

## **The Business Times – August 2021**

### **Inside the Mind of a Professional Organizer - By Jessi Bushman aka "Organizer Jessi" Ongoing Tips to establish and maintain an organized workspace**

My guess is many have settled back into a work routine. Currently, every individual's experience varies and "one size fits all" no longer exists. Regardless of your physical work location, here are some tips to improve your productivity.

#### **In the Office**

What is your current set up? Are you stationed in a office or cubicle? It's ideal to have an organized, inviting space. For example, provide a location for visitors and clients to sit, take notes or place their laptop.

Establishing a designated spot for others is a great start to transforming your workspace.

- Offices are typically designed to accommodate a chair or two.
  - Do you have existing furniture?
  - Are the chair(s) available or occupied with stuff?
- If you are stationed in a cubicle, is there a spare chair nearby?
  - If not, take inventory of any open wall space where a community chair could reside.

Now, think about available desktop surface. Do you have any? Are others envious? Afraid?! To create your ideal desktop, first, evaluate the stuff you have and need.

While considering your belongings, don't forget about your co-workers contributions. Co-worker often add low or high priority items to your workload. If you are not present when they drop these items off, problems could arise.

The majority of employees have a general inbox on their desk. This universal method is the quickest way to set yourself up for failure. Clear identification can also be part of the challenge. First, do peers know where your inbox is? If so, is it stacked full of papers already? Based on your presentation, many could be confused and unsure of what to do with information they need to pass along. You may find items randomly placed on your desk or set on your chair.

Imagine this, a check that needs to be deposited ASAP is set on your desk. Someone else then places a report on top of that. At a glance, you see the report, knowing it's not a priority, so you continue on with your current workload. The check is overlooked and the deposit deadline is missed. UGH.

I suggest creating labeled, categorized inboxes. Stacking trays are great for this. Take the time to alert everyone you interacted with, and designate where you would like them to place their repeat items. Anytime you step away from your desk and return, you will learn to check these areas for time sensitive items. This approach will improve your accuracy along with your time-management skills. Time spent looking for things will decrease.

This is just one example of understanding the paper flow at your desk. Creating a home for your documents and action items, will improve unidentified piles.

- ✓ Guest Chair
- ✓ Guest Counter Space
- ✓ Inbox Clarification

### **At Home**

The advantage of working from home is, you do not need to accommodate people coming into your space. The disadvantage, you need to create a functional and productive space for yourself.

Many do not have a designated office in their home and find themselves working from a kitchen table.

This is not an ideal option, so you may need to get creative.

Consider converting a spare bedroom, closet, under-stairwell area or basement/living room corner into your workspace.

When I launched my own business, I converted a spare bedroom walk-in closet into my office. Originally, this 7'x 8' room housed random, low-priority storage. I customized the space with a small writing desk, a spot for a comfy chair, large base cabinets for additional desktop/storage, nice decor and most important, it's private.

Take inventory of what your home allows. By reorganizing and decluttering you can easily customize a space to meet your needs.

**This is JUST THE BEGINNING of Tips to establish and maintain an organized workspace. Check back for ongoing ideas and suggestions!**

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