

„Always on“ Dealing with a constant availability

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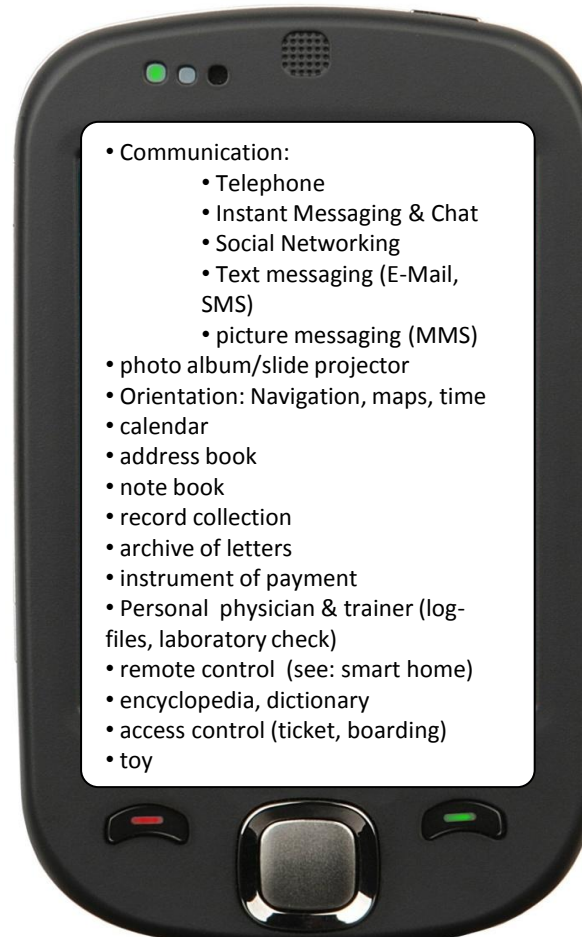
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Ubiquitous Computing

- Cyber space („the Internet“) no longer is a different place.
- Virtual Reality has become permanent and a simultaneous overlay: The dream of telepathy came true.
- Contrasts like „reality vs. virtuality“ or „presence vs. remote“ don't work any longer.
- Possibly: Face2face vs. CMC (computer mediated) communication
- ‚Total‘ availability

Convergence



Variety of influences & effects

Several studies describe phenomena, e.g.:

- mere presence of smart device is distracting
- yet no proof of multitasking capability
- illusions and hallucinations of incoming messages
- increasing number of traffic accidents due to cell phone use whilst walking/driving/cycling
- loss of devices in toilets, beach/sea, swimming pools, etc.
- checking messages is the first/last action in bed

Boundless work & life

Delimitation fourfolded (2+2):

1. Delimitation/fragmentation of work. Global communication, business requirements, work enters private time and space.
2. Delimitation/fragmentation of privacy. Private life enters work space.

- 3. Delimitation of time, space and reality/virtuality: always-on.**
- 4. Delimitation of artefacts: convergence and just the sky is the limit.**

Dilbert (2010)

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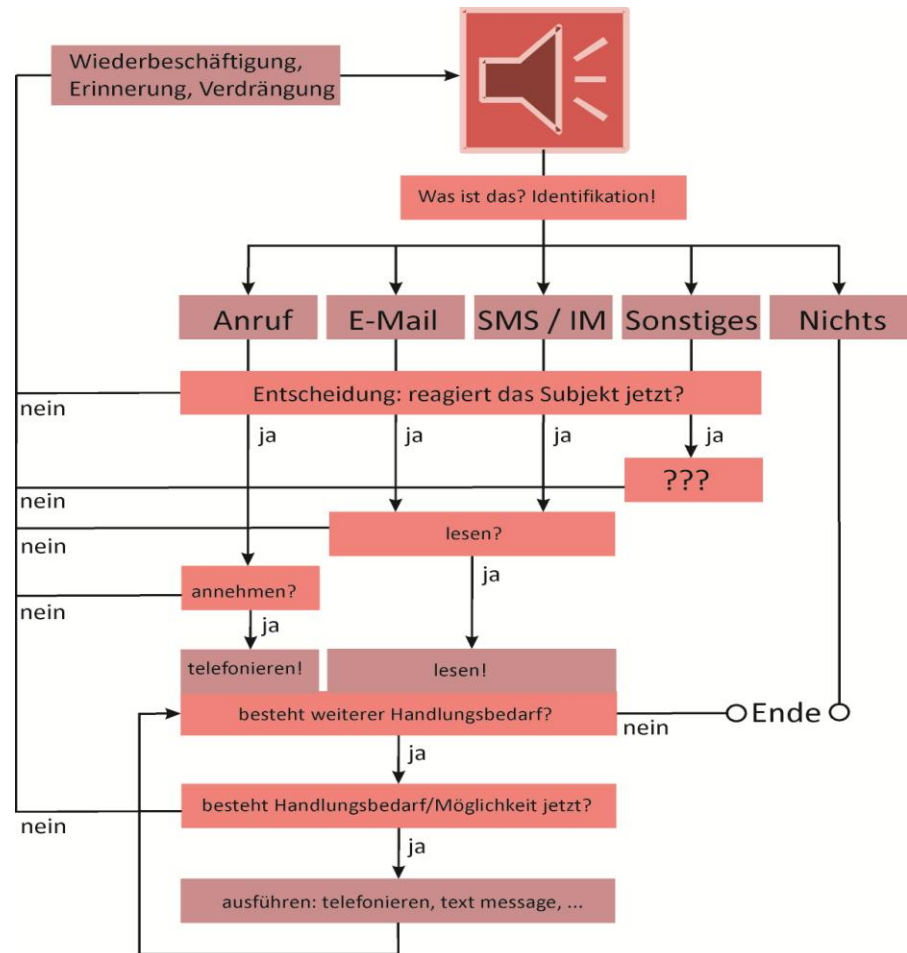
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Psychological strain factors

- Fears:
 - Loss of social affiliation and identity
 - Loss of control/self-efficacy
 - Injury/violation (loss of device)
- gratification and social distinction
- promise of autonomy (independence of place and time)
- competition (man vs. man/man vs. machine)
- medium to demarcate and isolate
- pressure of group conformity
- rumination and changed self perception of ineffectiveness
- hazarding of self destruction („don't text & drive“)
- limitation of use is left to subjects

An Array of Microdecisions

Processes of self-organization are invisible to others and therefore lack gratification. But they are necessary to enable gratificated work.



Organizational phenomena

- employer/employee-partnership in streamlining work
- organizations often don't regulate/limit availability and leave this individually to the subject.
- self-accelerating cycle of high-speed communication
- But: is ubiquitous CMC supportive and efficient?
- Or is there an health risk in CMC? Psychosocial risk assessment is compulsory for employers!

Implications on Counselling (1)

The content of supervision and coaching changes/grows:

- a) Individual reflection: Self-monitoring, positioning in work-privacy-conflict/delimitations, careers advice, psychological strain, mindset as ‚interest in risk-to-self‘, misunderstandings/conflicts, patronizing...
- b) Reflection of cooperation: structures for efficient cooperation (support vs. disturbance), work-privacy-conflicts, anticipated expectations, speed of work, communication styles, reduction of complexity and communication overflow...
- c) space for social learning as computer mediated social learning is curtailed

Simply: Reflection on use of media as a core competence for survival in a CMC environment.

Implications on Counselling (2)

The process of supervision and coaching changes:

- Ubiquitous CMC disturbs (see above) face2face settings by incoming (or not!) messages.
- Remote communication partners are somehow much more present in supervision settings and communication is faster.
- High-speed text-based communication bears many misunderstandings and produces special group dynamics and conflicts.
- Clients ask for computer mediated methods (e.g. telecoaching or mobile apps).

Further research

- The implications for the profession as Supervisor/Coach: Are coaching apps going to substitute (at least in parts) human counsellors?
- How could professional deceleration work in a hyper-accelerated world? Which methods and tools would be helpful?
- Ethical dimension: What is the goal of good supervision in this context? Critical reflexion of vs. supported adaption to acceleration?
- Is this the beginning of a so called “next society”?

References / Publications

- In preparation: Überlegungen zu Smart Devices als gruppendynamisches Phänomen
- Smart Devices in Organisationen – Von Regelungen für die Allgegenwärtigkeit von computergestützter Kommunikation. In: Organisationsberatung Supervision Coaching OSC (2014) 21:99–114, DOI 10.1007/s11613-014-0359-z
- Always on. Vom Umgang mit der ständigen Erreichbarkeit. In: Supervision. Mensch – Arbeit – Organisation, 4/2013, p. 32-38.
- „work hard - play hard“, in: Supervision. Mensch – Arbeit – Organisation, 2/2013, p. 62-65.

Thank you!

for your attention.

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