

## Organize

### Assess/Process

- What is it?
- Sort into appropriate categories.

### Sorting

- Pick a regular time (beginning or end of day) to sort paperwork into files (labels or boxes).
  - Indicate due dates for Read and Action Items (for tickler).

### Prioritizing

- Prioritize Actions (A, B, C).
  - A – Needs to be done right now. (i.e. reports, urgent needs, etc.)
  - B – Need to be completed soon, have a deadline, but are not urgent. (i.e. weekly budget reports, etc.)
  - C – Can be left until you have time to complete. No deadline. (i.e. personal filing)

## Plan

### Three List Method

1. Weekly Calendar
2. Daily To Do (Task) List
3. Project List

#### List #1 - Weekly Calendar

- Schedule “Big Rocks”
  - Appointments
  - Meetings
  - Time for large projects

#### List #2 - Daily To Do List

- Use a Composition Book or Notepad (Electronic is OK)
  - Write down everything you need to get done.
- Plan your next day the afternoon/night before.
  - Should be 15 minute task.
- Review your weekly calendar.
- Make your To Do's specific.

### Determining your Priorities

- Be ruthless in how you determine your priorities:
  - What are the most important things I could do to have the greatest impact?
  - Will these choices lead me to what I really need to accomplish?
  - Do I really have to do this at all?
  - What would happen if I didn't do it?
  - What are the real deadlines?

### Meeting Project Deadlines

- Break up project tasks with individual deadlines (for To Do List).
- Allow time for the unexpected - build in a cushion.

### List #3 – Project List

- Maintain an ongoing project list in your composition book or Notepad.
  - What do you need/want to accomplish over the next week, month or beyond?

## Execute

### 15 Minute - Scramble

- Review To Do list.
- Complete as many of the easiest, fastest tasks you can.
- Tackle similar small tasks back-to-back.
- Make quick phone calls and send short e-mails.
- Goal is to cross off as many tasks as possible in the shortest time.

### 40 Minute - Focus on Task

- Turn off all distractions – e-mail alerts, phone if possible, unrelated windows on computer.
- Choose the most challenging or highest priority task on your To Do list.
- Work on it with urgency without hesitation or distraction for 40 minutes.
- Focus on Finishing.

## 5 Minute - Refresh and Reset

- Take a breath
- Stretch/ergonomic exercise
- Walk around
- Web surf
- Meditate...
- Refocus - Look at your list and see if you spent the last hour productively.

## Paperwork Management

- Handling paperwork is the most important aspect of time management.
- Try not to handle a piece of paper more than once.
- Practice 2-minute rule.
- Create checklists.

## Handling Obstacles and Distractions

- Know what distracts you and look for ways to avoid.
- Be sure communication is clear before starting a task.
- Don't be a perfectionist if that isn't the goal.
  - Find out what 'good enough' is and Finish.

## Handling Interruptions

- Ask direct reports to "save up" questions.
- Let people know when you are available (i.e. office hours).
- Set boundaries for "drop-in" visitors.

## Managing E-mail - Sending

- Don't be part of the problem.
- Write descriptive subject lines.
- If you forward a message, put your comments at the top.
- Don't cc: unless it is really necessary.
- Use bullet points, bolds, and underlines so people can quickly review/respond.
- Answer promptly (24 hours).

## Managing E-mail - Receiving

- Schedule specific times to read and process.
  - i.e. First thing in the morning, before lunch, at the end of the day.
- Respond while it is open, if you can.
- Delete unnecessary e-mail.
- Tell people not to copy you unless you must be informed or need to take action.
- File your e-mail – don't leave it all in the INBOX.

## Review

### Daily Review

- Before scheduling the next day's To Do's, review your day.
  - What worked?
  - Where did you focus and finish?
  - Where did you get distracted?
  - What did you learn that will help you be more productive tomorrow?
- Choose one thing to improve on for the next day.

### Weekly Review

- Set up a weekly 20-minute meeting with yourself.
  - Friday afternoon?
  - Treat it the same as you'd treat a meeting with your boss.
- Review your project list, To Do list, and calendar.

### How to Stay "Prioritized"

- Get your work space and your head space organized.
- Be sure you have what you need, before you need it.
- Create and follow a "To Do" list.
- Focus on the Important and Urgent first
- Don't over schedule.
- Schedule time to refocus and recharge.
- Finish what you start.

### Rituals

- The power of rituals is their predictability.
- Doing things the same way over and over again leads to predictable outcomes.
- Aim for simplicity.
- Be ruthless (focused and deliberate) with how you choose to use your time.



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