

TOP 10 TIPS TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE AT WORK

The Wall Street Journal has reported that the average businessperson wastes an hour each day due to disorganization. That's 6 weeks a year! Want to be more productive? Follow these 10 tips:

1. **Manage your time:** Use only one calendar (or electronic device) to track your appointments, otherwise it's too easy to overlook something or to double-book your time.
2. **Clear clutter:** Make some room on your desk – remove all supplies and gadgets that you don't use every day. Take a look at the items on your bulletin board and the Post-its on your computer – throw out ancient history. Uncover your horizontal surfaces – credenzas, tables, the tops of bookshelves.
3. **Organize your information:** Create a filing system that works for you. Use hanging folders with plastic tabs (e.g., Pendaflex) to organize your papers. Create a filing system for your electronic documents that mirrors your system for paper. Visit www.101FilingTips.com for more filing tips.
4. **Use your space effectively:** Keep critical and frequently-used items and information within arms' reach. Use a vertical step rack or a file box for "hot" files. Move your furniture and office equipment so that you can easily access the things you need.
5. **Travel trouble-free:** Lists, lists, lists! Start a list of the information and materials you must bring with you as soon as you plan a trip. Keep a master list of items you always need to bring along – from your business cards to your toothbrush. Give a copy of your itinerary with contact numbers to someone who isn't traveling with you.
6. **Prevail over e-mail:** Check and respond to e-mail at designated "sessions" rather than continuously throughout the day. Mute the incoming mail chime to make it easier to ignore each new message.
7. **Manage meetings:** Have a written agenda, ideally with timeframes. Be vigilant about starting and ending on time. Keep information for different meetings in separate folders or binders. Write the date on your notes. Keep track of any actions you promised to take.
8. **Minimize interruptions:** The average businessperson is interrupted every 8 to 9 minutes. When you really need to get something done, make yourself unavailable – no phone calls, no e-mail, no visitors. It's okay to not answer a ringing phone. Even a cellphone. Really.
9. **Get great gear:** From your letter opener to your computer, don't tolerate products and tools that aren't perfect, however you define it. Your briefcase/bag is like a portable office – make sure you love yours and that it works for you.
10. **Make a habit of getting organized:** Spend a few minutes every day to "create order from chaos" – even 5 minutes will make a difference. 15 minutes could transform your life.

Lisa Zaslow, founder of **Gotham Organizers**, has helped hundreds of people get organized at work and at home. Her expertise is regularly featured in the media on shows like HGTV's *Mission: Organization* and *Real Simple Television* and in publications including *Entrepreneur*, *Real Simple*, *New York Magazine*, and *Good Housekeeping*.

For information about individual sessions and group workshops visit www.GothamOrganizers.com, e-mail Lisa Zaslow at info@GothamOrganizers.com or call 212-866-9493.

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