

# MasterControl Improves Incident Management and Response Times with Getting Things Done®



## CLIENT: MASTERCONTROL

*MasterControl Inc. creates software solutions that enable life science and other regulated companies to optimize delivery of life-improving products. More than 1,000 companies worldwide, ranging in size from five employees to tens of thousands, rely on MasterControl cloud solutions to automate and manage product development, quality control, supply management, clinical trials, regulatory hurdles, manufacturing processes, and postmarket surveillance.*



## Industry: Software

### THE CHALLENGE

At MasterControl, the Enterprise Support team is continually trying to improve their processes, maintain timely customer communication, and achieve the highest levels of customer success. In this fast-paced environment, team members must manage a constant stream of customer incidents that need to be logged, addressed, and resolved with a high level of detail.

One of the measures the team uses to gauge performance is incident resolution times. If resolution time grows because employees are disorganized or unable to meet customer needs, a domino effect occurs. Longer resolution time not only leads to dissatisfied customers, but also to a large incident backlog. If support incidents remain open longer, they require more effort to close while new requests continue to come in. In short, maintaining timely incident resolution is crucial to the team's and organization's success.

The challenge arose when employees' struggled to maintain their daily work while also resolving incidents.

In addition to supporting their customers, team members are required to attend meetings and manage other projects, including customer onboarding programs, product updates, and premium support needs. Team members found themselves struggling to keep commitments from falling through the cracks. At times they struggled to stay organized as they both fielded incoming customer requests and managed steady-state responsibilities.

To help team members better manage their workload and support their customers, leaders at MasterControl turned to Getting Things Done® by Crucial Learning.

### THE SOLUTION

Members of the Enterprise Support team at MasterControl attended Getting Things Done, a one-day course that teaches skills for managing the constant flow of requests, tasks, and interruptions people face at all levels of an organization. GTD™ skills enable people to make more strategic decisions about where to invest their time and energy, focus on the right priorities, and prevent critical projects from slipping.

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The team completed the course. Then, to ensure success and skill transference, employees attended a one-hour booster session six weeks after the learning experience. They also practiced the skills and coached each other during team and one-on-one meetings.

## THE RESULTS

Getting Things Done™ teaches people skills to manage their workload by capturing, clarifying, and organizing incoming assignments, improving ability to prioritize time and attention. Leaders at MasterControl observed this benefit across the customer support team.

“Everybody on my team has begun to implement the GTD skills in their daily routine,” says Jake Franz, Enterprise Support Manager. “They have identified areas where they were struggling to stay organized. Our goal is to respond to every customer request in a timely manner and that can be a challenge. GTD has helped people organize their backlog so they can respond to the right customer requests at the right times.”

Team members report they can better manage their backlog and maintain timely responses. They also say the GTD skills have reduced their stress levels.

***“Before GTD, the first thing I did in the morning was look at my email and then stress out over answering those emails,” says Jodie Sealey, Technical Account Manager. “Now, I only look at my calendar to see what meetings I have that day and when I have time available to answer my emails. This has relieved SO much stress from my mornings and makes me enjoy coming to work again.”***

“GTD has assisted in my work/life balance,” says Jake Wharton, Technical Account Manager. “When I go home, I know I can focus on my family because all my work items are in order.”

According to post-training surveys, the GTD skills have had a significant impact on team members at MasterControl:

- 95 percent of training graduates report they save time EACH day as a result of using the GTD skills. Specifically, twelve weeks after training, 33 percent say they are saving 21 - 40 minutes a day,

22 percent save 41 - 60 minutes, and 11 percent are saving more than 60 minutes a day.

- 8 of 10 say GTD has helped them reduce their daily stress on the job.
- 95 percent report an improvement in their ability to hit deadlines and deliver on commitments.
- Twelve weeks after training, 2 out of 3 graduates report an 11 percent or more improvement on their ability to deliver results and meet deadlines.
- 94 percent say GTD has helped them improve their daily effectiveness or ability to execute and stay on course. Twelve weeks after training, 1 in 4 are more than 20 percent more effective.

And the benefits extend beyond just the individual. Since taking the GTD course, the team as a whole has made a huge shift in the way they work together to address incoming requests and backlogs.

“Our team doesn’t have a set load,” says Franz. “One person could be incredibly busy, while another has customers who are being really quiet. GTD has really helped us balance our load between the team. When people can’t get to items on their to-do lists, we’re doing a better job of communicating with each other and asking others to step in and help out.”

In addition to better workload management, Franz says team members support one another in using and practicing the GTD skills.

“Because we trained our entire team, we can now speak the GTD language in a way that everyone understands. If someone says, ‘I’m going to disappear for a while and do my weekly review,’ we can all respect that and know that’s sacred time.”

GTD also inspired the team to establish new rules around their email practices. As part of their GTD post-training booster session, the team agreed to a 24-hour rule, which says if you don’t receive a reply from someone within 24 hours, you can and should follow up. They also identified rules around how to use the BCC and CC fields in email.

As a result, nearly 8 out of 10 participants say GTD has helped them better process their email inbox. Twelve weeks after training, 22 percent of graduates say they are processing 25 percent more emails than before.

And Franz says they are also seeing impact on the results that matter most in their customer-facing roles. Specifically, they have seen an improvement in maintaining their response time goals. Franz



also credits the GTD as a driver behind their success in dealing with the ebbs and flows inherent in customer support.

The team has also seen a strong correlation between their new GTD skills and a positive trend in customer feedback.

“Recent feedback from customers shows our engineers are getting back quickly, and they’ve been very responsive. Our customers are very pleased and happy,” says Franz.

*“The engineers on my team are the best of the best. But to see this feedback and see that response times are very quick tells us we’re on the right track. Many of the individuals who have strong customer ratings were trained in GTD and are using the skills.”*



## RESULTS AT A GLANCE

- **95% of Getting Things Done™ graduates report they save time EACH day as a result of using the skills. 33% save 21–40 minutes, 22% save 41–60 minutes, and 11% save more than 60 minutes a day**
- **8 of 10 say GTD™ has helped them reduce their daily stress on the job**
- **95% report an improvement in their ability to hit deadlines and deliver on commitments**
- **8 out of 10 participants say GTD has helped them better process their email inbox**
- **The team has seen a strong correlation between their new GTD skills and a positive trend in customer feedback**



## Getting Things Done

### ABOUT GETTING THINGS DONE®

*The Getting Things Done® (GTD®) methodology was developed 30 years ago by New York Times best-selling author David Allen. While David originally developed the methodology by observation, experimentation, and practice, researchers have since shown that the principles taught in GTD relieve cognitive load, allow for increased focus, even result in peak performance, or what is popularly called “flow.” In other words, GTD isn’t only about getting things done. The real promise of GTD is efficient engagement. It’s productivity with presence and purpose. The course is available in on-demand, virtual, and in-person learning formats.*

### ABOUT CRUCIAL LEARNING®

*Formerly VitalSmarts, Crucial Learning improves the world by helping people improve themselves. We offer courses in the areas of communication, performance, and leadership, focusing on behaviors that have a disproportionate impact on outcomes, called crucial skills. Our award-winning courses and accompanying bestselling books include Crucial Conversations, Crucial Accountability, Influencer, The Power of Habit, and Getting Things Done. [CrucialLearning.com](http://CrucialLearning.com)*

