



Spring Cleaning: An Organizational Rite of Passage

When most people think of spring cleaning, they probably envision clearing leaves from gutters, taking Windex to the coat of winter grime on the windows, and organizing closets. Time management and productivity expert Laura Stack suggests extending the spring cleaning tradition to the office, making it a spring de-clutter and organization ritual.

DENVER, Colorado, February 27, 2012 – Office clutter has a way of sneaking up on most busy people. Regardless of whether the office is home-based or in a brick and mortar location, clutter can interfere with productivity and increase stress levels.

Productivity and time management expert Laura Stack says there's no time like spring to tackle the much-needed purging and organizing that every functional office requires at least once a year. In her latest blog titled, "[Spring Cleaning: Time to Get Organized](#)," Stack reminds readers that clutter is more than the piles of outdated bills, memos, receipts, and unread magazine articles currently adding to the disorganization and distraction in the work space. [Electronic clutter](#) has become as much of an organizational nightmare as the paper piles, and both need to be dealt with in order to regain control of productivity levels.

Stack, president of [The Productivity Pro, Inc.](#), lists some tips on doing away with paper and electronic clutter as painlessly as possible.

"How often have you been on the verge of pulling your hair out because you can't find a particular piece of paper?" Stack says. "How much would it reduce your day-to-day stress level if you didn't have to look at stacks of unorganized stuff all week?"

"This is a great time of year to grab one pile at a time and get every piece of paper where it belongs," she says.

Among her hints to accomplish this:

Create a “tickler file” before tackling the paper clutter, which should help with the temptation to read every scrap of paper through before deciding what to do with it.

When it comes to crowded desk space and cluttered in-boxes, the prime culprits are items that need to be handled eventually, just “not today.” Once the process of organizing begins, it is important to focus on the task at hand and not get involved in a bunch of individual projects or tasks.

The only tasks that should actually be taken on during the spring cleaning process are the ones that can be completed in a few minutes (date a photo before filing it, for example, or place a stamp on an outgoing piece of mail). Everything else can be addressed at a later date and should be filed appropriately or purged.

“If you can’t address an important item right away, file it in your tickler file,” Stack says.

The tickler file is part of an indispensable filing system she recommends putting in place, into which goes only those pieces of paper that require attention within the next day or two, such as a bill or the birthday card purchased for a friend whose birthday is tomorrow.

Stack recommends approaching spring cleaning with a realistic goal, and being ruthless when it comes to tossing anything that isn’t really important.

“How much of the stuff on your desk is just trash that is continually shuffled from place to place?” she says. “Don’t look for reasons to keep it, look for opportunities to get rid of it.”

Stack even suggests sending piles of saved reading materials to the recycle bin, including magazines to which you subscribe but have no time to actually read. Clearing the backlog and starting fresh may set the stage for remaining on top of incoming reading materials as they arrive.

“Once you’ve cleared the backlog, you’ll feel refreshed and motivated to keep up with the day-to-day filing and management of paper, which ideally should take place at least once a week,” Stack says.

Electronic clutter is as pervasive a problem in most offices today as paper clutter, and Stack offers tips for eliminating the excess emails, desktop files, and duplicate files that pollute computers and interfere with productivity.

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Spring Cleaning/page 3

And, because tackling an electronic mess can be even more intimidating than tackling paper clutter, Stack offers some straightforward steps for getting e-files organized in her blog.

“Once you’ve caught up with your paper and electronic filing, you’ll find that keeping up with it is a piece of cake, provided that you are committed to maintaining the effort,” Stack says.

“Just remember, it is easier to put something in the right place in the first place than it is to play catch up.”

To find out more about spring cleaning the office, visit her blog site at www.TheProductivityPro.com/blog, send an Email to Laura@TheProductivityPro.com, or call (303) 471-7401.

About Laura Stack:

[Laura Stack](#) is a time management and productivity expert who has been speaking and writing about human potential and peak performance since 1992. She has implemented employee productivity improvement programs at Wal-Mart, Cisco Systems, UBS, Aramark, and Bank of America. Stack presents keynotes and seminars internationally for leaders, entrepreneurs, salespeople, and professional services firms on improving output, lowering stress, and saving time in the workplace.

The president of [The Productivity Pro®, Inc.](#), a time management firm specializing in high-stress environments, Stack is the bestselling author of five books: “SuperCompetent” (2010); “The Exhaustion Cure” (2008), “Find More Time” (2006), “Leave the Office Earlier” (2004), and “What to Do When There’s Too Much to Do” (scheduled for release in June 2012). The 2011-2012 President of the National Speakers Association and recipient of the Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, Stack has served as a spokesperson for Microsoft, 3M, Xerox, and Office Depot, and is the creator of The Productivity Pro® planner by Day-Timer. Widely regarded as one of the leading experts in the field of employee productivity and workplace issues, Stack has been featured nationally on the CBS Early Show, CNN, and in USA Today and the New York Times.

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