

The Three Most Crucial *Post-COVID*, Digital Office Skill Sets

Introduction

After COVID-19, most experts agree that digital skills are more crucial than ever. During the pandemic, the world shifted to a more virtual communication and collaboration work environment. For example, professionals suddenly needed to master remote meetings, digital time management, and a flood of new apps like Microsoft Teams and Planner.

The bad news, according to McKinsey, is that 70% of all efforts to boost digital skills fail.

One big challenge is that most professionals don't know where to begin. They wonder, ***What digital skills should I master?*** and ***How precisely do I improve?***

The purpose of this paper is to 1) Define the three most the crucial digital skill areas and 2) Provide concrete examples of next-level virtual best practices that will help individuals and organizations achieve real and lasting digital transformation.



1 Boost Virtual Meeting Skills

Professionals who excel in live settings often struggle to run effective virtual meetings. Suddenly, all non-verbal cues are gone, and the colleague is talking through a cold, lifeless webcam lens. There is an urgent need to upgrade virtual skills – but most professionals aren't sure where to begin. As a result, they muddle through web meetings using one bad habit after another. Over time, direct reports start to feel isolated. Leaders struggle to motivate. Salespeople lose their connection to clients, and sales decrease.

Why? Most professionals have given little thought to their lighting, audio quality, framing, and engagement technique. As a result, teammates tune out, and everything seems wrong to the presenter or leader. They lose confidence and feel nervous, which further diminishes their virtual impact.

The solution, of course, is training. You need to develop a program like our award-winning [Get Control of Virtual Skills Webinar](#) to correct each problem mentioned above. When your people love how they look, sound, and engage, their confidence and impact soar. Here are some valuable tips:

1. **Prep:** Develop a virtual meeting checklist. For example, refresh your PC, do a broadband speed check, and improve lighting, framing, and sound before entering a critical web meeting.
2. **Improve Presentations:** Use simple PowerPoint techniques to boost interest. Instead of showing all bullet points on a slide at once, animate them, one at a time. This way, you build suspense and prevent your audience from reading ahead and tuning out.
3. **Use Call and Response Techniques:** People hate commenting verbally in virtual meetings because participants often start talking at once. So make sure you ask for input via the chatbox, where everyone can chime in fast. Better yet, ask questions that make it easy for participants to respond. For example, ask them to type u if they hear something worthwhile. They'll find typing a single letter both easy and fun. The presenter will gain confidence with every response they get. Feel free to sign up for free virtual meeting tips at www.getcontrol.net.

The future of work will surely be more virtual. That's why classes like [Get Control! of Virtual Meeting and Presentation Skills](#) are so important.

2 Practice Tech-Driven Time Management

According to the Harvard Business Review, traditional time management best practices no longer work. The problem? We now spend almost 90% of the day immersed in technology. Professionals struggle with many tech-related challenges, including information overload, bloated inboxes, and hard-to-learn advanced device features.

Sound Familiar? Let's explore a day in your life. You awaken with lots of energy and ambition. After your early morning routine, you get to your PC and start to work. You quickly notice that your inbox and Teams chat are brimming with new messages and requests. Then, the cat throws up on the sofa just as you receive an urgent email from your boss. It's a surprise assignment that takes two hours to complete. Suddenly, as a series of low-value virtual meetings begin, you realize that most of your tasks will have to wait until tomorrow.

Is this description accurate? Most professionals shout, *Yes!* The solution is training that focuses on tech-driven time management best practices. The world of technology leaves every decision up to the user. We must begin to define the best ways to complete universal tasks like managing our inbox or prioritizing our e-Calendar. Here are a few tips from our [Tech-Driven Time Management Webinar](#):

- **Use Advanced Search Tools:** When you search for an email, look for a small downward arrow in the search box. Click on it and note all the advanced search tools. Now, you can rapidly narrow your search by clicking From, Attachment, or date sent.
- **Use Templates:** Microsoft and Google allow professionals to create time-saving templates. Microsoft users can highlight reusable copy and click **Insert > Quick Parts > Save** to create a template. You can use Quick Parts for email, meetings, and Word documents. In Gmail, open a new email > Click 3 dot button in lower right corner > Click Templates.
- **Adopt New Tools Like Tasks by Planner:** Outlook Tasks are so yesterday. Microsoft Planner is a much better tool for task management because it allows you to create buckets for different task types. It will enable you to see charts of all your tasks and much more. Best of all, Microsoft has integrated Tasks by Planner with Teams, Outlook, and your smartphone too!

3 Organize Your Digital Office

How exactly do you get organized in an increasingly digital world? It's not easy! Over 93% of all professionals struggle to find their stored email, documents, files, and weblinks. Our survey of over 100,000 professionals found that less than 15% receive adequate training on organizing their digital tools and files. As a result, most organizations have as many filing systems as they have employees.

The irony is that home organization experts like Mary Kindo have helped people organize their personal lives for years. These experts apply a simple set of best practices that transform a messy garage or closet into a tidy wonderland of logic and order. Why can't we do the same with our files?

The answer is that you can. Believe it or not, digital organization best practices exist. Our one-hour [Organize Your Digital Office Class](#) receives rave reviews because we walk professionals through a practical new file and find digital documents in a flash. Here are some highlights from the class:

- Cognitive research shows how people like to see information sorted into logical chunks. So, ditch the 40-folder system and create 4-5 logical master folders to simplify navigation into your digital world.
- Use longer file titles to clarify file content and number high-priority files so that they pop to the top of their folder.
- Develop one-click Windows and browser shortcuts to your top ten files to speed navigation.
- Create folder + sub-folder templates for repeat categories like Clients or Projects. When you get a new client, copy the folder and rename it to replicate the ideal folder structure with almost zero effort.

A [digital organization class](#) is a revelation for most professionals. Focus on creating a universal yet straightforward approach, and you'll be amazed at the results.

In conclusion, we recommend that you focus on improving virtual skills, tech-driven, time management, and organizing your digital world. The case study on the next page explains how this can lead to a measurable increase in your people's productivity and performance.

Please email us at info@getcontrol.net for more information or feedback.

Case Study

A Fortune 50 pharmaceutical company recently rolled out *Get Control! Training* to twenty-five colleagues. A pre-to-post analysis yielded the following strong results.

- ✓ Participants saved an average of 11 days per year (\$2,649/person).
 - ✓ Participants reported a 12% increase in productivity.
 - ✓ Tech proficiency increase by 44% over baseline (17.9 → 25.8).
 - ✓ Tech Coaching Skill increased by 20% (26 → 31.3).
 - ✓ Tech Coaching increased by 92%.
 - ✓ 100% found it helpful to learn about their tech type.
 - ✓ 100% rated the experience as Excellent (68%) or Good (32%).
 - ✓ 40% of participants implemented their TQ Action Plan and created a TQ Charter within 14 days of training.
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Digital Skills Gap Data

- 1) 87% of executives report a need to improve digital skills
- 2) < 50% of execs say they have a plan to address the digital skills gap
- 3) Only 10% of professionals feel proficient with everyday tech tools
- 4) Just 14% of millennials say they've mastered basic tech tools like Excel
- 5) 89% of all professionals feel reluctant to turn on their webcams
- 6) 92% of all professionals need help organizing their digital office
- 7) The average professional checks email over 15 times an hour

References

White Paper: [TQ - The Future of Work - Overcoming the Digital Skills Gap](#)

Contact: info@getcontrol.net for more information on TQ Initiatives

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