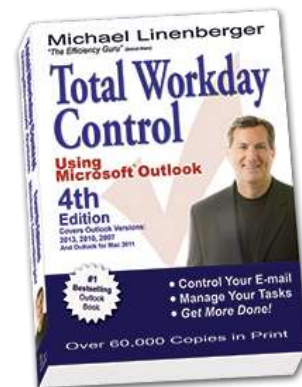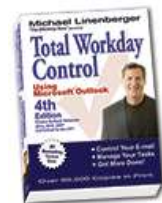# IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY, USING MICROSOFT OUTLOOK

Seminars on the Master-Your-Now! (MYN) Outlook-based system, by author Michael Linenberger

IMPROVING EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY, USING MICROSOFT OUTLOOK

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

Problem Statement

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 complain 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 seem 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 are overloaded, but…
More often, staff are not trained in good e-mail and task management, and so use precious time inefficiently, ineffectively, and stressfully.

Individual Symptoms

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

Productivity Training in MS Outlook can help solve the problems

Modern offices have the tools already on their desks: Outlook

Productivity Training in MS Outlook can solve the problem

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 Master-Your-Now! (MYN) Outlook system offers such a solution. The MYN system is documented in the #1 best-selling MS Outlook book: *Total Workday Control Using Microsoft Outlook*, by Michael Linenberger. That book shows you how to get your workday truly organized using Outlook as the tool.

Author-led seminars on the MYN system have transformed the work life of thousands of workers across a wide range of industries.

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

1. **Track all tasks to one location: Outlook's Task Manager (and configure the task manager correctly to enable this)**

2. **Separate Long term tasks from Short term tasks (create custom Outlook views to help)**

3. **Use a simple prioritization system that emphasizes must-do-today tasks (configure Outlook to show these)**

4. **Write only Next Actions on your short term task list**

5. **Use daily and weekly task planning**

6. **Convert action e-mails to tasks and prioritize them in your task system (learn Outlook tools that enable this)**

7. **File away processed mail quickly; consider using Outlook categories for your filing system (use OL views to support)**

8. **Managers: Delegate effectively and track delegated tasks in Outlook**

Solution Process

Participants report Productivity boosts of 25 to 45%

Productivity Boosts come from three main areas

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.

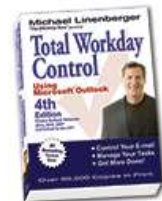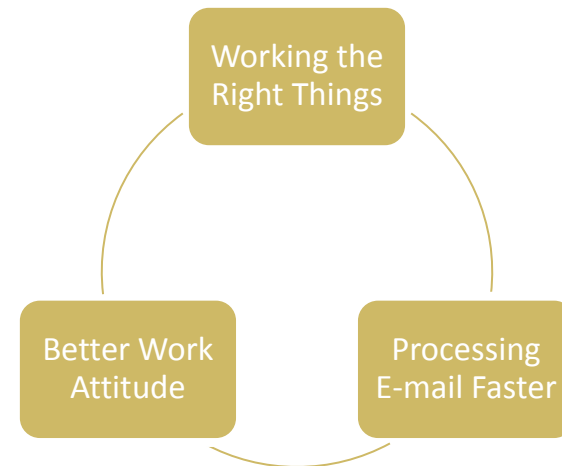3. Improved attitude about work.

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

1. MYN 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.

Use Outlook to boost staff Productivity

Three sources of knowledge worker productivity

The Total Workday Control Seminar Options

Classes include hands-on training of best practices in Outlook
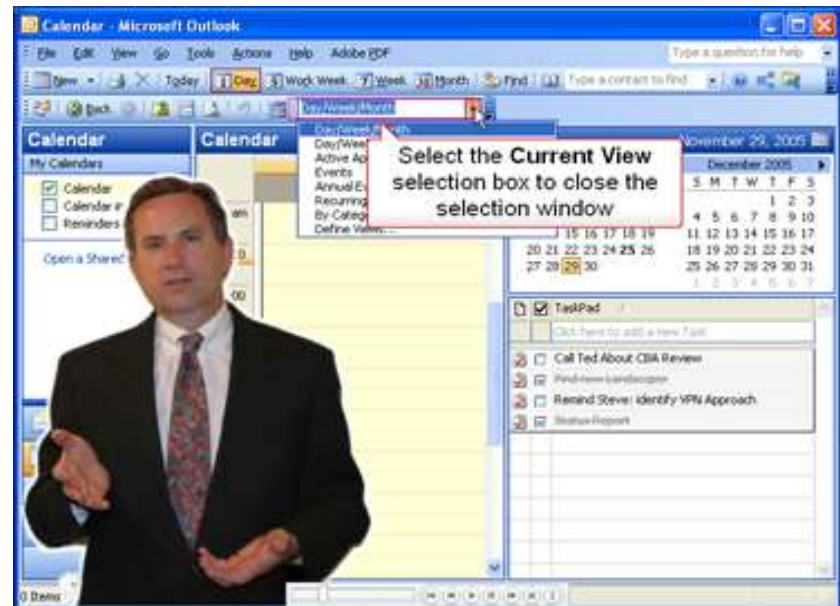

Seminar Options

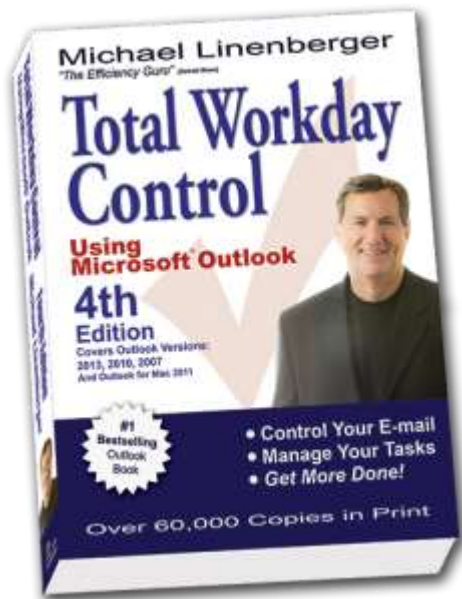**There are three seminar options:**

1. **Full-day seminar**, small to mid-size group (25 people max), hands-on. Participants learn the entire system within the one-day class. Books included.

2. **Half-day seminar**, small to mid-size (25 people max), hands-on. Participants learn the majority of the system within the half-day class. 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.

MYN Seminar Content

Workday Control w/ Outlook

Training on Task Management	Training on E-mail Management	Outlook Configuration for Productivity

Best Practices	Priority Setting Strategies	Convert E-mails to Tasks	Efficient Filing of E-mails	Simple menu-based configs	Optional Add-on Software

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

About the Author, and the Book

The Number 1 Best-Selling Microsoft Outlook Book

The author is uniquely qualified to provide this training

Michael Linenberger is the author of five bestselling productivity books. His book Total Workday Control Using Microsoft Outlook (currently 4th Ed.), has been the bestselling book on Microsoft Outlook for over six years. It reveals how to apply best practices of time, task, and e-mail management to Outlook to get ahead of an out-of-control e-mail inbox and workday.

Michael has been called "The Efficiency Guru" by the Detroit News, and has been written up in the business magazines Fast Company and Investor's Business Daily for his unique common-sense approach to e-mail control. He leads workshops and consults on task and e-mail management, and on workplace productivity. He has been a management consultant and technology professional for more than 20 years, and was Vice President of Technology for Connection to eBay, an Accenture Service. As a management and technology consultant with Accenture, he advised and managed programs and projects in the San Francisco Bay Area for clients such as eBay, Sun Microsystems, Cisco, Applied Materials, UPS, Adecco, and others. Before Accenture, Michael led the technology department at U.S. Peace Corps. Michael also consults on program and project management best practices, and recently led the creation of the Project Management Center of Excellence for AAA West Coast.

Featured in Fast Company, Investor's Business Daily, and Others

Fast Company interview with Michael Linenberger
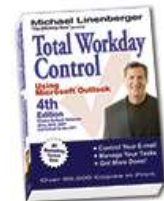**"**It's not spam or cc'd mail that slows down your e-mail processing..."

Investor's Business Daily:
"If your Inbox has become a source of anxiety and stress... Michael Linenberger ... has the solution"

Client List and Highlights: Success across a range of Industries

Partial List of Clients, staff segment, Industry

- American Health Care Association (IT staff, Lobbyists, Communications)
- GE (Management)
- Shell Oil (Trading Division)
- Microsoft Corporation (Software Development and Marketing)
- Kay Chemical/Ecolab (Chemical Manufacturing)
- Pfizer (Pharmaceutical sales support).
- US Army and US Coast Guard (military)
- California Polytechnic State University, Pomona, (Administration Offices)
- California State Automobile Association (all staff)
- Ascension Hospitals (Administrative offices)
- Arizona Fire Chiefs Association (Fire Chiefs from across the state of Arizona)
- Merrill Lynch (Sales support)
- Allegan (makers of Botox, medical research)
- Comcast (All Western Offices, VPs and Directors)
- Brasfield & Gorrie, LLC (Construction)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield (Insurance)

American Health Care Association

CIO and VP Kyle Vickers, after using the system himself, convinced senior management to have MYN training for upwards of 80% of the AHCA staff. The results have transformed productivity, with some staff reporting a whopping 40% improvement.

"I've tried them all and the thing about Michael's approach is that it not only works with a product I'm already familiar with and use extensively every day (Outlook) but it's also a system I can use without major disruptions to my work life - it just works. By implementing this approach I've gone from well over 1,000 emails in my in box to the point where I can now leave at the end of the day with less than 10. I'm also much more relaxed knowing that I have a handle on all the items I need to work on. My workload certainly isn't any smaller, but I'm no longer seriously stressed out about the great cloud of ill defined and perhaps unknown tasks and worrying about what I might be missing. In short, this approach has transformed my work life"

Kyle Vickers, CIO, VP Knowledge Management

California Polytechnic State University, Administrative Offices

The Administrative Offices staff at California Polytechnic State University found their workdays overloaded and e-mail out of control. They suspected Microsoft Outlook might have tools to help, but had no idea how. They turned to Michael Linenberger to solve the anxiety staff felt about long work days and low productivity. The results were outstanding.

"Because I was being swamped by my email and tasks in my new job, I read several time management books and attended a (Covey-based) seminar but none of them addressed my immediate need to get my work under control. Linenberger's diagnosis (in his intro) of what might be causing this was so accurate that it seemed he must have been sitting in my office watching me work... I have been using [the system] for about six months now and it is working great - I am getting my high priority tasks completed and my stress level is much lower!" Donald F. Hoyt, Ph.D. Associate Vice President for Research & Graduate Studies California State Polytechnic.

"Michael,…you will become the next Cal Poly Pomona 'rock star' (i.e., trainer for whom people watch and wait). The evals from your workshop were all great and many people have since told Loretta and me how much they enjoyed and valued the workshop" Susan Berilla, Cal Poly Pomona, Director Organizational Development & Training

California State Automobile Association

Over 300 staff at CSAA have attended half or full-day training on the MYN system, including all call center supervisors and the entire Legal department.

CSAA has adopted the training as a standard AAA University curriculum offering, and recently, internal staff have been trained to do the training themselves. Demand is high for this internal offering.

"Michael Linenberger provides very practical advice to leverage Outlook to its fullest. His approach allows you to quickly convert e-mail into tasks and work the tasks in a prioritized manner. I would recommend it to anyone who is swimming in e-mail."

Devon Johnson, Manager

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.

You can too.

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