Managing Information Overload

Maximise your capacity to absorb new information and sustain high performance!

Bill Jarrard & Jennifer Goddard, Mindwerx International

Abstract

Every day, people are confronted by vast amounts of new information flowing towards them from a multitude of sources. Almost everyone feels overwhelmed at some point when trying to absorb, understand and apply this new information.   The impact on individuals varies from simple time wasting to serious health problems, while for organisations the effect is compounded into a massive loss of productivity and poor performance.

This white paper explores the causes of Information Overload, described as "an excess of information that results in an inability to concentrate on tasks and stay focused", and presents a model for better Managing Information Overload that involves eight areas of consideration and skill development. By understanding and taking action in these eight areas, the benefits for the individual and their organisation are significant. The eight areas where skill development is vital are:

- *Purpose & Focus* – it all starts (and ends) with clarity of focus. Knowing what to work on, and what to ignore, is vital
- *Information Incoming* – the first step is understanding where information comes from and how to handle it as it comes in
- *Information Organisation* – how to organise incoming information so it can be retrieved, adapted and used later
- *Information Retention and Recall* – knowing what and how to retain and recall key information, and ways to improve memory
- **Information Application** – applying critical and creative thinking to achieve goals with creativity on demand
- *iBrain & Digital Literacy* – understanding and harnessing new technologies to better Manage Information Overload
- *Mind & Body Connection* – appreciating that Healthy Mind = Healthy Body, and Healthy Body = Healthy Mind
- *Time & Life Management –* time manages itself quite nicely, it's what is done with time that determines the success achieved in life
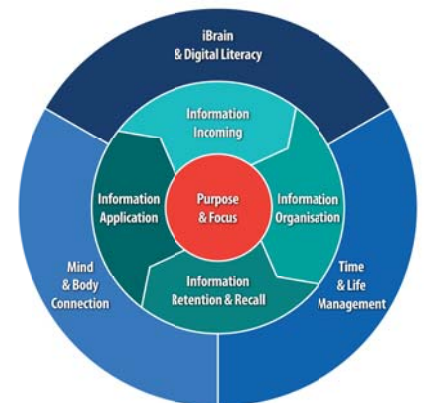
Total Word Count = 6,100
Average Reader = 25.4 mins
Skilled Reader = 10.2 mins

Table of Contents

The Challenge of Information Overload

Every day, people are confronted by vast amounts of new information flowing towards them from a multitude of sources. Almost everyone feels overwhelmed at some point when trying to absorb, understand and apply this new information.

Information incoming is like being bombarded in a war zone. Information flows in through reading, scanning, news, meetings, lectures, TV, internet, video, games, conversations, emails and more – it's no wonder people are overwhelmed. According to one saying "getting information off the internet is like drinking from a fire hydrant."

"Australian workers are the most likely to admit that the amount of information they have to manage for their jobs has increased in the past five years (92%) with two-thirds (65%) saying the amount has increased significantly. Compared to other markets surveyed, Australians spend more time receiving and managing information (54%) than actually using that information (46%)."
-Information Rage Impacting Australian Workers
LexisNexis 2010

The Information Overload Resource Center reports that Information Overload, described as *"an excess of information that results in an inability to concentrate on tasks and stay focused"*, is a massive problem in the 21st Century.

Recent Basex research shows Information Overload costs the U.S. economy around $900 billion per year.

The impact of Information Overload on the individual leads to wasted time and lost focus, longer work hours, less willingness and ability to look 'outside' their own space, and on to stress, depression and bad health and in some cases breakdown in the family unit and worse.

For organisations, the effect of having overloaded employees is compounded and results in poor performance and a massive loss of productivity. Absenteeism and staff turnover increases, driving up the cost of recruitment, induction, retraining and more. In the workplace Information Overload manifests itself in a demonstrable lack of direction and focus by staff, open door policies and cubicles that create distraction rather than cooperation, meetings where more time is wasted than anywhere else, and often a feeling by individuals that they are powerless, simply because they are unsure on what to do and what not to do.

An International survey of white collar workers revealed that "information overload is a remarkably widespread and growing problem among professionals around the world and one that exacts a heavy toll in terms of productivity and employee morale."
- Workplace Productivity Survey
LexisNexis 2008

The bottom line impact of this to the organisation is significant. For example, Intel's own research indicated each knowledge worker loses six to eight hours per week due to Information Overload, which for a company its size would result in a cost of around $1 billion per year.

To put the challenge in context do a quick calculation of the potential cost of Information Overload to your organisation.

Calculation steps…	Example	Your Organisation
1. Number of employees:	200	_____
2. Estimated time lost each week PER EMPLOYEE due to Information Overload, lack of focus, and poor meetings:	x 2.5 hrs/wk	x _____ hrs/wk

3. Total hours of lost productivity each week: = 500 hrs/wk = _____hrs/wk

4. Total hours of lost productivity each year (~48 weeks): x 48 = 24,000 hrs/yr X 48 = _____ hrs/yr

5. Average estimated hourly cost per employee ($ £ €): x $45 x $_____

6. Total lost productivity in financial terms PER YEAR: = $ 1,080,000 =$ _____

↑

How does this figure compare to your current net profit?

For many companies it is many times actual net profit!

The Benefits of Managing Information Overload

Sustained high performance depends on having a capacity to solve problems, explore opportunities, and achieve goals, and having the ability to effectively absorb and use new information creatively is vital to doing this. The usual approach to Managing Information Overload is screening out unwanted information, and this may appear helpful in getting through day-to-day work, but important opportunities may be missed by narrowing your focus.

To **Manage** Information Overload is to have the capacity to know what is to be achieved, and what information is needed to do so. In this way, you can locate, organise, retain, recall, and then use information important to achieving individual and enterprise goals. The benefits of effectively Managing Information Overload are clear:

> *"Your time is limited, don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma, which is living the result of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of other's opinion drown your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary." – Steve Jobs*

- *Benefits for the Individual*
    - More clarity of focus, resulting in faster, easier achievement of goals and a solid increase in personal performance and productivity, and greater satisfaction at work and home
    - Ability to scan more broadly for new information, with more time for 'future' thinking
    - No more taking home work that should be done at the office, not after the kids are in bed
- *Benefits for the Team*
    - Less time wasted on unfocussed activities, badly run meetings and wasted effort relearning or relocating information that is already available
    - Higher levels of team collaboration, performance, and energy as results are achieved more quickly and with more immediate impact
- *Benefits for the organisation*
    - Employees that manage information perform better, are less stressed and more productive, and therefore more committed to building the organisation
    - Lower staff absenteeism and attrition, leading to reduced recruitment, induction and retraining costs, and increased employee and customer client loyalty
    - Greater opportunity to scan for new opportunities and ideas results in increased potential to grow new markets, plan future strategies and endeavours, and beat the competition

Everyone Benefits from Sustained High Performance when Managing Information Overload

- Managing Information Overload is important for people often referred to as knowledge/information workers. Individuals such as executives, managers, professionals, office staff, specialists, small business owners, educators, mature students, and leaders of any sort of organisation (including NFPs and Associations) will certainly benefit, and it will be of immense value to anyone who feels they aren't achieving their goals due to the overwhelming impact of Information Overload.

> *"A study by University of London examined how volunteers carried out tasks, first in a quiet environment and then in one where they were **subject to a barrage of calls and emails**. In the second scenario the **volunteers effective IQs were reduced by 10 points**; for comparison, in similar studies that compared regular cannabis users with a control group, the drop is usually five points."*
>
> *- London "Financial Times" 26 August 2006*

- Managing Information Overload encompasses the needs of different disciplines – Services, Marketing, Accounting, Engineering, Sales, Operations, Human Resources, Retail, Call Centres and even online knowledge workers.

- Managing Information Overload is also of real interest and importance to the mature age worker, particularly those seeking to change their career path or re-enter the workforce. Reinvent Your Career reports that 38 % of the Australian workforce is now over the age of 45 years old, and that by the year 2016, people aged 45 and over will account for more than 80% of work force growth in Australia. Organisations with foresight know they need to engage the older knowledge worker and aid them in overcoming the challenge of Managing Information Overload.

<u>The Mindwerx Managing Information Overload Model</u>

The Mindwerx Managing Information Overload approach explores eight areas of consideration that fall under three broad themes, all of which interact with each other, as represented in this model:
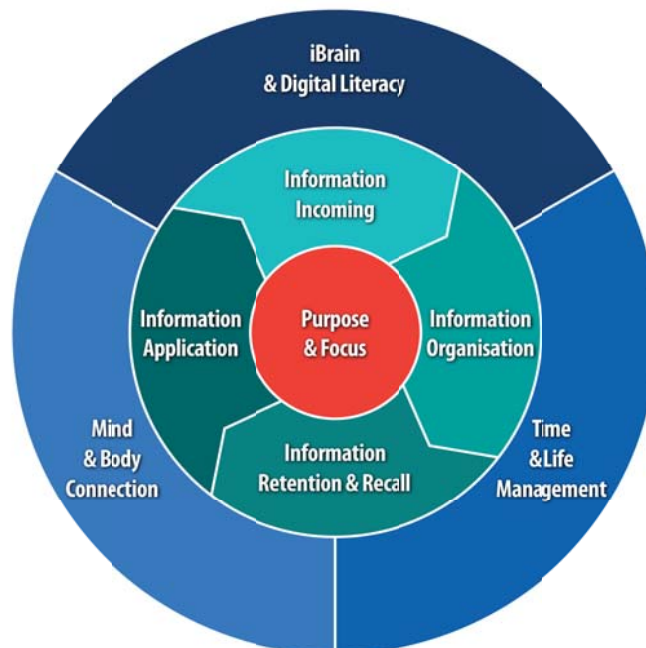
Purpose & Focus

Having a clear Purpose & Focus for the short and longer term, in all aspects of an individual's life, and an organisation's reason for existence, is vital to success in Managing Information Overload. Without clarity of focus it is impossible to know what information to seek and what to ignore, and even more importantly knowing what to do with it. This is the central theme of the Mindwerx Managing Information Overload approach.

The Long View

Techniques such as Imagineering help you visualise the desired future, so you can see the gap between where you are now and where you want to be, so you can then engineer it into reality. Having clarity around your aims, goals and objectives in the six key areas of life - Family, Work, Social, Spiritual, Health and Financial, allows you to develop a Creative Hit List that goes well beyond the immediate.

For example Shannon, a 34 year old very successful IT channel manager earning well over $200K per year, took a long view of where she wanted to be in the future, which was to be a valuable contributor on a range of company Boards. To position herself to achieve this goal she undertook an MBA and is currently undertaking the CPA, while starting a family. Now a Sales Manager, doing very well, she continues to seek information and focus on her long view goals, while maintaining absolute focus on her immediate purpose as a senior Sales manager, wife and mother. We'll learn more about Shannon later.

> *"The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score." – Bill Copeland*

The Short View

Whether or not you have the kind of long view clarity that Shannon has, having a clear purpose and focus for Managing Information Overload is equally important for the short view. This is about setting Aims, Goals, and SMART Objectives for those things you want to accomplish in the next 15 minutes, 15 hours, 15 days, or even 15 weeks, etc. With this kind of focus your capacity for seeing the information you want is enhanced, and your ability to screen out 'noise' is increased.

For example, Ian is managing a current project involving a small team to design and implement a new product delivery system over the next three months. Clearly he has goals and objectives for the project, which will guide him on what information he wants to collect. But he also has a more immediate focus to deliver a presentation to key stakeholders next week on the innovative approach planned for the project. Having a clear set of Aims, Goals and Objective for that presentation gives him an idea of the very specific information he'll want to gather to prepare and deliver it successfully.   We'll see how this works in practice later.

Techniques such as Visualisation; Imagineering; AGO – Aims, Goals, Objectives; Multiple Focus Statements; FIP – First Important Priorities, and the effective use of Creative Hit Lists and basic planning systems, all provide simple but powerful ways to develop clarity of purpose and focus, so information can be thoroughly and effectively sought and managed.

Information Flow & Application

The second theme considered in this model involves the four stages of information flow and application:

1) **Information Incoming** – This is the first step in understanding where information comes from and how to handle it as it comes in. Books, reports, newspapers, magazines, scanning, meetings, conferences, lectures, news, TV, internet, video, games, conversations, emails and more are avenues for incoming information, and you seldom have total control of when and how it arrives.

To address this you will fall back on your Purpose and Focus to determine as much as possible how to seek and handle incoming information, and use a range of practical techniques to get more of the information you want, and filter out that information you cannot afford to receive. This may involve setting Internet Alerts and RSS Feeds on key topic areas to reduce time spent searching, and scanning intelligently for academic papers, articles and books on the topic of interest.

Reading (books, reports, newspapers, magazines, on-screen, etc) remains the dominant method to bring information in, and debunking traditional reading myths and using reading techniques such as power browsing, skimming, scanning, and more allows you to read better, faster and with more satisfaction. The ability to read strategically leads to an increase in reading speed, comprehension and recall and is a major skill that can be developed to better manage incoming information.
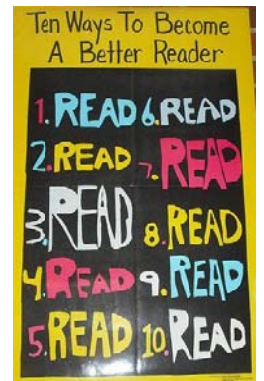
This goes beyond the very helpful Speed Reading to what is more accurately called Range and Rapid Reading.

According to a 2010 report, 2.8 million emails are sent per second (that's 90 Trillion per year), so creating an efficient approach to email (basic rules and filters), bookmarking information for later (bookmarking services), and reading when you have the time (read it later services) are useful devices for handling incoming information. And these are readily available to everyone who wants to use them.

Conferences, meetings, lectures and other group activities where information is exchanged often result in more time wasted than almost anywhere else. Learn techniques to get real information value from every group activity you participate in to help fix this one problem, and you're well on your way to regaining control of your life. As we'll see this includes information organising methods and improved memory techniques.

2) *Information Organisation* – Having the ability to organise information as it comes in so you can retrieve and use it later is the next stage of information flow. By knowing what information you want you can design methods for capturing, organising, adapting and then using it better. The aim is to consolidate and enhance your knowledge base to have information beyond your own immediate areas of concern so you can come up with new ideas and answers as and when you want them.
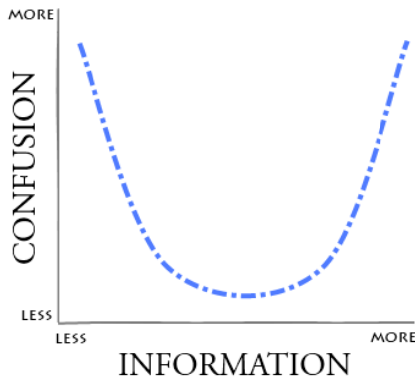
Converting information to visual displays to make the complex simple, and the simple memorable, is a sure way to get the most of information coming in. Mind Mapping and other brain-friendly thought organising methods allow you to see the big picture and the details at the same time, while Mega Maps and group Mind Maps give you maximum information value you can use in teams.

Flow charts, process diagrams, symbols, sketches, and ordering methods to highlight key points are all valuable, as are statistical techniques. The aim is to bring information 'alive' so you can retain, recall and use it later. This is also effectively done using simple tools for organising files, emails and tasks into active, foreground and background activities.

The creation of Knowledge Files allows for the effective build-up of information over time, so it can be recalled and used on demand. This may include study material, information to be used in a project or when writing a report or book, and even for client files where building long-term rapport is wanted. Your Knowledge File may be a computer file or a physical file (or both), and hold your Mind Maps, reports, articles, web link references and other online material, as well as your own notes and observations. In many cases your online Knowledge File will automatically sync in the Cloud, so you can access and add to it using your mobile devices, such as an Android or iPad.

Email in particular can be better organised using simple filing and syncing mechanisms so that you can capture, isolate and organise them as they arrive, have automatic notifications on the arrival of new material, which can then be focused on anywhere and anytime you are ready. This basic approach saves considerable time each day by reducing the switching back and forth of your attention as emails arrive.

3) ***Information Retention and Recall*** – If you read it, hear it, or study it but don't remember it (or remember how to find it again) your effort to learn it is a waste of time. Knowing what and how to retain and recall key information is vital if you are to put it to effective use. Strengthening memory skills to keep yourself relevant in an age of Information Overload is a simple way to build an outstanding Knowledge Base you can call on continuously.

This starts with identifying what to remember and what not to bother with, and then learning to use simple and effective memory techniques. These include:

a) The 12 components to an effective memory, and how they also apply to study techniques and being more creative in your thinking
b) The principles of mnemonics and why they work to retain and recall key information
c) Remembering unstructured information using the Loci Method
d) The skill of remembering names and faces in group situations, so you can connect information with people and build knowledge networks
e) The Most Important Graph in the World and the 7.5 memory principles for personal and business success:
   i) Recall during learning – Primacy, Recency, the Von Restorff Effect, Association and Imagination
   ii) Recall after learning – from information to knowledge to wisdom you have mastered

When you understand and apply memory principles you become a master communicator, able to tailor your leadership and communication approach to ensure messages are remembered.

In addition to having an improved memory there are many iBrain devices to retain and recall information, and again this is most effectively done by organising information as it comes in, with your Knowledge Files being a key tool for this.

The connection between better information retention and recall, and generating innovative new solutions is clear. The more information you have and the easier it is to recall it, the greater your chance to make new connections between key pieces of information and generate new answers. The argument that there is little need to remember information, because everything we need to know is instantly available on the internet, breaks down in application. If you don't know what you don't know, and don't know what questions to ask, the vast information on the internet is of little use.

Getting information off the Internet is like taking a drink from a fire hydrant.
Mitchell Kapor
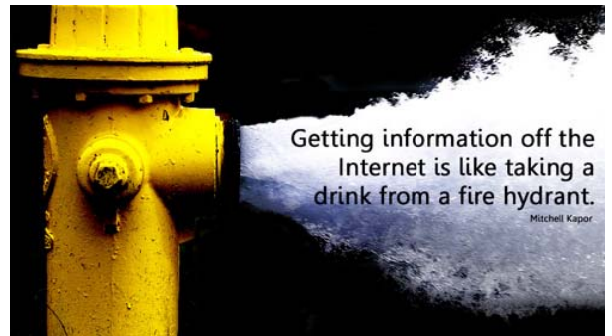
4) **Information Application** – Creativity on demand is a vital skill anyone can develop and improve, and by applying critical and creative thinking you can effectively use information you have collected to achieve the goals you set.

Critical thinking is defined as the application of intellect on the process of thinking in order to improve it – what is called 'thinking about thinking' or Deliberate Thinking. Creative thinking is that thinking done to shift ones' perspective, in order to see things in new ways – if you can see something you've never seen before or see something in a way you've never seen it before, the potential for discovering new opportunities is heightened. That is the nature of creativity.
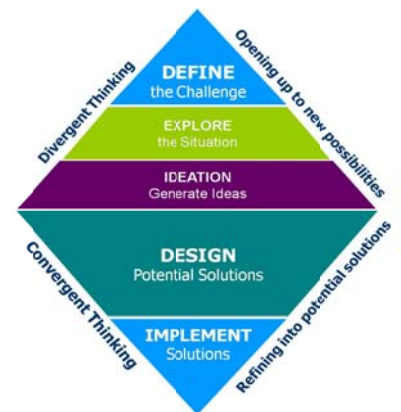
The better you are able to use the information you have, individually and in teams the more effective, efficient and creative you'll be. Different types of critical thinking are available for different situations, and understanding these gives you real power to rapidly develop innovative solutions.

Types of thinking valuable in Managing Information Overload include:
a)   Strategic thinking – the vital step before strategic planning
b)   Radiant thinking – using the natural bloom and flow of your amazing brain
c)   Parallel thinking – the ultimate collaborative approach to getting results fast
d)   Directed thinking – learn where to look and how to direct your thinking
e)   Lateral thinking – proven methods to generate ideas on demand

Deliberate Creative Thinking as embodied in the Mindwerx model embraces the proven Divergent-Convergent approach to creative thinking, and is the way to creatively use information and achieve your goals faster and with more potential solutions.

When combined with a range of Deliberate Creative Thinking tools this approach to critical and creative thinking turns information into innovative outcomes and results you can use, particularly when working in teams using new iBrain technologies such as Zing Group Systems, GoToMeeting, and MindGenius Mind Mapping software.

"Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people." Eleanor Roosevelt

Managing Information Overload Influencers

Encasing the process of information flow and application there are three broad aspects that influence or impact on how well and in what ways information is able to flow and be used to achieve your goals. These are:

- **Harnessing your iBrain & Digital Literacy** – Understanding and harnessing new technologies help Manage Information Overload in a wide variety of ways. These technologies include basic computer skills which many people still don't use effectively, to Cloud computing and a wide range of new devices with almost limitless apps, to effectively source information from the internet.

Social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter keep us in touch like never before and on the basis that many brains are better than one, using blogs and social media to get answers and learn faster makes sense. The key is not to get diverted by the allure of online technologies.

The aim of Managing Information Overload is not to restrict the flow of information from iBrain sources, as many organisations do, but to effectively use these to get more of the information needed to achieve individual and organisational goals. This will be a hard reality for some leaders to swallow.

- **The Mind & Body Connection** – *Mens sana in corpore sano* - a sound mind in a healthy body. This adage is as true today as ever and appreciating that a Healthy Mind = Healthy Body, and a Healthy Body = Healthy Mind is fundamental to being truly effective in everything you do.
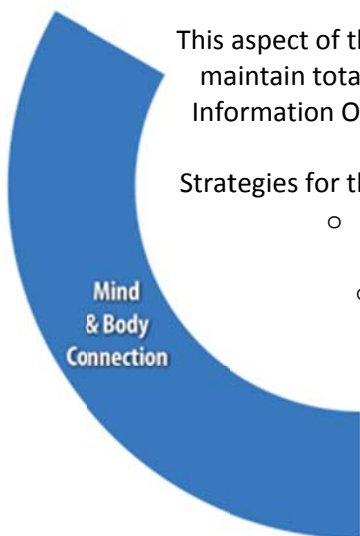
This aspect of the Managing Information Overload model considers how to keep your mind tools sharp to maintain total fitness. It explores the impact of poor diet, health, stress, and lack of sleep on Information Overload, and includes a look at the importance of quiet time / reflection / breathing.

Strategies for the rejuvenation of both body and mind encompass:
  o Diet and supplements – you are what you eat and drink, and that affects how you function
  o Exercise your way to a better brain – strength and cardio exercise
  o Mind/Body Medicine - the healing power of the mind and visualization

Aspects such as Multiple Intelligences, laughter and wellness, as well as emotional freedom techniques to rewire the brain are considered here. Balance in all things is the key to a healthy mind and body, including balancing your goals in the six areas of your life and making time for the little things is important, as is the importance of social interaction to maintain balance.

Time & Life Management – Time manages itself quite nicely. It is what you do with your time that determines your life success, and that is the focus of consideration here. Everyone has the same amount of time each day and getting things done demands focus, so connecting back to your Purpose and Focus is important in making the most of your time.

To stop struggling with the juggling you need to understand how multi-tasking leads to a significant loss of productivity, and how to reduce attention switching activities. Setting first important priorities to get things done and using calendar management techniques are a simple start to help sort the Important, Not Important, Urgent, Not Urgent activities.

Tools such as your Universal Personal Organiser are valuable in planning your day, week, month, year and beyond. Eliminating unnecessary work and staying on focus and the use of productive thinking in teams will reduce wasted effort and massive frustration. This consideration is all about the simple saying ***"If it's worth doing, it's worth planning"***.

Managing Information Overload in Action

- **Shannon has the long view** to join a range of Company Boards in 5-10 years, so while doing her MBA her primary focus was on Board responsibilities, duty of care, regulation, etc, but she also wanted to see if there was anything unique about 'women on Boards' that would help her achieve her goal sooner. In addition to scanning and speed reading many books, papers and company reports, she also set in place a number of Google Alerts to watch for information on women on boards, and even made one of her objectives to meet several amazing women currently making their mark.

  > *"Don't say you don't have enough time. You have exactly the same number of hours per day that were given to Helen Keller, Pasteur, Michaelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Jefferson, and Albert Einstein." – Life's Little Instruction Book, compiled by H. Jackson Brown, Jr.*

  During University lectures she Mind Mapped key issues, points, and ideas and built Mega-Maps on each subject to condense a complete subject to one large visual overview she could study daily and recall instantly during exams. She is using the same approach when doing her CPA study. In attending lectures, conferences and meetings her skill to remember names and faces, allows her to make rapid connection with key people, whom she is then able to approach later when needed. This improved memory skill alone has also given her a significant advantage over other sales people, and helped her become a top sales person, with her sales performance regularly being double that of others.

  In writing assignment reports and presenting findings, as well as in the many presentations she does as a Senior Sales Manager, Shannon applies the improved memory principles embodied in the Most Important Graph in the World (MIG). By understanding the principles of Primacy, Recency, Association, Imagery, and the Von Restorff Effect she makes her presentations memorable, so others can better manage their Information Overload. As a result she is now speaking at conferences, where many of the women on Boards she wanted to meet are also attending or speaking, giving her opportunities to meet her objective of meeting these amazing people, who now see Shannon as pretty amazing herself.

- **In our example of Project Manager Ian** needing to make a presentation to stakeholders next week, his goal is to clearly demonstrate the benefits of an innovative new approach being planned. He therefore identified a number of peer review papers that had been done on this, and through his scanning located a number of TED Talks by key specialists that gave him the support he needed. He even found an interview on BVO.com he could

capture 3 minutes of for his talk. He set in place a number of Google Alerts to capture any late-breaking news on this approach, and Power Browsed three books on effective presentation, including Presentation Zen, which he Sped Read and quickly Mind Mapped to capture key tips to great presentations.

In preparing the content of the presentation he used Mind Mapping software to construct an overview of the talk, and used the Notes section to fill in the details so he could rapidly convert his thinking into a Word hand-out document and an Interactive PowerPoint presentation. This approach allowed him to quickly convert the information in his head into a cohesive overview of his talk, which he could then recall and speak to without constant reference to notes during the talk.

As the approach planned for the project involved team members working virtually 24/7 using a sunrise-sunset/time-zone change schedule, it was important the Project Knowledge File was held securely in the Cloud and synced to relevant team members. Team leaders in each time time-zone, as well as many team members, also had continuous access to core material on their iPads, so they could contribute to the project at any time.

One thing Ian knows well is that ideas can come at any time, and it is vital to capture them when they do.

His aim in the presentation to stakeholders was to demonstrate this approach by presenting in an innovative way, which he did by involving two other team leader using Skype and GoToMeeting, on his iPad connected to the overhead projector so everyone could see everything clearly.

Managing Information Overload courses

Now that you know what to do, the next step is to learn *how* to do it. Imagine you want to learn to juggle three balls (a bit like juggling information). Just watching someone juggle and then using the 'grab three balls and juggle strategy' will surely lead to frustration and lots of dropped balls. Many people think that juggling is passing the ball from one hand to the other and therefore will **never** be able to juggle in their lifetime. **Simple, practical and expert hands-on guidance leads to participants being able to juggle within 1 hour of practice** – we've proven this over and over again in our training courses.

Mindwerx International has designed several course options for organisations wanting to help their people deal with the challenge of Information Overload. On completion participants will be able to identify where they might take action to better manage Information Overload in their own circumstance. These are one or two-day blended programs involving a workshop and online participation, with keynote and half-day seminar style presentations also available. A basic course summary, that is tailored to your specific needs, follows …

Introductions, goals, objectives and approach

The challenges of Information Overload
- o Why today's availability and ease of access to information is both a blessing and a curse
- o The impact of Information Overload on the individual and workplace productivity

The Mindwerx Managing Information Overload Model – Overview
- o *Purpose & Focus* – It all starts and ends with your focus
- o *Information Incoming* – where information comes from and how to handle
- o *Information Organisation* – organise information as it comes in so you can retrieve it later
- o *Information Retention & Recall* – retain and recall key information, and improved memory
- o *Information Application* – critical and creative thinking generate ideas and solutions you need
- o *iBrain & Digital Literacy* – understanding and harnessing new technologies
- o *Mind & Body Connection* – Healthy Body = Healthy Mind
- o *Time & Life Management* – make the most of your time to achieve your life goals

The Power of Purpose & Focus to stay on track
- o The Long View and the Short View
- o Imagineering – imagine your desired future and engineer it into reality
- o Setting your aims, goals and objectives for success in all things
- o The importance of your Creative Hit Lists

Handling Incoming Information to get and keep what you need
- o What information are we talking about, how does it come in?
- o Techniques to improve how you handle information coming in

Organising Information to better retain, adapt, and manage it
- o Organising information to suit your purpose and focus – short and long term
- o Mind Mapping for note taking and note making
- o Converting information to make the complex simple, and the simple memorable

Retaining and Recalling the information you need, when you need it
- o Strengthen your memory to keep yourself relevant
- o Understand the Most Important Graph in the World and the 7.5 Principles of Memory

Critical and Creative Thinking to achieve the outcomes you want
- o Critical thinking to be creative on demand is a vital skill anyone can develop and improve
- o The Mindwerx Deliberate Creative Thinking model
- o Different types of critical thinking for different situations

Influences that impact the challenge of Information Overload
- o Harnessing your iBrain and Digital Literacy to use technologies to Manage Information Overload
- o Understanding the Mind & Body Connection and its impact on Information Overload
- o Managing your time to achieve your Life Goals

Putting it all together
- o Where to from here post-workshop – Mindwerx Academy online eModules for continued learning
- o The Mindwerx Managing Information Overload Workbook

End workshop

Self-Assessment, Action Planning Workbook, and Online eModules

Mindwerx International has developed several invaluable tools to help individuals take up the challenge of Managing Information Overload, that are part of our one and two-day blended program options, and include:

- **The Managing Information Overload Participant Self-Assessment**
  - o A self-assessment that results in an 8 sided spider diagram showing each of the 8 components of the Managing Information Overload model, and where you likely need to focus most attention on skill development – done prior to the Managing Information Overload workshop.
- **The Mindwerx Managing Information Overload workbook**
  - o Used in conjunction with the workshop, this workbook provides templates and instructions to guide each participant in creating a Managing Information Overload Action Plan.
  - o Provided to every participant for use during and after the workshop.
- **The Mindwerx International Academy of Online eModules**
  - o eModules build on material covered in 1 and 2-day workshops, and look closely as specific tools and techniques for Managing Information Overload.

You Can't **Beat** Information Overload
You Can't **Master** Information Overload
You Can't **Eliminate** Information Overload

**What you CAN do is learn simple and easy techniques
that productive people know, say and do
to MANAGE Information on an ongoing basis
to reduce stress, increase effectiveness and**

live a happier, healthier and more successful life!

Mindwerx Managing Information Overload Support Programs

Your efforts in Managing Information Overload are supported with more in-depth blended workshops looking at specific tools and techniques, including:

- Mind Mapping to Get Things Done
- Deliberate Creative Thinking
- Edward de Bono's Serious Creativity Tools
- HBDI – Whole Brain Thinking

- Speed Reading
- Study Skills for Students
- Improved Memory & The Most Important Graph in the World

For more information on these professional development programs and how we can tailor a Managing Information Overload program for you, email bill@mindwerx.com or call +61 (0)7 5502 6570 anytime.

References & Links

In addition to the work done with clients over the last 20 years, we have done a range of research on the challenges of Information Overload. This research will continue, but we share the following with you and encourage companies to validate the challenge in terms of their own context. In that way we can work with you to ensure the Managing Information Overload programs we tailor for you truly result in massive improvement to organisational performance and the greater well-being of your people.

Intel's own research indicated that each knowledge worker loses eight hours per week due to Information Overload, which for a company its size would result in a cost of $1 billion per year.
http://bsx.stores.yahoo.net/inwaroninov.html

The pdf report - http://iorgforum.zippykid.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/IntelWarIO.BasexReport1.pdf

Illustration of information overload: http://knol.google.com/k/information-overload-new-symptoms-and-new-solutions#

"Knowledge workers spend about 20 hours a week doing e-mail, and one-third of that e-mail is useless," explains Zeldes. Worse, 70 percent of e-mail gets handled within six minutes of arrival and the average worker is interrupted every three minutes, according to research. "When you switch between tasks, you incur a cognitive reorientation cost," says David Sward, a senior human factors engineer at Intel and one of Zeldes's partners on the infomania project. The bottom line was that Intel's workers were wasting about six hours a week.
http://www.cio.com/article/120852/Intel_rsquo_s_E_Mail_Overload_Solution

Basex says today knowledge workers lose 25 percent of the work day due to Information Overload and by 2012 the typical knowledge worker will receive hundreds of messages each day via e-mail, IM, text, and social networks"
http://www.internetnews.com/dneedle/2009/08/what-does-intel-know-about-inf.html

"Basex research shows that Information Overload costs the U.S. economy about. $900 billion per year."
http://informationoverloadresources.com/research-report/intels-war-on-information-overload/

McKinsey Report - Recovering from information overload
http://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/Recovering_from_information_overload_2735