Managing Information Overload

Transcript for page 1, Welcome
Welcome to Managing Information Overload. In this module we're going to talk about how to manage all the different sources of information. And also keep an eye on what's new and what's hot out there without necessarily drowning ourselves in too much stuff.

Transcript for page 2, Learning Objectives
Let's take a look at the learning objectives.
- Be able to evaluate sources of information so you can decide which sources to keep and which to eliminate.
- Be able to sort, manage, and prioritize Outlook and other email inbox programs to increase productivity.
- Recall basic speed-reading techniques that enable you to absorb more information in less time.
- Apply the three-folder inbox method. Employ the Do It, Delegate It, or Delete It inbox triage method.
- Know how to evaluate if a new tool, website, or service is worth exploring.

Transcript for page 3, Overview
In today's over-informed society, it's important to take a step back and recognize that we simply can't have all the data in the world. We can't process all of the information. But we do have to stay abreast of developments in our field, our industry. And most importantly those things that effect our jobs and the candidates that we are placing or hiring. So let's take a look at some ways to help you manage the information bloat and assist you with getting more knowledge out of the constant streams of useless information.

Transcript for page 4, Cartoon
I choose this image to represent what it must sometimes feel like to a recruiter just getting started and receiving this training for this first time. It's almost like dredging directly from the fire hose. So, if you can relate at all to this and, by the way, what's in that fire hose can be resumes, can be articles and blog posts, social media and recruiting. It could be candidates coming at you. It could be hiring managers coming at you. It's really pretty much all of the above. So, how do we make sure that we're absorbing all that? Not just the training but all the knowledge and information and data that's coming our way.

Transcript for page 5, Your Typical Day
When you look at this slide, does it give you a headache? Is this familiar? Does your day start by checking 150 unread emails and 15 un-listened to voicemails on your mobile phone or on your landline, and maybe a bunch of text messages and having checked a couple of websites for updates on new information, background checks, ATS, job posting metrics, reports, etc.
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Maybe you even have some paper mailing you have to deal with. How often do you have to repeat this process in one day? So, let's give you a little bit of relief.

Transcript for page 6, Your Goal Today

What I'd like you to be able to do at the end of this module is walk away with a clear understanding of what's important and what's urgent with regard to the amount of data that's thrown at you. Along the way, you'll learn to organize and maximize the time that you spend on your recruitment desk. Maybe even decide what's worth your time, what activities are or aren't worth your time and what resources are worth your attention because nowadays anybody can be an expert by simply creating a blog and just coz I call myself an expert. It really doesn't necessarily mean I am. So let's evaluate. How do we figure out whether or not somebody is really an expert?
Also, you should be able to extract a lot of freely available information in an organized way so you're not trying to catch your own tail and spinning around in circles. We'll leave you a couple of free and very inexpensive tools that should improve your efficiency. And, all the way, we're gonna do this without forgetting that we are recruiters and have jobs to fill and have to stay abreast at everything that's going on in our industry. So, I'm actually gonna accomplish all these without creating more work for you. In fact, by creating less work for you.

Transcript for page 7, Extract the Signal

First, let me begin with drawing a big picture for you. There really is such a thing as too much information. Analysts relate this to something called "analysis paralysis" and that's in fact where "information overload" comes from. We have too many choices, too much data. Think if you will standing at a cereal aisle in the grocery store trying to buy a box of cereal for the first time for your young toddler that's finally able to eat crunchy cereal. Where do you even start? Maybe you go to old standbys. Okay. So, what, Fruit Loops and Captain Crunch? Yeah, there's a dozen of each of those varieties. So, again, too many choices is really not good. Why? Because information is not knowledge. Knowledge is what we do with the information when we apply experience and determine the meaning of the information. If we then apply that knowledge and compare it to our past experiences, more accurately, our mistakes, then we have what's called "wisdom".

So, let me straighten you out. Data is not information. Data is a component of what goes into information. Information is not knowledge. Information is something that feeds knowledge but other things feed knowledge as well. And knowledge is not wisdom. Simply knowing does really amount too much unless you know what to do with that knowing. For example, if I said, "Six, seven, eight", would that be meaningful at all for you? Without any context, it's just a random series of numbers or maybe it's not even a random. It's simply a series of numbers - six, seven and eight follow each other numerically - but what is that? Well, what if I gave you some context and I said, "Area code"? Now you have two pieces of data - "area code" and "six, seven, eight" - that's information but still pretty useless, right? I mean, what are you gonna do with that? Oh, I know. "Hey, that's what's on someone's resume." Well, with that information and my experience as a recruiter, I can now apply that into knowledge and say, "This person must live or have a mobile phone from the Atlanta area." All of that from just two pieces of data but given the proper context and experience. And the last thing of course is, "What am I gonna do with the fact that they live in Atlanta?" That's where wisdom comes in.
Transcript for page 8, Overcome Overload

Ok. So now you know the difference between data and information and knowledge and maybe you're starting to scratch your head wondering why it is that any of that's important. Well, it's important because it helps me explain how you're gonna get past that overload. And, remember, there reason we assign wisdom to old age is because people who've lived longer and have had more experiences have had the opportunity of making more mistakes. And, although people won't really tell you this is not right, it's the mistakes that make wisdom. So, I'm here to tell you that my mistake over 15 years of trying to drink from the fire hose was to try to read everything. It got to the point where I was spending way too much time and my productivity declined outside of what I would consider to be normal. Some people say maybe I was addicted. I don't really think I was addicted to information. I just think that I really enjoyed the knowledge that I was developing by applying that information, all that to say I learned a really hard lesson and that was that I simply can't absorb it all. So here's what I ended up doing. I use an RSS Reader in the document section.

Up above in the top right you'll see a couple of handouts. One of them is gonna be a handout about RSS Readers. But there's a variety of these. Google Reader is my personal favorite but Yahoo makes a really good one and Firefox and Opera and Explorer browsers all have built-in RSS Readers as does Outlook. Whatever it is that you choose to use, an RSS Reader is simply a way to harvest RSS feeds so they're downloadable on your computer. So, back to using RSS Reader. I would spend or got used to spending 15 minutes a day. That's it. Just 15 minutes a day reading my shortlist. The thing is, it took me a couple of years to get to that shortlist and, yeah, don't worry, I'm happy to share it. That's actually one of other attachments you'll see is an OPNL file that you can import into any reader and includes my recruiting and sourcing shortlist. But after years of calling and pruning the list, I ended up with what I would consider to be most reads. So I spend just about 15 minutes just glancing over that. It's almost like I'm picking up a copy of the newspaper and reading it on the bus or the train or the commute on the way to work, hopefully you're not the one who's actually driving the bus or the train. But, I can catch up with most of what's really important in that 15 minutes a day. And once a week I take 30 minutes usually over a couple of cups of coffee and maybe a sandwich or something and I sit on my desk and I scan through or I gist the rest of the numbers on that list. So I may have a dozen or so websites that are on my shortlist and I've got maybe several dozen or so that are of the other ones. I scan the headlines. I click on anything that's gets my attention, read the first paragraph. I'll give you some speed reading tips in a few more slides here. And, I also know that if it's important enough, it's probably going to be covered by one of my shortlist sources. So chances are if it's in that other list I can probably get away with not reading it so I'm just gonna spend 30 minutes trying to read what I can and if anything useful comes up, great, if not, I move on. And then once a month or so, of course I do slip up and sometimes go for a couple of months without doing this, I prune. This is where I delete or remove all my unproductive feeds. I've been doing this for years ever since I've had an RSS Reader. And, I notice that I do sometimes fall behind but it's easy to catch up because, like I said, if it's really important it's gonna be covered by something on your shortlist. So the key to all of these is to develop a shortlist and then develop a process where you're using the best use of your time to read the shortlist and prune the tree. I will give you a hint though and that is, as it relates to speed reading, although not quite technically speed reading advice, it is scientifically proven that reading earlier in the day and whatever it is that your day starts - if the day starts at midnight, that's fine - but early in the day or closer to the time that you wake up versus closest to the time that you go to sleep, if you read closer to the
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time that you wake up, you actually can read twice as fast. Well, the opposite of that, if are reading closer to the time that you're going to sleep, you'll be reading twice as slow. So, think about that and maybe 15 minutes a day is your first cup of coffee.

Transcript for page 9, Speed Reading Tips
Okay. So I gave you one speed reading tip. Let me give you a few more. Here's what I do. I scan the first and the last sentence of the paragraph. Then I go back and I look at the headline, whether it's a blog post or a subject line in the email, and I make into a question. If it's already a question, great, but often it's not, so I have to turn it into a question. So I rephrase the headline in the form of a question and I'll look in between the paragraphs for the answer. Once I find it, then I may skim the whole article or I might decided at this point that this is a waste of time. I skim the article and I find the answer, I might go back and then fill in the blanks. So, my first pass, first and last sentence then headline turns into question, look for answer to question, skin the rest of the article, if anything comes up then I might fill in the blanks, otherwise I move on. In this way, I have gotten to the point where I could read about pretty much about a book a day. Nowadays, I don't really have enough time to read much of anything besides of a book so I can't really tell you I've been keeping up with it but what I can tell you is that it's a skill that never really goes away. Once you kinda get that idea of how to scan the beginning and end and look for the answer to the question, you're not gonna read every word unless you really absolutely have to.

Transcript for page 10, Quote
Sometimes the bark sarcasm of Steven Wright can catch you a little off guard but I enjoy it. And so this is definitely one of my favorite quotes. On one of his comedy skits he said, "You can't have everything. Where would you put it all?" That's to say even if you really could somehow capture all of the information you want to capture, not only would there be enough time for you to read it or process it but there wouldn't be enough space for you to store it, even electronically. So, there's just no sense to try to fight it. It's not necessary. What you wanna do is focus on what's important not on what's urgent. Focus on what matters not on what might be relevant today. We'll take a deeper look at a couple of ways to discern the difference between those two in just a minute.

Transcript for page 11, What's Reliable?
So, you can't have it all because you wouldn't be able to put it anywhere. How do you decide what you keep? I definitely can tell you that from personal experience reading 200 blogs didn't make me more intelligent. It certainly did make me much more unproductive though, which is why I started that 15 minutes a day and the calling process. So, I recommend you pick a few reliable and original sources. I stress the original because reliable sometimes, at the sake of being repetitive, is really not a good idea. So, a good source of information, in my opinion, is an original source of information. Why? Because otherwise I'm kind of rereading recycled ideas. Now that might be okay when you're looking at sunrays but when we're looking at deep web and search engines and things like that, I like to stick to the original. So how do you pick the winners? Well, the first thing I did was I made a list of all the places I go to regularly. Now I'm gonna give you the shortcut. The shortcut is you use something like a Google Reader.
Reader will actually tell you which sources of information you end up reading the most because it tracks what you read and don't read, and I'll show you some very cool statistics on that, making it extremely easy to prune the tree. But, if you don't have that or if you print sources or whatever, just make a list. I started with a spreadsheet. I wrote down what percentage of the articles from that particular source among the last 10 items of that sources made my list. In other words, Blog A, I looked at the last 10 items and I counted of these 10 items, how many of them were items that I actually wanted to read and how many of them were useless. So, once I've gone through my whole list and I've done my exercise, you end up with something like 7 out of 10, 6 out of 10, 5 out of 10, etc., for each one of the sources. Then you simply sort them and delete the bottom half. That's it. I know it sounds really simple but that's because it is and you have to be a little aggressive about it. If you have 100 blogs that you are reading, I guarantee you you're not reading all 100 of them all the time. So I started with that then I looked at the rest and I said, "Okay, I gotta cut this down a little bit more." So, I went through some of the post and I thought, "Hey, sometimes I like those short and sweet posts." I kept a few of those. But, some of the long ones were okay when they were thorough. What I don't like is the long posts that are useless. It's almost like the person who's trying to overwrite because they want you to think they spend a lot of time putting together all the research. But after you read the whole article, you still feel like you haven't really learned anything. So, short can be bad and good, and long can be bad and good. I like to have a mixture of both. What I'm looking for on the short and sweet side are posts that have a new idea and a fairly synced or piffy explanation. On the long side, I'm looking for something that may not be necessarily a good idea but goes into a greater deal of depth and is very well explained. As far as frequency, I think a few posts a week is okay. If a blogger is posting much more than a few times week, like, say, for example, several times a day, chances are they're doing that more for SEO optimization and traffic than they are actually for sharing information. Personally, I can tell you that having written original material for the last 15 years, it's really hard to come up with much more than just one or two things a week that's totally original. So, if somebody's doing much more than that, they're not probably doing everything originally.

Here's the last trick I'm gonna give you on this topic. If you see something you really like, ask yourself, "Is this thought leadership or through repeatership?" Who originally said that or thought about that? Now, the original source may not be the best source but you do wanna track it back to as far or as close to the original as you can and look at the person that maybe built the news or wrote about the first time that item was released and they were the ones who really did the thinking about it. After then, other people just said, "Hey, look, that's cool!" and passed it on. So, I'm really more interested in finding the ones that care enough to be a real content curator - a knowledge evangelist for that particular topic and then I follow that blog.

Transcript for page 12, Information Triage

Okay. Let's switch away from blogs and take a look at your inbox. Information and emails get to clutter quite a bit. Data can be a lot like clutter in your closet. So, it's a good idea to avoid being a packrat especially when it comes to data which tends to go stale fairly quickly. So this applies not only to emails but blog posts and articles and bookmarks and favorites. If you're gonna use it for a few months, great, but if you think you're not gonna need it a year from now, there really is no point in keeping it. Do something with it, delegate it, delete it, maybe store it but hanging on to just for the sake of hanging on to it, nah, it's really not very productive. So before I save it, before I save my favorite or save the email or save the blog post or article, I ask myself, "Is this going to mean something to me a year from now with no context?" So, imagine yourself as an
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archeologist beaming through your computer a year from now and pulling up some random email and reading it and thinking to yourself, "What was I thinking? What is this about?" If it's like that, just delete it because it's not gonna make any sense to you. So, really what I'm saying is only keep the things that are either self-contained or important enough that you can probably connect the dots later on. Everything else, just get rid of it, delete it. What I do now is I dump everything into one archive folder but I'm getting ahead of myself. In a couple of slides, I'll show you how I find it best to organize folders, however, when it comes to this information triage, I just wanna get you thinking about it. When you see an IM article, email, whatever, ask yourself, "Can I do something about it? Can I delegate it?" if not, delete it or archive it. Get rid of it.

Transcript for page 13, Prioritization Pyramid

This is probably a good point to take a step back and say, "How could you possibly prioritize sources of information?" Well, I'm certainly not gonna tell you how to do it but I can give you a guide or at least a roadmap. For me, things that make it higher on my priority list, things that I process first for as often as I can is anything that affects my job. It affects my job, my personal productivity, my ability to earn a living, to get promoted, to get new clients, etc. That's gonna be what gets my attention first. Secondly, anything that's related to my company or if you're a solo practitioner and your job in the company are kinda the same thing, anything that relates to the people that are closer to you and affect your business. It doesn't have to be your company but let's just say your ecosystem. Then, anything that relates to my industry, in my case, it's recruitment and more specifically sourcing. In your case, it might be recruitment and sourcing or it might be a specific kind of recruitment - financial recruitment or technical recruitment. And, after that, the next in line in the list of priorities would be technology - things that are gonna make my life easier through automation or some sort of tool that makes me more effective, faster or does something less expensive. Finally, the economy and the world, pretty much in that order. So, if it's something that's gonna affect the economy, particularly in my practice or area, I'm gonna pay attention to it more than anything else, obviously, but this is just how I kinda look at my information as it hits my desk.

Transcript for page 14, Batch Processing Your Inbox

So continuing the keep or delete thread, let's focus specifically on your inbox. I like to take a look at my inbox at three different views. The first view is who the item was sent to, in other words, you can sort or filter by the person that the email was addressed to. What I'm actually looking for is for my name to be the only one in the two line. So, that it was sent to me and not CC'd me, not BCC'd me but sent to me and only to me. Maybe other people were CC'd or BCC'd but it was sent to me exclusively with everybody else either on the CC or BCC list. Why? Because it's much more likely that an email sent to just me is something I'm supposed to do or delegate. Then, I'm gonna look for anything that I can delegate or forward based on my name being on the CC list. And then finally everything else is basically gonna get archived. I might glance at it using my speed reading techniques but for the most part, if I'm not on the TO list, if I'm on the CC list, then there's nothing for me to delegate or do. It's probably just FYI so I might archive it or delete. The second view that I like to use is to switch to a view by conversation topic or thread. This could be by subject line, for example. This lists all the messages on a particular conversation together. So, if there was a rash of messages about a particular proposal, the proposal's now finished and it's been turned in, you can look at all 27 messages from 15 different people about that one proposal and delete them all or archive them all in one
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fell swoop. That helps you clean out your inbox pretty quickly. Some people call that threads or conversation topics but you might not have that on your inbox so you'll probably just do it through the subject line for example. You'll see the original subject line and then all the REs and FWs that follow after that. And the third view that I like to use is the BY SENDER, in other words, who sent message. So, I'll do a sort for anybody that sent an email from my company. So, it's in my inbox and sent to me or CC'd me but it came from my colleagues, my peers at my company or anybody that came from one of my client groups and so on. You can also sort things that were sent to you by social media like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter or other lists and so on. And that way you can then, again, archive, delete or delegate or do something with large chucks of data from the inbox. In this way, it might take you 30 minutes but you could probably process about 1,000 emails. I can tell you that from experience coz I've done that. I very often let my inbox get to the point where there's 2,000 or 3,000 emails in it. Mostly because I'm travelling or off onsite doing some work for a client, but, when I come back to my desk, I still have to deal with that stuff and most of it is important so I can't just ignore it all. This is what I do, I sit down and send to, conversation topic and then send from and I'm probably going to have process the majority of what needs to be taken a look at.

Transcript for page 15, Inbox Management

So, I went through it but where did I put it all? Actually, I really only have three folder. Search inside of our email and on our desktop has improved to the point where with tools such as Xobni, Outlook or Lotus Notes or desktop search, you can pretty much find almost anything on your computer instantly. The whole need to put things in folders like we used really kind of just goes away. So I really only have three folders. One, for something that's been assigned to me that I have to do and takes me more than two minutes. So these are my TO-DO items, actually required or to-dos. Another for anything that is a follow-up item. So these are reminders, requests, things that might waiting for something from someone else, for example, in order for me to complete my task, I have to get something from the background check company or whatever. And then once I get that then I can complete my task. So that's the second category. So think of the first category as DO NOW and second category as DO LATER. The third one is basically everything else. Why? Well, if I need it, I can probably find it. And, it's actually easier to search across all of those three folders than it is to search one after the other, a bunch of different folders even though Outlook makes to search a variety of folders at once, I still find that it gets a little clutter some and I can easily delete large batches of emails and lighten my inbox by keeping everything in three separate folders.

Transcript for page 16, Color Your Emails

Another quick and easy way to sort through your inbox very quickly is to color the messages as they come in. Both Outlook and Lotus Notes have ways of doing this. My color scheme is anything that's sort of pseudo junkies or lists or emails that are definitely not sent to me but where I'm copied on a list with 1,000 other people. For example, messages from announcements and newsletters and things like that get colored gray. Anything that's internal that somebody sent from my company ends up getting colored red. Anything that comes from my list of friends, people that I consider close, that gets colored blue, news get's colored yellow. Anything that's from a client gets colored green. That's just me but it's much easier to distinguish the messages this way and when I see something, if I'm looking for internal message and I see
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something in red, I can focus in on that and then focus on things that are green or blue and leave the rest of the other things for later.

Transcript for page 17, Flowchart
So as I sort these by color or subject line or sent to or sent from, I decide, "Is this something that is really important and urgent, both important and urgent? Again, is it gonna take me less than two minutes to reply?" If it's really important and it's gonna take me less than two minutes to reply, I reply immediately. By the way, I only check my emails every couple of hours. You might be saying to yourself, "Yeah, right. Whatever." But, believe it or not, I actually enforce that through software. What I do with my Outlook is that it's set to only pull for new messages every couple of hours. That way, I don't have emails coming into my inbox every five minutes interrupting my day and dragging me in and pay my attention. Instead, every couple of hours, I'll get the ding that says "you've got new mail" and I'll go in there and I'll do a batch process. So as I said, if it's important and urgent and it's gonna take me less than two minutes, do it now. If it's not important or urgent or if it's gonna take me more than two minutes, then I have to determine. Is it something that I can assign? Is it something that I can do later? Or is it something that doesn't really require me to do anything right now or reply. So, if it's something that I can assign, I might move it to my ACTION REQUIRED and follow up folders and everything else goes into my archive. Pretty much everything else gets deleted. By the way, if an email is more than two weeks old, do yourself a favor and just answer it, archive it or delete it. Having it sitting in our inbox is just not going to make you feel better. Trust me, guilt is not going to make you more responsive in 6 months and in a year and in two years. Looking at that email and feeling guiltier for not responding is not going to make you wanna respond anymore than you are now. So, either get it done or just delete it. If that person really needs to get in touch with you, they'd probably would've called you or sent you another email or something. So just do yourself a favor and avoid the stress.

Transcript for page 18, Boilerplate Emails
This is really more of a reminder or refresher with a twist. Back in the initiating contact and effective emails module, we talked about border plate. These are messages that we use a lot like "thank you for sending your resume" and frequently asked questions, responses and directions and prescreen and referral and reference checking and so on. So, I'm not gonna go over those because we talked about those in the previous module but I do wanna reinforce that it's a good idea to have these mastered templates or use these as signature files because probably about 80% of the email that you send is responding to the same 10 basic requests. Think about it. So you end up typing and typing the same stuff over and over.

Transcript for page 19, Evaluating New Tools
New tools and bright shiny objects are gonna come at you all the time. Change is inevitable except of course for vending machines. But, these websites are created daily and everybody wants to make a dollar. Before you go and sink your time into a new whatever it is, the LinkedIn or the new Twitter or the new Facebook or the new Google, do a little bit of research. Here are things you might wanna ask. Can you verify the claims that they make about their impact? Do other companies like yours use it? Have they used it successfully? Do they have case studies
they can share? What do people at those other companies have to say about the tool? Sort of a backdoor reference checks if you will. What do some of the recognized industry experts and thought leaders have to say about it? Ask them. If you have a couple of favorite speakers or thought leaders that you follow, drop them a note. "Hey, I just came across this website tool. Have you used it? Do you have any experience with it?" Also, ask yourself from your point of you, what is it going to take to support this new tool or website? You might need to make investments other than money of time and resources. What type of support does that organization offer in order to help adoption? Will it fit in to your audit requirements and other types of standards or CCP, EOC, Sarbanes-Oxley, ISO 9000 and so on. One of my favorite questions, "If I don't do this now, am I gonna have to do something and like it later or get left behind?" Another way to think about that is, "How long can I wait before I get in to this new technology without losing my competitive advantage. The answers to some of these questions should help you whether or not it's really worth your time to get into that new tool.

Transcript for page 20, "Must Have" Tools
These are my personal favorite. I love Xobni because it's like Outlook on steroids. It installs in your Outlook and in fact, I've heard rumors that it's probably going to get integrated into Outlook so you might not have to get it separately. I actually paid a few bucks and get the Pro version because it allows me to search the content of counter items and attachments inside of emails, which I think is pretty cool. But the free version is very powerful. What it does in a nutshell is it helps you bring your own network inside of Outlook. Personal. It's just yours. So everybody who sent you an email is connected to everybody else who sent an email to them, where you sent an email to that was related to them, etc. It's kind of like 6 degrees, only what you're looking for is people that are tied together through some combination or having emailed or added each other to counter items. It also looks at data and statistics such as how frequently to email you and what time and date to email. I like this a lot because I want to know what time hiring managers usually respond so that I have a better chance of catching them at their desk either via email or phone. If a hiring manager response to me much more between two and four, then I just know that that's kind of how their day runs. So if I'm going to call them or set a meeting, I'm going to do it somewhere between two and four.

Another one of my favorites is Evernote, which allows you to take pictures from your mobile phone and recognizes the text inside of the pictures. That's right. So you can take a picture of a resume or notes in a meeting or a sign and it will actually be able to read it. It also synchronizes between your phone and iPad and Macintosh and PC, and it allows you to add all kinds of things like Powerpoint and Excel and Word documents and audio notes in addition to photos, etc.

Another one I really like is Contact Capture which is made by Broadlook and you'll get a free license using the link that's in our resources menu. But why I like is because it can take a big page full of names and titles and phone numbers and pars it so that first name is up in the first name field and phone number on the phone number field in your Outlook or Lotus Notes or Sales Force or Mac's Hire or whatever database you end up using. So, it's kind of a way to avoid having to type a lot of stuff especially if you're a bad typist like me, prone to making small errors that make emails undeliverable.

Time management, I find is very easy to do with a tool like Rescue Time that sits in your system tray and tracks how much time you spend on different activities, like how much time a day you spend on Powerpoint versus Word versus Explorer, and on Explorer, how much of your day goes to LinkedIn versus Facebook etc. And it reports it back to you, it's private. What's nice
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about is that you can see how much of your day you're spending on all the different activities as an aggregate. So you might be flipping back and forth between 20 different activities but it actually adds them all up together. This is even more useful if you have to build per hour, for example if you're a contractor or a consultant.

Opera is my favorite browser because you can create instant searches from any searchable database or website. As long as the website has a search box, you can right click and create a search engine inside your browser. That's pretty cool. I don't know any other ones that do that.

And I'm pretty fond of the Virtual Assistant at Remember the Milk. It's one of those things where you can text or call or email yourself a reminder that you should pickup milk on the way home at 5:30. So that way, you leave the office 5 o'clock or 5:15, you're in the car, you're on your way and you get a text message from Remember the Milk saying, "Don't forget the milk," or don't forget to send the resume or don't forget to follow up with the hire manager or whatever. It's kind of like programming reminders that pop up in the future only you have more control than just your Outlook. They can go your email. They can go to your voicemail. They can go to your mobile phone and send a text message, etc. There's a pretty comprehensive handout with about a dozen or so resources getting that resources tab that you can download and most of those are free. In fact, all of these I've talked about here are free or have free versions Xobni, Evernote and Rescue Time have powerful upgrades for just a few dollars.

Transcript for page 21, The Pareto Principle

Pareto was an Italian economist who calculated that 80% of the wealth was only owned by 20% of the population. And so often this is referred to as the 80/20 Rule. People have applied this rule to other areas besides just the distribution of wealth. For example, it often applies to the way we manage our day. That's to say that 80% of the tasks that we do result in 20% of the output of productivity. Which means that a lot of the activity that we do are actually a waste of time and there's a few things that you do that are incredibly productive. The trick is, just do more of those 20s that result in the 80% and do less of the 80s that result in the 20%. So, like I did with the blogs, I also created a list of all the types of things that I do during the day - write articles, create presentations, source candidates, submit candidates, talk to hiring managers, etc. And I would, in little table format, show how many hours I approximately spend on each one of those per day then I had to call them to rate the productivity level if you will or multiplier effect, how well that does that activity contribute to "bottom-line" or end goal. And anything that had a low score, according to a threshold that I pretty much, arbitrarily set somewhere in the middle, ended up by getting eliminated or delegated. But, a tool like Rescue Time makes it very easy because it will tell you where you're spending your time as an aggregate through the day, a week, a month and it even tells you what websites and what parts of your computer you use more often or less often. So, you can easily identify unproductive tasks.