

**Report of the 3-Day Strategic Executive Assistants Programme**

**Title: The Strategic Executive Assistant Programme**

**Date: 7-9 February, 2018**

**Venue: Adam Fidlers’ Academy, Manchester, UK**

**Background to the Training:**

This programme is a 3-level course designed to give Assistants practical, hands-on strategies and all the essentials they require to perform exceptionally well as Executive Assistants in a commercial world.

It is clear that that every Assistant has the opportunity to become outstanding – not because they are not already very good at what they do, but because they can be even better. Assistants who would survive the changing dynamics of the job are those who become strategically aligned to the business.

**Discussions and training activities**

This report essentially covers the training undertaken in levels 3 and 4.

**Day 1: 7th February, 2018**

**Title: Get Ahead as an Executive Personal Assistant**

This level 3 course covered the following areas:

* Redefining the Executive PA role, skills and competencies required to succeed on the job
* Answering the telephone for both internal and external calls
* Useful phrases for emails and reports
* Meeting Management (things to do before, during and after meetings)
* Black box and red box duties
* Daily routines

• Diary management – a better way to use the electronic diary

• The Day Pack

• Inbox management – zero inbox!

• Scheduling your own time

**The Five Folder System™ for paper and electronic workflow.**

This is a form of workflow checklist which ensures the following:

* Following up on feedback from others
* Adopting a ‘system’ that can be religiously adhered to, for proper organization of the work flow
* Ensuring that tasks assigned by the boss do not get forgotten, or lost
* Timely completion of tasks to avoid being reminded of things
* Taking charge of the boss’ meeting papers to ensure that they are properly handled and retrieved when needed.

The Five Folders are

1. Current: Items requiring action without deferring to anyone
2. Boss: Items that need to be discussed with the Boss
3. Pending (Waiting): Awaiting response from someone else
4. Bring Forward: Futuristic documents
5. Filing: Documents to be archived.

**DAY 2 and Day 3: The Strategic Executive Assistant:**

The Strategic EA programme is an advanced course for senior Pas and EAs to extend their contribution and effectiveness through a broader understanding of business and the impact of their roles as ‘new style’ business support managers and administrative leaders.

The discussions and topics covered in this course include:

1. Global trends in administrative support (how the role has evolved slowly and continues to survive in the corporate world)
2. New definition of executive support (diverse titles, core competencies, the EA as an enabler, decision making styles, attention and focus management, Boss Mode/PA mode – thinking and doing)
3. What the Executive wants (adapting your leadership style to suit your Executive, strategic communication and upward management)
4. Leadership and Management in context of the EA role (differences between leadership and management, becoming a manager by supporting leaders, transactional vs transformational leadership)
5. Business strategy for the EA (definition of strategy, becoming more strategic using SWOT, PESTLE and Four Blocker, company strategy and the Executive’s priorities, Risk, compliance and Governance, Reputation Management)
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Developing executive presence
8. Dispelling PA myths that no longer serve Pas, nor their bosses (reverse mentoring to create a better boss/PA)
9. The transition of job description from PA to EA (duties of an EA compared to a PA)
10. Success factors defined for the new EA

**Recommendation based on evaluation of training**

This training is highly recommended for Assistants who desire to be better at what they do as it gives not just theoretical but practical guide on how to stand out as an Executive Assistant.

**Follow up action plan to contribute further to training objectives**

* Practice and apply lessons learnt from this training
* Share knowledge gained especially in aspects that would be beneficial to staff. Some of the materials from level 3 would be helpful in training interns (corpers).
* Ensure continuous learning to keep abreast with modern industry trends in the profession
* Delegate black box activities and do more red box activities to inspire growth and mentor others in the role.
* Develop a broad spectrum of skills in areas that would enable better support to the Executive and the organization e.g Project Management, Finance for Non-Finance Managers, Excel Masterclass workshop, etc.

**Conclusion**

Based on observed skills gaps before embarking on the workshop, I can state categorically that this workshop exposed me to tools required to be better at what I do.

**Acknowledgement of sponsors**

I appreciate the Management for graciously approving this training and giving me an opportunity to learn and grow.

**Annexes attached to the report**

* Training materials