



5 Simple Decisions to a Clean Desk

Cathy Sexton, Productivity Coach & Strategist

Whether it is at home or at your office, your desk is the hub of your daily activities. Consequently, it also becomes your dumping ground. Littered with all kinds of paper, mementos and personal items at times can resemble chaos, not order.

The first thing to do is what I call "a desk purge". Starting with the desktop, gather up all paper and sweep it clear of everything: files, magazines, mail, coupons, greeting cards, etc. Put them all in a box. We will return to these later. Next, remove all your personal items: photographs, awards, rocks, plants, souvenirs, coffee cups, etc. We will deal with these later too.

Reevaluate your equipment. What remain should be those items you use consistently. These might include your computer, telephone, answering machine, a lamp, calculator, clock and an in-and-out basket. If this is the first time you have seen the desktop in quite a while, it might be a good time to get out the dust cloth and wipe it clean. Organize your supplies. Here is a list of items a desktop should contain:

- **A good functioning stapler**
- **A container for pens, pencils, letter-opener**
- **A container for paper clips**
- **A sturdy tape dispenser**

Your desk is your workstation so the less clutter and knickknacks there, the more space there will be for real work. Now you can return to the desktop those personal items with real meaning. Keep in mind you only want things on your desk or around you that gives you energy.

Now, get started on that stack of paper. Go through the stack deciding on each piece as you come to it. If you are motivated this will come easily. It is important to know that paper clutter is postponed decisions. My experience tells me you will find much of the paper on your desk is outdated and no longer of interest. Here is the process:



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Start with the top piece of paper and **make a decision!** No setting off to the side for later.

Discard - Trash/Shred (see questions to ask to help with this below)

Delegate - Who else can do this? Is this the best use of my time? Place in pile #1

Do It - If it can be done in 2 minutes or less just do it NOW

Defer for Filing- File Pile – filing someone else can do? pile #2

Define the Action - The only items left should be your action items - pile #3

Whether tomorrow is going to be your wedding day or just another day at the office, the surest way to make your day a successful one is to be organized and *plan ahead*.

I challenge you to **I.G.N.I.T.E.** your personal productivity by implementing what you have just learned. Start by using these steps:

Intention: Know your intention, ask why is it important? What are the benefits?

Get started: Take action on one strategy you learned within the next 24 hours.

Commit: Your Time, Money, & Energy

Engage the process!: Motivation, celebration, evaluate what's working or not working to keep moving forward and ask someone to hold you accountable. Your success depends on it.

I would love to partner with you on improving your productivity. Visit my fan page at <http://www.facebook.com/cathysextonproductivity> where I share resources, articles, tips and techniques to help you be more productive.

Contact me for personal help, coaching, training or to join one of our Clutter Buster Program where you get a day of motivation, celebration and accountability support you need for working on your organizing project.

As a productivity coach and strategist, I am passionate about helping individuals discover their personal productivity style so they can accomplish more with less effort. I use my passion and empathetic nature to help people live healthy productive lives! I know the health risks of being a workaholic; I have lived it. My purpose in life is to provide coaching, teaching, and tools to people who are hungry to spend more time with family, enjoy their careers and live a less stressed and carefree life. For more information please visit. www.cathysexton.com / www.TheProductivityExperts.com or email cathy@theproductivityexperts.com