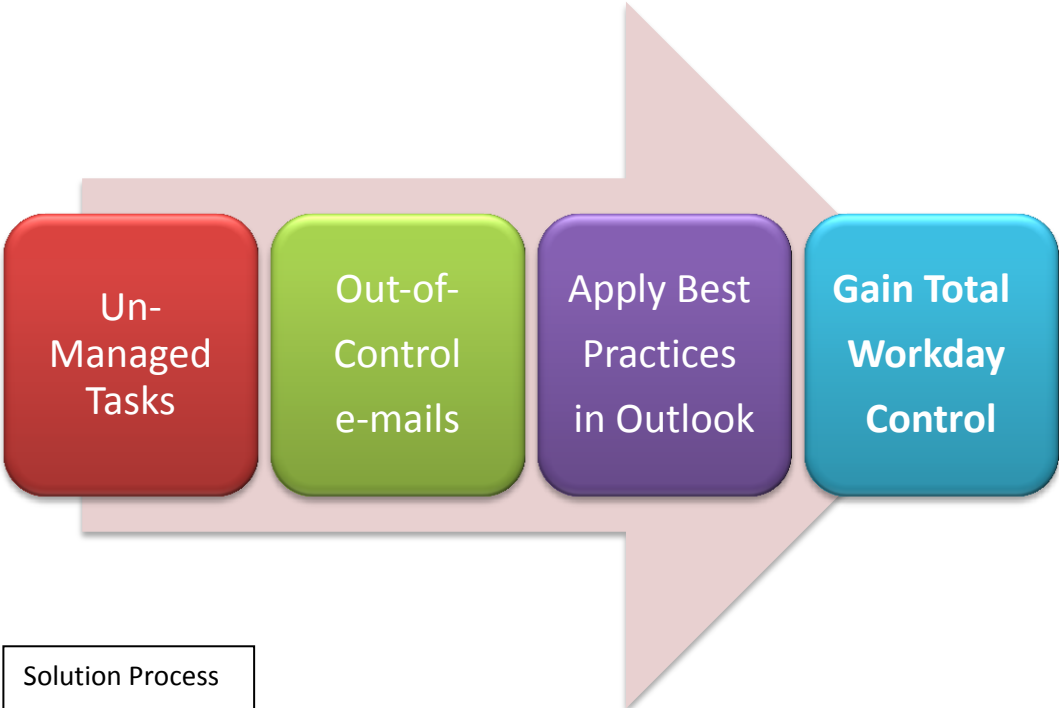
1. Track all tasks to one location in Outlook's Task Manager (and configure the task manager correctly to enable this)
2. Separate tasks based on context (Where do I need to be, or what tools do I need, to conclude the task; use a custom view to group by context in Outlook tasks)
3. Separate tasks based on due date (use a custom view to group by context in Outlook tasks)
4. Write only Next Actions on your short term task list
5. Connect projects, goals and areas of responsibilities to your tasks allowing for a total view of your current work
6. Use daily and weekly task planning
7. Convert action e-mails to tasks (learn Outlook tools that enable this)
8. File away processed e-mails quickly; consider using Outlook categories for your filing system
9. Delegate effectively and track delegated tasks in Outlook tasks

ProWork® and Microsoft Outlook

Think about it. With most of our ad-hoc tasks coming in through e-mail, and with e-mail out-of-control, we need a solution which organizes and integrates both. Microsoft Outlook offers tools for integrated task and e-mail management, but they are largely unknown and unused. Outlook, when combined with training on proven best practices of task and e-mail management, offers a strong productivity package.

The ProWork® Outlook system offers such a solution. The ProWork® system is documented in the ProWork® Workbook and shows you how to get your workday truly organized using Outlook as the tool.

Expert-led seminars on the ProWork® Outlook system have transformed the work life of thousands of workers across a wide range of industries.



Productivity boosts come from three main areas

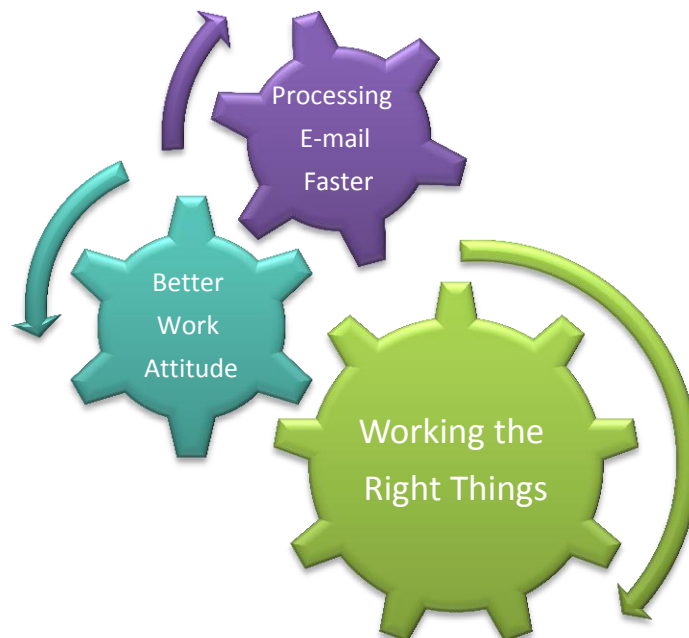
1. ProWork® Seminar students find they finally have a system to ensure that the right things get worked at the right time. Inherent in the training is a proven task management system which consistently places the highest priority tasks in sight when needed. Lower priority tasks can be deferred for optimum timing.
2. Students find they can fly through their e-mail using the system's method of converting action e-mails to tasks. Most can empty their inbox daily.
3. And students find once they are in control that they have an improved attitude, which leads to a virtuous cycle of better output.

The effective gain in productivity is measured by survey the student prior to the Seminar and 4-6 week after. Typical results show gains in productivity of 30-90 minutes per day and student! Examples of results from surveys are available at: http://immediate-effects.com/en/gtd_results

Work the right things; get through e-mail faster; improved attitude

The main sources of the increase in productivity from the seminars are:

1. Efficiency gains by working on the right things at the right time.
2. Processing e-mail much faster
3. Improved attitude about work.



Three sources of knowledge worker productivity

The ProWork® Seminar Options

Classes include hands-on training of best practices in Outlook.

Seminar Options

There are three seminar options:

1. Two-day seminar, small to mid-size group (12 people max), hands-on. Participants learn the entire system within the one-day class. Books included. The two days can either be carried out over 1,5 + 0,5 days or 1 + 1 day. The second block is intended as a follow-up and includes the concluding survey and a peer-review of the implementation. Further horizons of productivity enhancing best practices are taught and demonstrated.
2. One-day seminar, small to mid-size (12 people max), hands-on. Participants learn the majority of the system within the half-day class. Optional pre-class self-study available to increase content coverage. Books included.
3. Large-group demonstration/training: variable formats available either hands-on or not, to transfer core concepts of the system. Participants leave class with the basics. Optional: self-study material to complete study later. Useful when smaller groups are not practical.

All seminars are presented by the author, with custom Outlook demos.

ProWork® with Microsoft Outlook – Seminar content



About Göran Askeljung



Göran Askeljung, BSEE, MBA.

Mr. Askeljung is an expert on Personal Productivity trainings such as ProWork® (Getting Things Done), Pro-Read® (Speed Reading), ProWrite® (Effective Business Writing), Coaching, Solution Selling® and is a certified Microsoft Solutions Sales Expert.

Göran Askeljung is a Serial Entrepreneur with short of 20 years' experience in the TIME Segment in Europe. Mr Askeljung led two Green-Field Start-Up Operations in the late 90's (framfab and Icon Medialab), managed the MSN Division for Microsoft in Austria in the early 2000's and has since build his own Technology- and Training Business immediate effects into an expert company with a European footprint.

Client List and Highlights: Success across a range of Industries

immediate effects is a Productivity Training business, founded by Mr Askeljung in 2003. The company is based in UK, Germany, Austria and Hungary and works with partners and licensed professionals all over Europe. immediate effects is affiliated with Microsoft, e-bda and Dale-Carnegie.

Client list

- EPO
- OSCE
- UNOV
- BMLV
- BMJ
- ÖGB
- Erste Bank
- Mondi Packaging
- Mobilkom
- SAP
- Hyperport Financial Services
- Zürich Group
- Generali Group
- RBI (Raiffeisen Bank International)
- Invest Kredit
- BAWAG
- IngDiBa direct Bank
- Moody's
- Atlas Copco
- Microsoft
- Ubisoft
- Saab Österreich

Customer voices

"With this course, the way I now work is much more efficient and better documented than before. My head is clear and I can focus better on the tasks at hand and relax better when I get home!"

Mr Spallier Geert, [Mondi Packaging](#), Belgium 2007

"If your desk is full of papers and piles of stuff, your Email spills over and you're constantly surprised by urgent tasks, that a moment ago wasn't on your radar - then this seminar is for you. The principles are easy to understand and even more easy to adopt. When you finally manage to really collect everything that represents work in your life, the feeling of control and relaxations is incredible!"

Mr Stephan Bauer, [Aestomed](#), Austria 2006

"Since I use the system consistently, my desk and my inbox is empty, my head is free of thoughts of work and my tasks - earlier lost in piles and Emails - are neatly collected in my PDA for instant review and choice at any time. The best thing is that I actually now never forget anything! I have become much better at deciding what to do and what not."

Martin Wawrusch, Neovalis IT Development GmbH, Austria, 2006

"Thanks to ProWork, I've realized both professional and private benefits; now feel an inner peace and contentment even in my hectic environment."

Renate Kleinl, [SAP](#), Austria, 2006

"The ProWork methodology is very helpful. Now I can handle my work and life much more effectively. The feeling is very liberating and the 2 minute rule works very well!"

Petra Bauer, [SAP](#), Austria, 2006

Further references: <http://bit.ly/Empfehlungen>

ProWork® ROI Analysis: http://immediate-effects.com/de/gtd_results

Wrapping up

Say Goodbye to the out-of-control and stressful workday and to the overburdened e-mail Inbox and say hello to a new lease on workday satisfaction!

Most seminar participants find their lowered stress and improved attitude their number one benefit. Now you can too.

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