

Five Ways to Stay Organized in 2024

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It is the beginning of a new year, and we all know what that means – resolutions! The key to a successful resolution is attainability. Instead of vowing to start hitting the gym from once a year to once a day, I have a better idea: organization. Although staying organized can feel like a challenge, the effects of being organized make up for it. The benefits of organization are increased productivity, reduced stress levels, and increased punctuality. Below are some tips to increase organization in the workplace:

1. Maintain an organized email inbox

As we all know, our email inboxes often fill up quickly throughout any given day. Without fail, there is typically a combination of urgent and timely emails, routine emails, and spam. With email being one of the most common forms of communication in our day-to-day work lives, our inboxes can feel unorganized quickly. Despite the number of emails received in a day, it is important to be aware of the communications you are receiving to avoid letting anything fall through the cracks. It is recommended to check your email five times daily to maintain proper oversight of the requests and correspondences you are receiving.

2. Choose one method for documenting reminders and due dates

There are many options available to us when it comes to note-taking. For me, it can be any combination of sticky notes, scratch paper, or email calendar reminders. Although having options is helpful, it can be to blame for organizational issues. Unless all reminders to yourself are documented using one method, some will inevitably be forgotten. Whether it is a ZOOM meeting or an internal reminder to yourself to complete a task, all due dates and reminders are important and should be managed equally.

3. Schedule email calendar reminders

As previously mentioned, it is important to choose one method for documenting reminders and due dates to avoid any oversights. With that being said a reliable strategy I recommend is email calendar reminders. This has proven to be the most helpful in viewing my schedule for the next day, week, month, or quarter all in one place. This method does not require reading yesterday's handwriting or risking a lost Post-it note – give it a try if you have not already!

4. Document and retain notes

Maintaining organized notes is critical for success. However, without being accessible, the notes we take are useless. There are two primary concepts to consider for note-taking: the location of your notes and the organization within it. Similar to documentation of reminders and due dates, establishing one location for notes is best. This way, when you need information there is only one logical place to look. Once the notes are consolidated into one location, it is recommended to use headings and subheadings to organize your notes into easily navigable sections. There is no one way to do this correctly, just know what works well for you! Some examples could be a file folder method, an online notebook (such as Microsoft One Note), or binders with tabs.

5. Understanding where resources are located

Working in a more remote environment has many advantages, but organization is not necessarily one of them. It seems as if there are more resources available to us, however, they are often provided by multiple entities in multiple locations. By simply documenting URLs in your personal notes or by bookmarking your favorite sites in your browser, you can ensure efficient accessibility and can better manage your resources.

I hope that the above strategies are helpful or ignite further brainstorming of ideas that will work for you. Ultimately, organization is achieved when managed consistently and in a manner that makes sense for you. I challenge you to choose at least one new organizational strategy for the new year!