



Clear your desk

If you are filled with dread every time you look at your desk, or can't find anything when you want it, why not rearrange your desk drawer.....and get rid of those unsightly and so called 'in', 'out' and 'pending' trays. Here's a Proven Technique for managing your desk and therefore your time. This system works best if you have the kind of drawer in your desk which holds suspension files. So to start with empty the drawer, re-attach the frame, if it's in danger of collapsing, and follow these simple rules.

Take no more than ten suspension files and place in the drawer. Then prepare the following labels.

- Today
- This Week
- Awaiting Information
- Pass On
- Reading Projects (2/3 sections if you really must!)
- Filing

This is how it works....

The section labelled **TODAY** should be placed first, nearest you. In here you put everything you plan to work on today. Be realistic about the time you have and the interruptions you may receive. Within a week you should get this right.

The next section is **THIS WEEK**. Here you place all the items you must deal with within the next week. Before you finish each evening quickly check this section and place those items you intend to work on the next day into **TODAY** all ready for the following morning.

Third section **AWAITING INFORMATION**. Here is where you place those items which require a response from others. It may be correspondence waiting for a reply, a telephone call, the results of a meeting or information from another department before you can complete a piece of work.

PASS ON is next. Here you place everything you need to pass on to others, either with a briefing or at a meeting. Or it may be just stuff to place in others people's in trays in one go rather than popping off to their desk each time you remember.

PROJECTS These files should be current ones (not past or to come which should be returned to your proper filing cabinet) but those you can safely confirm you are working on at the present time.

Next is **READING**. Yes, all those reports you receive, trade magazines and other stuff which piles up on the corner of your desk...they all go in here. Whenever a spare moment arrives you can do some reading. Once a month, or more often if you receive a huge amount, you sort this section and either book a slot in your diary to read it or throw it away.

The final section is **FILING**.....depending on how much ends up here you need to ensure it's filed each week so it stays manageable. This way you can do it yourself say every Friday afternoon or if you have admin assistance make sure it's collected regularly and filed away efficiently. Anything, but anything, which does not belong in these sections should be in a filing cabinet and out of sight.

And that's it.....It works well, is easy to do and I promise will leave you with a lovely clear desk to start your day.

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