Why should management support DC?

How to focus & improve performance

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EDITORIAL

The post-pandemic world has seen profound changes in the workplace. Many people have made significant adjustments to their life priorities and they have realised that there must be a healthier balance between their work, their private life and their mental health.

This is a positive and welcome trend. An increasing number of employers are actually embracing this new way of looking at working conditions. The increase in the normalisation of "working-from-home", at least for a proportion of the time, is one of the most visible examples in activity sectors wherein it can be applied.

Performance at work and mental health do not have to be opposites. They can be skilfully combined to create a life that is satisfying both in the workplace and in our private existence.

It is important, of course, to remember that an employer-employee relationship is a two-way street and that, whereas it is normal for employees to receive a salary and to ask for good working conditions from their employer, it is normal for the employer to expect work to be produced as specified. A one-way relationship, in either direction, sets the scene for a frustrating association.

At the heart of it all, there are people. People with their own history, their own circumstances, their own competencies. Working is meant to provide a living for people as a minimum, but we all know that working can bring so much more than that. At our own level, let's endeavour to influence our working life to make it a part of our personal fulfilment.

Free Subscription
Subscribe
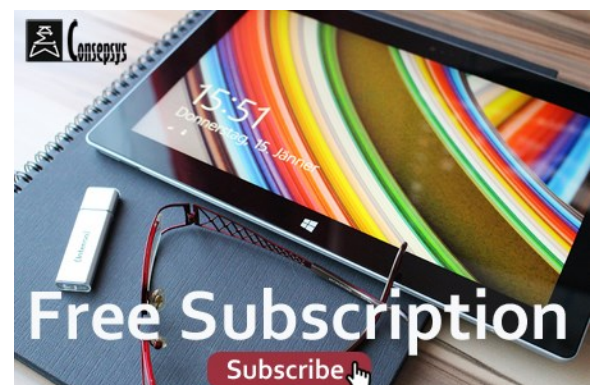
Consepsys

THE DOCUMENT CONTROL PROFESSIONALS

TRAINING COURSES - CERTIFICATION - CONSULTANCY
PUBLICATIONS - TOOLS

WWW.CONSEPSYS.COM

WHY SHOULD MANAGEMENT SUPPORT DOCUMENT CONTROL?

Even though it is perceived by some as just an unimportant administrative role, Document Control is a key role, and this poor perception cannot be further from what true Document Control really is.

Document Control is in fact essential to minimize risks for the company in terms of liability, lack of traceability, loss of information, rework due to incorrect information, and financial losses due to lateness or conflict.

For example:

- **Document Control protects people** by making sure that they work with up-to-date documentation that contains no dangerous mistakes.

- **Evidence in case of disputes:** Document Control helps organisations defend themselves and prove that they are right in disputes that could potentially expose them to heavy financial losses.

- **Awareness of changes:** Document control can also prevent organisations from making disastrous mistakes, by making sure that they are always aware of important changes that can affect their work.

However, it is sometimes a struggle for Document Control professionals to make sure that all internal and external interfaces comply with the day-to-day rules established to protect the company.

Indeed it seems to be human nature to try and by-pass rules sometimes, especially when deadlines are tight.

It cannot be left only to the Document Controllers to fight every day with stakeholders for them to comply with rules that the company has put in place and agreed on.

Document Control needs the support of the management team in order to allow them to fulfil their mission of compliance, gatekeeping and efficiency.

This is how the management team can help Document Control:

- By making sure that the Document Control procedure, instructions and templates are approved at the highest level of management

- By being on the side of Document Control when someone comes to management to complain about the rules, asking for an exception to the rules

- By involving Document Control in all project phases, including very early phases (Invitation to Tender, contractual clarifications) and by inviting Document Control to all important meetings, starting with the kick-off meetings of projects and important initiatives

- By making sure that rules of Document Control are listed in all contracts involving the delivery of documentation, and by enforcing the compliance of external interfaces with these rules

- By involving Document Control in the calculation of Document Control manhours on projects, instead of grossly underestimating the number of DC manhours.

- By sponsoring Document Control teams to attend the Certified Document Controller Course, the Advanced Document Control Course and the Certified Lead Document Controller Course.

5 SOFT SKILLS YOU SHOULD HAVE AS A DOCUMENT CONTROLLER

Document Control is an exciting role full of interesting tasks and challenges.

To thrive in this role, it is best if you have (or develop) these 5 soft skills:

#1 Problem-Solving

Problem-solving is the ability to identify problems, to brainstorm and analyse potential options for resolution, and to identify the best solution, adapted to the exact and specific situation.

It is one of the most sought-after soft skills: 86% of employers are looking to recruit someone with problem-solving skills, as that means the employee will be both a self-starter and a collaborative teammate.

#2 Proactiveness

Being proactive is the opposite of someone who only reacts when prompted, or when there is no other way around an issue.

Being proactive means that you monitor KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and that you take preventive actions when you see that a problem or an issue might happen. It also means understanding the root of a problem and taking actions so that the same problem does not keep on happening over and over again.

#3 Methodical and meticulous

Someone meticulous shows great attention to detail, is careful and precise. They will focus on delivering a high quality work and product, and will take pride in doing things right first time.

Being methodical means that you are able to follow a methodology, a consistent approach to your tasks, not trying to skip steps to go faster, but trying to have an approach that is both efficient, systematic and structured.

#4 Assertiveness

In our role, it is essential to know how and when to say no. Document Control is about gatekeeping and compliance, so if you are facing situations or requests that go against the values of Document Control you should enforce the rule and say no.

Being assertive means the ability to speak up when necessary in a way that is both confident, forceful and respectful.

#5 Influencer

It is critical to know how to influence our stakeholders into following the rules of Document Control and to influence them into viewing Document Control as a key player in the company.

There are many ways to influence positively others, it can be by explaining and demonstrating every day the values of Document Control (see our TICCQS values article), by taking the time to make proper inductions that don't focus on tools but on what Document Control is and why it is important, or it could be by having an active approach to raising awareness, as we discuss in our Advanced Document Control Course.

# 4 TOOLS TO HELP YOU FOCUS AND IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE

We now live in a world of constant notifications: emails keep coming during the day along with the chime that goes with it, Microsoft Teams notifications keep arriving even though you mentioned in the status that you were not available, and that's only to mention computer notifications; but if we have to include the phone notifications… well it sometimes seems like a mystery that we can achieve anything at all, as we are constantly interrupted.

Because these notifications are actually disruptions for your brain: instead of being in a concentrated state, it gets distracted, it strays away from focus, and that can have terrible consequences for a profession like ours that needs attention to detail, consistency and a quality mindset.

So here are **4 tools to help you focus and improve your performance**

### #1 - Use the "Work Offline" feature of Outlook

If you have a backlog of emails or transmittals to go through and you want to concentrate on this task without receiving new emails and transmittals every 5 minutes… then use the "Work Offline" feature of Outlook which will let you process your work using Outlook without fetching new incoming emails. That function is located under the "Send / Receive" menu in Outlook, under "Preferences".
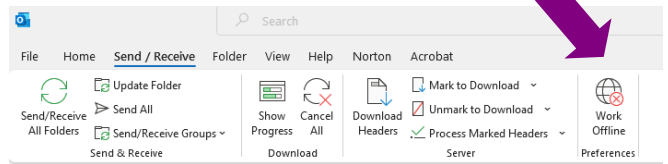
#2 - Explain your do not disturb rules to your interfaces

Make sure you set your Microsoft Teams on "Busy" and don't hesitate to add a message to deter colleagues who message you even if you asked not to be disturbed.

It's just a matter of boundaries and respect. But then make sure you make no exception to that rule, otherwise people might never let you concentrate!
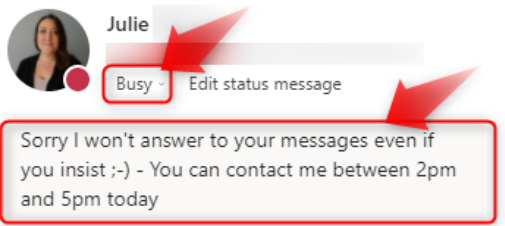
#3 - Use the focus mode on your phone

It will block out all distractions coming from your phone or smart watch, while you are trying to focus. You can either set it automatically every day at the same time or on a ad-hoc basis.

Depending on your phone options, you may also select apps that you find particularly distracting (like social media or games) and if you try to open them, Focus mode will remind you that the app is paused. Focus mode will also silence those apps' notifications until you're ready to switch out of the mode.

Toggle the "Share Across Devices" button in order to apply the same settings to your smartwatch for example.
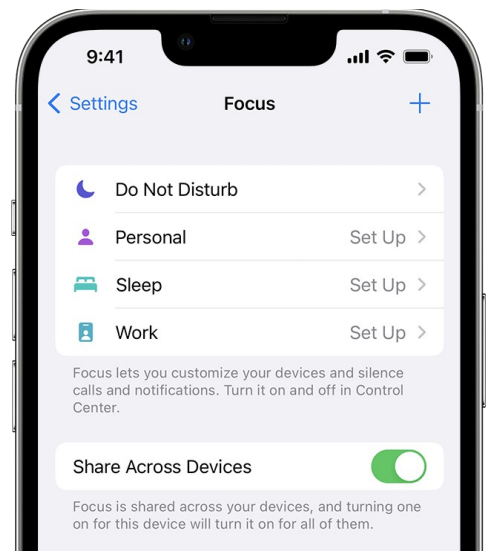
#4 - Use apps specifically designed to help you focus

Apps like Freedom can block distractions - both websites and apps - on all of your devices, simultaneously. No more blocking Instagram on your computer, only to immediately open it on your phone. If you start a session, your distractions are blocked everywhere.
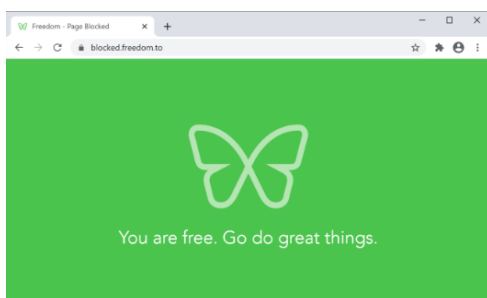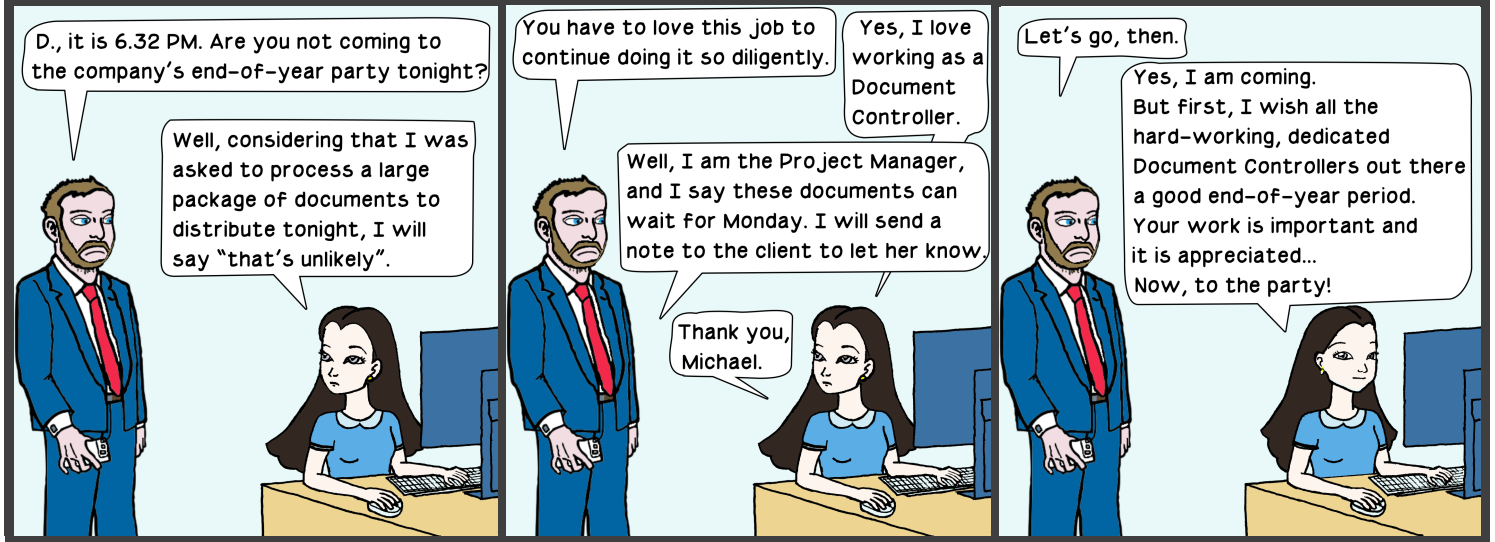
Set up as many blocklists as you want, then start or schedule a session. There's a lockdown mode, which makes it impossible to edit your blocklists while a session is active - consider this app if you're prone to breaking your own rules about focusing on work, or if you know that you tend to forget your own good intentions.

"Hanging in there" with D. Ceecee - the Document Controller by Tuffmee

Copyright © Consepsys Limited

Panel 1:
D., it is 6.32 PM. Are you not coming to the company's end-of-year party tonight?

Well, considering that I was asked to process a large package of documents to distribute tonight, I will say "that's unlikely".

Panel 2:
You have to love this job to continue doing it so diligently.

Yes, I love working as a Document Controller.

Well, I am the Project Manager, and I say these documents can wait for Monday. I will send a note to the client to let her know.

Thank you, Michael.

Panel 3:
Let's go, then.

Yes, I am coming. But first, I wish all the hard-working, dedicated Document Controllers out there a good end-of-year period. Your work is important and it is appreciated... Now, to the party!

Follow D. Ceecee on Consepsys and on [f]

Credits

Graphical concept: Myranda Saffarine

Scenario & Design: Tuffmee & Nwash

SALARY SURVEY: HOW IT CAN HELP YOUR CAREER

A salary survey is a tool that gives you information on the average salary of people with the same job role as yours. For professionals, it's a great tool to benchmark themselves against other professionals in terms of salary, but also for other benefits and compensation packages.

It's used to have quantifiable data about salary but not only: it gives you data about the trends (are salaries increasing?), data about industries and activity sectors that are actively recruiting at the moment, countries or regions where the profession is most present, typical working conditions of people with a similar job title, impact of experience and of other factors on salary levels, etc.

Consepsys has been running a salary survey for Document Control professionals every year since 2014. Our survey analysis is the reference for Document Control salary levels. The survey is open to Document Control professionals, worldwide, and to all levels of experience and all activity sectors.

Every year we gather hundreds of contributions, and we analyse them to provide the Document Control community with a detailed analysis report with data per country, per industry, per job title as well as a wealth of information about the Document Control profession.

The data from the survey gives you a competitive edge and information on how you can improve your profile in the future to meet your objectives.

Contributions are open for 2 months during the year. For the 2023 survey, you can complete the survey form from the 7th of December 2022 to the 31st of January 2023. All contributors to the survey receive a free copy of the complete analysis report once it is published. Fill the survey form here & share the link: **www.consepsys.com/salary**

The **2023**
SALARY SURVEY
for Document Control professionals
is now open for contributions!

Contribute

Advanced
Document Control
TRAINING COURSE

A course focusing on **non-routine activities**, which represent the opportunity for Document Controllers to **raise their profile and to expand their knowledge**.

It allows DCs to **increase their credibility** by demonstrating a better understanding of their interfaces. This course guides participants to make a significant difference and to add a lot more value as a professional.

More Information

A course by Consepsys: World leading provider of Document Control courses & Internationally recognised certification body for Document Controllers

COURSE OUTLINE

Module 1
Understand Document Control stakeholders and their requirements

Module 2
Setting up Document Control for a new project

Module 3
Reporting on the status of documents (KPI, statistics,...)

Module 4
Writing Document Control Procedures & Specifications

Module 5
Raising awareness about Document Control

Module 6
Organising an As-Built documentation package

Module 7
Managing your competencies

www.consepsys.com/DCA

PORTRAIT OF A DOCUMENT CONTROLLER

FILIMOE'UNGA 'AHOLELEI

Document Controller and Assistant Project Accountant for a Transport & Infrastructure company in Tonga

> *Filimoe'unga attended the course "Certified Document Controller" in May 2021.*

Can you tell us a bit about you?

My name is Filimoe'unga 'Aholelei. I am 31 years old, and a single parent to my only son who is aged 7. I was born, raised, and currently residing in Tonga.

Tonga is an island, a small archipelago located in the South Pacific Ocean. The population for Tonga is approximately 106.76 thousand. It is a constitutional monarchy and is unique among Pacific nations for having maintained its independence from colonial powers.

Tonga has shocked the world with its recent event occurred in 15 January 2022, the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai volcano eruption and tsunami.

It was unfortunate that I have witnessed this tragic event but also blessed to still have another chance of life.

I have a great sense of humour, I am dynamic, and very open-minded. I love gardening, fabric painting, adventures, workouts, jogging, reading, and volunteering my free times to my community especially to women community development donor-funded projects.

What is your current role?

My current role is Assistant Project Accountant and Document Controller for two major infrastructure projects in Tonga known as the Nuku'alofa Port Upgrade Project

and Fanga'uta Lagoon Bridge Project.

Can you describe your professional experience?

The past ten years, I have experienced working in international agencies, private sector, NGOs, and a few government donor-funded projects including my current role.

My skills and experience vary from marketing, community work, logistics, administration and management, and finance and accounting.

My field of expertise is accounting and

> *"I truly enjoyed this course. […] It helped me [...] to realize how critical the role of a Document Controller in large projects is".*

management, but it is a benefit to have some skills in other relevant fields including my current role. My management skills including good organization is a bonus to my role as Document Controller.

Which Consepsys course did you attend and when?

I attended the Certified Document Controller in May 2021 and completed my certification examination in October 2021.

What did you think about the course? How did it help you in your current role and career development?

I truly enjoyed this course. It was fascinating! I had a wonderful learning experience, although it was online.

I learned more of project document control and how to effectively interact with project teams, users, engineers, and managers.

It helped me in a way to realize how critical the role of a Document Controller in large projects and the damage that could occur if there is no proper

documentations process and filing. This course gave me an alternative that I can choose to pursue with my career as Document Controller in the future.
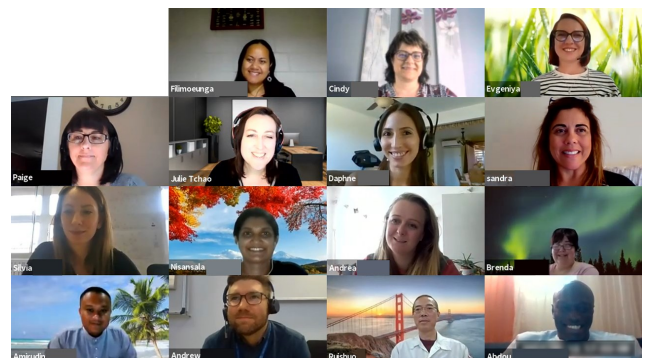
Filimoe'unga participated in the May 2021 Certified Document Controller Course course

TOOLS TO SHARE WITH YOUR INTERFACES
FOR THEM TO FINALLY UNDERSTAND DOCUMENT CONTROL

In a recent survey run by Consepsys, one of the most common difficulties shared by Document Controllers was that, often, our interfaces (engineers, managers, authors, colleagues) don't understand what Document Control is and how Document Control can contribute to the success of a Company. There are things we, as Document Controllers, can do to improve the recognition of our profession as we have shared **in this article**, and adapting our language to the language of our audience definitely helps, as shared in the **Elevator Pitch video.** But there is also information that might be worth sharing directly with your interfaces.

Over the years, Consepsys has published a lot of content on this topic, and we thought that you might be interested in sharing some of the below links and tools with your colleagues, in order to improve their awareness and understanding:

- What is Document Control **LINK**

- Do YOU need Document Control? **LINK**

- Real Life Examples where Document Control made all the difference **LINK**

- Engineering & Document Control **LINK**

Consepsys also published an online webinar dedicated to Managers, so that they have a better understanding of what Document Control can provide to their company, and how valuable a good Document Controller can be. It is called "The importance of Document Control - for Management & Supervisory Roles"; it takes 1-hr only and it is accessible 24/7.

Using the managerial perspective, this webinar uses a variety of real-life examples to influence Managers and Supervisors to give more support to Document Control, and to consider it with more importance.

More information on the webinar here **LINK**

THE DOCUMENT CONTROL TRIBUNE