

*The Indispensable Assistant* is designed with you in mind, outlining unique insights into the 11 essential principles for support and office role effectiveness.

Today's competitive environment demands more from office support personnel than ever before. Secretaries, assistants and support staff are individuals who need a sophisticated set of skills to meet their daily challenges. You are expected to:

- Communicate with people from every level of the organisation ...by telephone, e-mail, memo, or often in person.
- Manage multiple priorities, objectives and demands with a packed schedule and tight timing – all while staying cool, collected, and in control.
- Stay on top of everything despite unforeseen changes, difficult people, conflicts, and challenges.

This management guide is designed to help you do your job better in the face of increased demands and pressures. Learn success and support skills that make the difference between “just getting the job done” and being truly exceptional at what you do.

Benson & Company conduct ‘in-house and public courses’ and employee development programmes for public and private organisations throughout United Kingdom and internationally. Our programmes assist individuals formulate professional working strategies that channel their talent into tangible organisational outcomes. For a free taster session call: 0800 088 7569 or visit [bensoncompany.co.uk](http://bensoncompany.co.uk)



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ESSENTIAL MANAGEMENT GUIDES

# THE INDISPENSABLE ASSISTANT

11 ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES  
FOR COORDINATING, MANAGING & ASSISTING  
EFFECTIVELY IN A SUPPORT OR OFFICE ROLE



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The Indispensable Assistant – 11 Essential Principles for Coordinating, Managing and Assisting Effectively in a Support or Office Role

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# INTRODUCTION

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This booklet has been designed to provide you with useful information that will make you more effective in the workplace. It will also give you a small glimpse of some of the advantages to continually developing your own abilities.

At Benson & Company we fully understand how crucial it is to ensure you are able to adapt in line with new information. Technologies, systems, and procedures are evolving at a faster rate than ever, which in turn means your role can become obsolete quicker than before.

Factoring in the changing economic climate means we have a modern workplace that can be merciless to those who become complacent. Job security can only be improved by taking a proactive approach to making yourself as effective as possible.

We work closely with leading global companies to develop strategies that ensure they not only survive, but also thrive. We know any company is only as strong as the individuals it's comprised of. We equip managers and supervisors with all

the necessary tools to not only perform their job, but also to innovate and excel.

The core principles behind our consultancy and training services have become an integral part of our client's continued success. Isn't it about time they became part of yours?

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## PRINCIPLE 6

# IMPLEMENTING THE “QUIET HOUR” TO GUARANTEE BLOCKS OF UNINTERRUPTED TIME

**A** recent paper entitled “A field test of the quiet hour as a time management technique”, which is currently published in the *European Review of Applied Psychology*, found some **far reaching benefits to the implementation of a quiet hour.**

### THE BENEFITS

Over two weeks several test subjects (all managers) were given a quiet hour. During a quiet hour you must **avoid all outside stimulus**, including things such as your mobile phone, notifications on your computer, and interruptions from colleagues, it really must be as literal as possible.

The results (not surprisingly) showed greatly increased performance during the quiet hour. What was a little more surprising was that these effects seem to overlap into the normal working environment, **creating increased productivity for the whole day after the quiet hour.** The effects were more pronounced for those who were less conscientious, and don't use many other time management techniques.

## THE IMPLEMENTATION

Whilst a quiet hour sounds fantastic, in reality it can be a little more awkward to pull off. The best way is to **involve colleagues**, supervisors, or managers, so at different times you can protect each other's quiet hour.

With the in office distractions taken care off you can then move on to the technological ones. Turn your phone off, if you're uncomfortable completely switching it off then place it on silent (not vibrate) and place it in a draw out of sight. Ensure your computer is either muted, or that all notifications are turned off, and any web pages you may be tempted to quickly flick to are closed.

## INTENT IS CRUCIAL

This level of preparation is essential, as an underlying factor to the success of the quiet hour is the pre-commitment on your part. Many a quiet hour may have passed at work without you realising, and without any great increase in productivity. However, this psychological pre-commitment creates expectations, and lets you know there will be no interruptions. This knowledge allows you to become more completely absorbed in the task at hand, and therefore improves productivity, and often the quality of your work.

*“It is our attitude at the beginning of a difficult task which, more than anything else, will affect its successful outcome.”*

**William James**

# End of Sample

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[www.managementguides.co.uk](http://www.managementguides.co.uk)