



## Today's PA



### Course Aim

#### **The definitive total-immersion workshop that will help you maximise your role as a PA.**

However you became a PA – and it's surprising just how many PAs tell us it happened to them almost by accident – your position is unusual in many ways. No other role in business places so much reliance on the absolute capability of one person to provide unwavering and comprehensive support to a senior executive.

Working in the shadow of someone important and busy, it's difficult to avoid your own needs and aspirations being overlooked – by you and others. Today's PA workshop brings you out of the shadows and into the light as you become aware of the critical part you play in your organisation's success and how you can give your career a boost as well.

We give you the knowledge and tools to ensure you become the indispensable aide and business associate your manager needs – so much more than a secretary. We also make sure you begin to appreciate your real worth - not just to your manager and yourself, but to the whole organisation - and arm you with the confidence and assertiveness necessary to be not just good at your job, but brilliant.

The rewards for this fresh, new approach to your role and the enhanced outlook on your career and life it delivers, will quickly become apparent in the weeks and months following the workshop.

And because the course is designed by successful PAs, for PAs, rest assured – it will be the most career (and even life) changing two days you will spend.

A packed two-day programme:

**Maximum number of delegates: 16**

**Cost: Members – 4 units, £600 +VAT**

**Non-members - £900 +VAT**

To register please contact our Training Co-ordinator on [registrations@thelearningcollaboration.com](mailto:registrations@thelearningcollaboration.com)



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### Course Outline

#### **Tough Love – Tact and Diplomacy**

Protecting your manager from unnecessary interruptions is a critical part of your job and it's one of the hardest, especially when there's a steady stream of other, often very senior, people wanting opinions and decisions. We will show you how to handle these tricky encounters, diplomatically but firmly, whilst ensuring that you don't create a bottleneck that threatens the success of the organisation. As your reputation for decisive action grows, people seeking your manager's time will start to think harder and more thoroughly before doing so and will even begin bouncing their thoughts off you first. You will become a kind of executive 'triage nurse', deciding which ideas and requests really merit the attention of your manager and which can be delegated sideways or downwards to someone more appropriate.

#### **Don't Stress Me!**

Few people in business have to juggle as many different balls as a busy PA and it can be very stressful, especially if you work for more than one manager. During the workshop we will show you a number of different strategies you can try in order to reduce stress. These include managing your and your manager's time more effectively and learning how to deflect or defer tasks or priority interruptions that often turn out to be little more than fire-fighting activities, with tactful firmness.



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### Improve Your Outlook

As with all computer-based office tools, we tend to use familiar features and functions and ignore the rest. Over the years, however, applications like Microsoft Outlook have grown in sophistication and refinement to the point where they really can help you do your job better – and take some of the pressure off. Outlook is now a mature and fully-fledged assistant for you; learning to exploit its capabilities will help you make the most of your time and simplify and automate other office tasks that until now have been tediously manual or just impossible.

You can:

- Convert information in emails straight into contacts, appointments and tasks with a click of the mouse
- Carry out mail merges to email, just as you do with Word
- Manage your projects and your manager's projects with the tasks function
- Personalise your diary and run your manager's at the same time

### Make My Day

You are the gatekeeper to your manager, but who protects you from the interruptions that conspire to prevent you achieving what needs to be done each day? It's tough enough working for someone who never seems to go home, without missing your lunch break or even occasionally getting out of the office on time. Our research suggests that PAs frequently experience interruptions of 90 minutes a day or more. Think what you could achieve and how much better you would feel if you could claw back two hours of lost time each day. Sounds impossible? During the Today's PA workshop, we will show you how it can be done. And you will love us for it.

### Serving Two Masters – or More!

Working for one demanding and exacting manager can be more than enough for most PAs, so if you work for two or more, you have our sympathy. But it need not be hell trying to balance their individual needs. Plainly you cannot give them the same level of attention they would get if they didn't have to share you, but there is a better way. We will show you how it works and equip you with the tools and skills – and patience – you need to make a great job of keeping them all happy and successful - and your stress levels down.

### Have Conference, Will Travel

A PA is expected to embody elements of a number of services that are otherwise provided by specialist companies. Depending on the size of your organisation and the resources and budgets available, you may be able to take advantage of these companies, but we also know you will probably have to do much of the donkey work yourself. We will show you how to ensure events and travel arrangements are not only a runaway success and make you look good, but also come in on time and on budget without taking over your life and giving you a nervous breakdown.



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### **You'll Never Walk Alone**

As a PA, you 'plough a lonely furrow' at times. Your position is unique: you work closely with and have the ear of someone important and influential, yet you occupy a relatively junior place in the hierarchy. The orbit in which you move makes colleagues keep their distance from you and be on their guard about what they say in your presence, in case it gets back to your manager, possibly to their detriment. So it's hard to establish the friendly interpersonal relationships that allow office workers to work effectively together.

It's a bit like being a royal consort – all the glory, but no power. Sometimes, however, you need some of that power to rub off on you, because today's senior executive expects you to be able to act as proxy and delegate accordingly.

A major part of the Today's PA workshop involves building up your self-esteem and sense of self-worth, so that you see yourself not just as the assistant to an important person, but an extension to that person's management style and vision.

We will show you how to acquire levels of confidence and assertiveness that will give your manager the executive associate actually required of today's PA. As a result, you will feel much more comfortable with asking colleagues to carry out tasks that advance the objectives of the organisation, because you will share your manager's 'big picture' outlook, rather than the more limited horizons of the traditional secretary-based PA.

### **Don't Forget to Write**

Texting, email and social networking websites have taken a terrible toll of writing as a skill to be nurtured, developed and valued. So it's ironic that today's PA still has to tackle a steady stream of letters, proposals, reports, presentations, emails and more, all of which demand absolute clarity and economy. You may work for a brilliant and successful entrepreneur who perhaps doesn't feel comfortable putting his thoughts into writing, for instance. But it's your job to ensure that important information and messages are disseminated to peers and the media without your business leader losing face or appearing ignorant. During the workshop we will take you back to basics with the essentials of good written business English, another key confidence-builder.

### **PA Confidential**

Your unique position as a PA means you often hear things that challenge your sense of discretion. Does your boss need to know about all of them, or do you decide what to pass on on a 'need to know' basis? Do you remain as enigmatic as the Sphinx, or behave like a C-list celebrity on a reality TV show. We're exaggerating a bit here, but the purpose is serious: to win the confidence of colleagues at all levels is vital if you are to function effectively and successfully. A reputation for utter discretion, except where to keep silent might threaten the organisation or your manager, will open new conduits of communication and information that will help make your job easier and give you the opportunity to present your manager with new business options to consider.



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### Time After Time

No-one likes time management courses, except the people who send you on them. PAs know that time management courses are for people who haven't got enough to do, so we're not going to give you one of those. But because Today's PA has been designed by PAs, for PAs, there are some very useful tips and wrinkles we can pass on to help you manage not just your time, but your manager's time, more effectively and productively. One thing we will do, before you attend the workshop, is ask you to keep a log of your daily activity, so we can analyse it with you during the course.

### Just a Minute

No PA considers taking minutes to be pleasurable, but it has to be done – and done well. Not everyone working at PA level has come via the traditional route, which means that if you don't take shorthand, it can be difficult to keep up with what's being said. If it's also a less than interesting meeting, it can be hard to maintain your attention so you don't miss something. And then when the meeting's over it's all got to be typed up and circulated – about as much fun as watching paint dry. You might find it hard to believe we can make the job enjoyable, but after the Today's PA workshop, you will know how to write minutes that are beyond reproach – and even enjoy doing so! We will show you how to:

- Enhance your listening skills
- Condense your minutes down to the essentials, without losing the flow of the meeting
- Maintain your concentration during the meeting
- Improve your note taking
- Deal with technical subjects and jargon

### Questions, Questions

When you commit two valuable days of your time to Today's PA workshop, we want you to know that we understand and recognise that commitment. We want to do everything we can to ensure that the workshop is thoroughly worthwhile for you. Being properly prepared will play a key part in achieving that success. Indeed, your success is our success.

If you get what we promise from the workshop – and we know you will – we are confident you will recommend it to peers and colleagues. So we would like you to complete a short questionnaire, just before you attend the workshop, in order to give us a snapshot of the kind of person and PA you are, how you became a PA and what are your issues, frustrations, hopes and ambitions.

When you arrive at the workshop, you will be able to feel that you are among friends who understand you – and you are, because your trainers and course designers have all been where you are now. Doesn't that give you a warm, fuzzy feeling?

### A Professional Trainer For Professional PAs

Your principal trainer has been a highly-successful PA and Office Manager and is now Managing Director of Today PA. With a post-graduate degree in business studies, few if any trainers are better qualified to deliver and lead the workshop for Today's PAs – for you.



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### Lest You Forget

You will hear and learn a lot during the workshop – too much to remember in its entirety, in fact - so we have put together a comprehensive set of handouts, comprising more than 100 pages of key information that pull together everything you have seen and heard on the course.

### Something for Nothing - That's Priceless

Once the workshop is over, we don't just wave you goodbye and close the door. When you leave, you take with you our ongoing commitment to your success, which includes:

- Free membership of the Today's PA network
- Email support from a nationwide network of experienced PAs
- A platform for your opinions through our bi-monthly newsletter
- Professional help and information just a phone call away
- Ongoing help with time-saving tips to make your day easier
- Experienced help with finding venues and accommodation world-wide
- Access to our extensive professional network to provide event management information
- A training company dedicated to the development of your ongoing career
- Your own event management consultant on call
- Regular visits from other professionals working in similar business sectors to yours
- Visits to potential event and accommodation venues
- Someone to 'be there' for you when you need them!
- And finally – ongoing coaching to develop you and your career

"Regardless of whether you're an experienced PA wanting to learn a few new tricks or you're looking to get your first PA role, I would highly recommend our 'Today's PA' training course. It is full of practical tips and advice as well as assertiveness exercises and is a great confidence booster. I came away with the belief that I should be earning more money and, more importantly, the confidence to ask my boss to pay me more money; a conversation that I'm pleased to report went very well indeed!"

Jharda Walker - Waggener Edstrom

"The trainer was brilliant, fun and relaxed. The course was just what I had been searching for and I thoroughly enjoyed it, and will miss it. It's a shame it's not Monday tomorrow as I can't wait to put it all into practise."

Julie Flageul - Chigwell Construction

"Absolutely brilliant! The best course I have been on. The trainer was fantastic. Enjoyed every single minute of it."

Kate Worrall - Banctec

"Would recommend the course to any PAs. I had been searching for a good PA course - this was just right. It covered all the points I hoped it would. I really enjoyed the course and will definitely be putting the ideas into practice. Great trainer and great materials."

Reese Sansom - Girlguiding UK



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### Name Dropping

When you sign up for the Today's PA workshop, we can guarantee you'll be in good company. Below are just some of the companies who have sent PAs to the Today's PA workshop recently.

2012  
American Golf  
AMT Coffee  
Barclays  
Boots  
Brunel University  
Carphone Warehouse  
Girlguiding UK  
Home Office  
IPC Media  
Liz Earle Cosmetics  
npower  
Pfizer  
QinetiQ  
Selfridges  
Waggener Edstrom

### Take Your Career To The Next Level – with PA Academy

Today's PA workshop is rapidly becoming the most popular and talked-about short training course for PAs on the market today. However, we know from the extensive and enthusiastic feedback we receive from dedicated, professional PAs like you that there is a lot of demand for taking many of the subjects covered in Today's PA further. So we've developed the five-day PA Academy. It's big, it's brilliant – imagine Today's PA with all the bells and whistles you could possibly want.

### Today's PA – The Reunion

One of the things our PAs love about Today's PA workshop, is the chance to network and interact with their peers and realise that they are not alone! Solid friendships have been forged during the two days of the course, which often ends with promises to keep in touch and get together. We know what the realities of a PA's working life are, however, so we've decided to hold a regular annual reunion for everyone who's been on Today's PA or PA Academy.