

Discover the Joy and Power of Order

Many people struggle with disorganisation and clutter; it can hold us back from completing tasks, it can block our creativity, add stress and prevent us being as productive and effective as we could be.

Managing your desk, or work area, is just as important as managing your time.

Questions to ask yourself?

- Do you waste much time during your day due to disorganization?
- Have you taken any time to make it comfortable? Stand back and assess your workspace. Does it work well for you? When you have a clean, neat work environment, with all your required tools handy, your efficiency will increase by at least 50%.
- Rather than asking yourself the traditional question – “will I need this again?”, ask “Can I get this again if I need it in the future?” If you can, discard it. Asking this questions give you a totally different result and a far neater desk.

Suggestions:

- Always re-file what you take out. As soon as you finish with papers or a file, replace them in your filing system. This is a good habit to get into and keeps your desk clear of clutter. Remember, you want your work surface to be so large that you can spread out your current work project. Loose files and papers on your desk are distractions, to draw your attention away from the task at hand. They can also be picked up accidentally with other papers without you knowing it, and become a real problem and waste of time trying to find them later.
- At the end of the day, clean off your desk by storing all equipment and filing papers and files away. Tomorrow you will be happy you did, and will start the new day with a clean slate.

Things to think about:

- Think about how much energy gets sucked out of life when we tolerate messiness and too much stuff.
- Clutter really does affect your success: there have been studies that prove it impacts the way employers and co-workers view your ability to do your job. Forbes ran an article called “The Dangers of a Messy Desk” where a study clearly showed that co-workers judge other’s work habits by their cleanliness, and Office Max did a similar study with similar results.
- A messy desk and office, with papers and piles on any flat surface available, send the message that you are disorganized and don't know what's going on.

Tips for Decluttering

- Walk into your office and inventory to visible clutter honestly. Now inspect the bottom desk drawers and cabinet storage areas (carefully that the empty boxes, used mailing tubes, retired notebooks and briefcases don't crush you). I'll bet you'll average 50% unwanted clutter. If you don't want to go through this clutter now, just wait until you move – or your boss / supervisor / employer commands it.
- Take a picture of your desk, cubicle, office, or work area, and look at it. Be honest, now. What would you think if that were a co-worker's space? If you were the boss, would you want that person working for you? If you like the way it looks, then maintain it. If you don't like the way it looks, you have the ability to change it – a little at a time.
- Get real and start small. Take ten or fifteen minutes (set the timer) and work on one pile...and stop at the end of that time. Do this every day and you will begin to see a big difference. There's all sorts of decluttering advice out there, but the big thing is doing it; if you wait until you have time to do it all, you probably never will.
- Organise First; Buy Second. Do not go out and buy a tone of storage supplies before you start sorting. Clean out first, then assess what containers you really need and buy a few.
- Complete each task – completely. Once you sort things into categories (toss, recycle, donate, put in deep storage, etc) – do it now, take it there, finish the process.

De-cluttering's most dignified words – No Thanks!