



From Distracted to Productive:

Finding Your Productivity and Focus
in Today's Hyper-Interrupted,
e-Distracted World

Presented by
Randall (Randy) Dean
President, *Randall Dean Consulting &
Training, LLC*
A Leading Time, E-mail &
Distraction Management Training Firm

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So why are people so distracted???

E-mails	Text Messages/IM
Smart Phones & Tablets	
Voice Mail	Faxes
	Social Media
"Snail" Mail	Office Clutter
Traditional Media/News	Interruptions
Even Family & Friends	The "Rise" of A.A.D.D.

The Squirrel Syndrome!

Agenda of Program

- Introduction
- Handling & Managing E-mail & Info Overload
- Let's Talk E-mail Etiquette
- Reducing the Impact of Unexpected Interruptions
- Keeping Your Focus on Key Projects/Clients/Cases
- Setting Expectations/Managing Deliverables
- Planning/Working Your Day For Higher Productivity
- Owning Your Technology (Rather than it owning you!)

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Let's Talk E-mail! The Harsh REALITY

___ HOURS

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Distraction Reality The Troubling Statistics

- ▷ More than half of professional e-mail users spend 25 – 50% of their day doing e-mail
- ▷ Only 1-3% have had formal training
- ▷ Average user reads EACH AND EVERY e-mail 3-7 times before taking action on it, “tasking it”, or adding to calendar
- ▷ 20-25% of workers check their e-mail 20 or more times per day
- ▷ 13% of Smart Phone users now show signs of clinical addiction
- ▷ The typical user looks at their phone 150 times per day!
- ▷ Many people report getting interrupted between 10-25 times daily by work-related phone calls, “stop bys”, and texts
- ▷ 95% report being “distracted” at some point during the day
- ▷ Those reporting higher distraction also report higher overwhelm

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To Control Distraction,
You Need Strategies!

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An Important Disclaimer

The Two Key Ways E-mail is
Owning You:

1. Checking far too often
2. Reading same messages over
and over again

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Don't "Bling!"

- Resist temptation to constantly monitor
 - Manage sounds & pop ups
 - But, identify most important senders!
- Consider a regimen: check at set points throughout day (except for most important)
 - To balance productivity with responsiveness
- Are you being forced to "bling"?
 - Ask for a "habit change"
 - Consider the quick courtesy reply



THE Definitive CLUTTER Buster!

The 3-Minute, One Touch Rule

Every piece of information (*paper, fax, e-mail, v-mail, etc.*) that you get you should touch one time.

If you can take care of this task (accomplish, reply, file, read, forward, delete, toss, etc.) *in three minutes or less*, **DO IT RIGHT NOW!!!**

If not, convert to task item or calendar (**Drag & Drop!**) to be accomplished in order of priority or urgency (you decide).



"Taming E-mail" Decision Tree

Receive New E-mail

3-minutes or less?
DO IT!!

Longer than 3-minutes?
TASK IT!!

Once DONE or TASKED,
FILE or DELETE!!

Going Paperless?
Print to PDF?

If no file folder?
CREATE IT!!

Every e-mail received can be handled this way!



A Key E-mail Time Saver

- Use your “Signatures” tool as an “Auto-Emailer”
 - Great way to automate “frequently recurring” e-mail messages
 - Allows your quality of communications to improve over time too
- Related “Quick Parts” helps with shorter text
 - Great for FAQs, contact info, directions, etc.
 - If SPAM gets through, SHIFT-DELETE!

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Let's Talk Etiquette: Manage CC's, Forwards, Replies, & FYIs

- ⌄ When forwarding, point out specific info/actions
 - Consider deleting old text
 - Change subject line when subject changes
- ⌄ Be considerate of others – don't overuse CC
 - “CC as a CYA”
 - Handling the “E-mail Firebomb”
- ⌄ Don't forget the old standby – a conversation!
- ⌄ EOM & NRN (and PUTP!)
- ⌄ Train others to use same system

More E-mail Etiquette

- ⌄ K.I.S.S. – a Different Definition
- ⌄ One Page Memo Rule – No Scrolling!
- ⌄ Every E-mail, Consider the Recipient:
 - ⌄ Why they received it
 - ⌄ What they need to know
 - ⌄ What they need to do
 - ⌄ When they need to have it done by
- ⌄ Multiple People? EACH Person has tasks and due dates clearly identified – use bullet points!

Want Less E-mail?

- SEND LESS E-MAIL!!!
 - BEWARE “Reply All”
 - Consider BCC for group distribution
 - PUTP!
 - P&G Memo Rule
 - Simple text & task, or not?
 - Is e-mail smart for urgent messages?

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Can Help for Office/Desk Clutter Too!

The 3-Minute, One Touch Rule

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If not, convert to task item or calendar (**Drag & Drop!**) to be accomplished in order of priority or urgency (you decide).

LET'S GO TO OHIO!

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Let's Go to OHIO!

Only Handle It Once!

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Three Key Reasons People Have Clutter

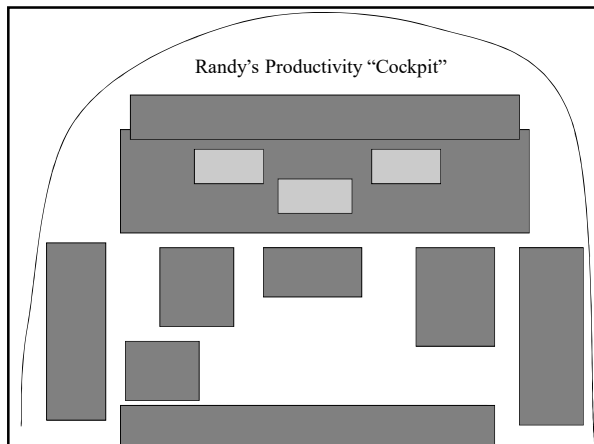
- TOO BUSY!
- Filing isn't "Easy"
- Letting the little stuff "stack"

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To reduce clutter and find
focus, you have to
make decisions.

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Randy's Productivity "Cockpit"



Key Point:

Proximity = Productivity

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Clients, Projects, Tasks,
“Traction”, and Interruptions

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Cost of Interruptions to
American Business:

\$650 Billion/Year

Average Time Lost
Per Interruption:

4-15 Minutes

Two Primary Kinds of Direct Interruptions

- The Phone Call (Text?)
 - You CHOOSE to Answer
 - *Voice Mail IS an Option!*
- The “Stop By”
 - They FIND You (if you let them!)
 - *Sometimes the worst place to get work done is your office/workstation/desk!*
- A GREAT question to help reduce less urgent interruptions ...

“Smart Phones often make for stupid people.”

Smart Phone Sanity

- Manage Your Attention – Own Your Device!
 - Check notification settings – phone, text, social, apps, etc.
 - *See which apps are distracting you – adjust their settings!*
 - *Consider special ringtones/notifiers – most and LEAST important people*
- Put it away if you really need to focus
 - Consider who you give your number/text
 - *Technology should be an enabler, not a disabler or distractor*

Smart Phone Sanity

- Can be very useful and truly helpful!
 - Send myself task/event reminders
 - Reply to e-mails quickly using voice
 - *Use for quick search, GPS, reference*
 - *Even document creation, PDFs, more*
 - *Use social to maintain/build relationships and connections*

Reference/News

- Wikipedia & AskWiki
- Encyclopedia Britannica (paid)
- Dictionary & Thesaurus apps
- White Pages (full app-based phone book)
- Zip Code Tools & Instant Area Codes/Area Code Tracker
- WolframAlpha
- Google Earth, Maps, Moon, Mars, etc ... ***Tons of Knowledge At Your Fingertips***
- Major News Apps (TV, newspaper, etc. CBSN, Bloomberg favorites right now – full stream)
- Language/Translation Apps (check out Google Translate!)
- Specific Reference apps (what's your interest?)

One GREAT way smart phones
can help reduce distraction:

Noise Canceling Headphones!

Texting/IM

- Manage Your Attention – Own Your Device!
 - Only give your text number to your most important people?
 - Recommend others e-mail you instead?
 - Check your phone settings for special notifiers within text?
 - Have a discussion on when texting is and is not appropriate

Social Media

- Manage Your Attention – Own Your Info!
 - Like e-mail, get social on some form of regimen (and less than e-mail)
 - Only check on your personal devices?
 - Consider setting a timer?
 - Limit your “channels” – pick one or two that you focus on more than others
 - The interesting counter-statistic ...

Let's Talk Input “Addiction”

- Science is actually showing a significant number of people with clinical addiction ...
 - To their e-mail ...
 - And/or phones
 - And/or social media
 - And/or traditional media
 - And the creators of these tools/apps/services are actually enabling this addiction for profit and presence!

Let's Talk Input "Addiction"

*If this is you, you must
acknowledge and address!*

... or it could ruin the quality of both
your work and life

And finally, consider this ...

*The MYTH of
"Multi-Tasking"*

BETTER:

*Find
"The Flow"*

What about family & friends?

- If in the middle of something critical, consider voice mail/replying later ...
- But also remember – time flies ...
 - These are your most important people
 - How about disconnecting from your tech so you can “reconnect” with your peeps?
 - Even physically separate yourself from access to tech ...
 - Set specific tasks and calendar items for your most important people
 - Give them your most important asset – your undivided attention

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*Let's chase away
these squirrels!*

A Simple Strategy for
Getting Key Clients, Cases,
Projects, Activities First

First:

*Know what your key projects,
Clients, customers, cases, activities
and events even are!*

A Project Kick-Start: The “Next Step” Habit

- Never “backtrack” on a project
- Also great for interruptions
- Low-tech: The Sticky Note
- High-tech: Software/Smart Phone/Tablet
- Mid-tech: Come see me!!

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Outlook is GREAT for managing projects/tasks/clients!

- Feeds my “Type A” nature!
- Capture key projects/roles in categories
- Use individual tasks for “next steps”
- Favorite views are “Today” & “Active Tasks”
- Can also sort by “Category”, “Complete”
- “Next Steps” for Family & Friends?
- Capturing **Projects & Roles in Your Category List** Helps w/ Focus & Balance

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A Calendar/Tickler Tip for the Guys

- Ever forgot a birthday? Or anniversary?
- NEVER do it again!
- Use the same “recurrences & alarms” strategy for meetings and appointments

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Managing Your Calendar

- Includes **Work** AND **Personal** commitments (two calendars?)
- Recommend it be FIRST thing you look at daily
- Think about long-range tasks, projects, vacations, trainings, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
- Next, think shorter range about upcoming internal/external meetings, events, phone calls
- Then, enter/review current commitments for today and this week
- Finally, make commitments with yourself (Strategic Time Blocking)

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A New Daily Process

- At least once a week: Review Priority Memo
- Every day:
 - Check calendar first – look ahead!
 - Check today's calendar – how much time?
 - Revise task list per priorities and calendar
 - Plan delegations/follow ups
 - Check e-mail/voice mail/snail mail
 - Revise task list again per available time
 - GET TO WORK

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Final Thoughts:

- Lots of info to chew on here:
 - Pick the ideas/strategies that work best for you
- Come back to your notes later to integrate more
- Consider all of your inputs, technology, distractions – look for opportunities to better manage and control
- Continue learning/practicing/perfecting your use of time
- Keep finding ways to get the most important things first!

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“Be the change you wish to
see in the world.”

– Gandhi

Where to Get More Info:

- Randy Dean's *Taming the E-mail Beast* (Available on Amazon.com – search “*Taming Email*”)
- David Allen's *Getting Things Done*
- Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink*
- Randy's E-newsletter: *Timely Tips – 1 Tip a Month to Save You Time!* <http://www.randalldean.com/signup.html> Or
just send me an e-mail (randy@randalldean.com) w/ “Timely Tips Please” in subject line – there is no cost to subscribe and you can unsubscribe anytime
- Randy's *Taming E-mail Facebook Fan Page:*
<http://www.facebook.com/TamingEmailBeast>
- Randy's *LinkedIn Page:*
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/randydean>
- Twitter: @timelyman and also on YouTube & G+

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Other Randy Dean Programs:

- *Taming the E-mail Beast:* Key Strategies for Managing E-mail & Info Overload
- Finding an Extra Hour Every Day *Workshop:* Time Management Strategies for Busy Professionals
- Optimizing Your Outlook: Time Management Strategies for Busy Outlook Users
- Time Management in “The Cloud”: Using Google Apps to Manage Your Time, Life, Work, Projects, People & More
- Smart Phone Success & Terrific Tablets: Getting More Productivity From Your Smart Phone/Tablet Devices
- Managing & Leading Great Staff & Team Meetings
- Go to www.randalldean.com/programs.html

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We're Done!!!

Randy Dean, MBA
The E-mail Sanity Expert®
randy@randalldean.com
Phone: 517-336-8906
www.randalldean.com

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