

# Technology

## Conquering Technology Anxiety

By Jeff Davidson,  
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Who says that the leap to integrate even more office technology has to be painful? Here are some effective ways to become more technologically adept, without giving up your identity or your life in the process:

- Each week, learn one new presentation or communication tool, particularly those which are already part of existing software packages that you use.
- Read at least one article a week related to communication or presentation technology. The article can be in a PC magazine, a business journal, or your local newspaper. You don't have to pick a highly technical article.
- Once a month, read a book related to technology. Again, go easy on yourself. Pick up Nicholas Negroponte's *Becoming Digital* or Dan Burrus's *Technotrends*, among a variety of other books that put technology in perspective in an understandable, friendly way. Also, choose one of the many books on using Internet navigating software such as Netscape or Mosaic, using a modem or fax-modem, and so forth. The Alpha and Que divisions of MacMillan

Books, a Simon and Schuster Company, has an excellent series called *The Complete Idiot's Guide*, covering such topics as the Internet, DOS, Windows, CompuServe, America Online, and PCs in general, among many other topics.

- Find out what your clients and customers are doing with technology. Similarly, pay attention to what others in your industry, particularly close competitors, are using. Ask people how they're accomplishing certain tasks, and what works particularly well.
- Join a technology group in your area. The business page of your local newspaper will list who's meeting, when, and where. In every metro area of at least 75,000 to 100,000 people, there are PC and Macintosh user clubs, bulletin boards, support groups, and the like.
- Once you begin to feel more technologically at ease, consider subscribing to a technical publication — for example, *Wired*, *PC World*, *Home Office*, *Internet Magazine*, *The Net*, *Byte*, *MacWorld*, *PC Computing*, among dozens of others, are all available at relatively affordable yearly subscription rates.
- Look in your local paper for forthcoming technology trade shows and expositions. Again, in any metro area above 75,000 to 100,000 people, in the course of a

year, there are at least four to six technology fairs where both hardware and software vendors display their latest products and services. The cost of attending such shows is usually free or the nominal price of \$5.00 to \$10.00. Many of these shows also have specialized seminars which are free with your general admission, or which only require an additional nominal fee.

- Rather than attempt to absorb new information during the work day in a subject area where you may not presently be comfortable, designate one night a week when you'll spend two hours or so learning more about technology, becoming familiar with terminology, and forsaking the world of the technologically disadvantaged. No matter whether you read or learn slowly, it's more important that you have a quiet, uninterrupted space in which to absorb new concepts and explore new ways of thinking.
- Remember at all times that others who felt even less comfortable than you were able to master communication and presentation technologies to the point where it became profitable and rewarding for them. You'll be just fine.

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