

Does Being Disorganized Make You Less Effective?

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An effective manager is an organized manager - because being organized reduces distractions and removes the unnecessary from your life. Sometimes "getting organized" is easier said than done, however.

But if you can't keep your own workspace in order, how can you expect to properly manage others? If you begin your meetings half-focused on your computer screen, how can you expect your words to have much impact?

A messy desk and a cluttered focus are often indicative of limited effectiveness.

Here are five steps to get your act together and be more effective in every area of life:

1. Shine Your Space

Nothing says "weak manager" like a disorganized workspace. Who wants to be led by a person who is a mess? Getting organized starts by creating an uncluttered workspace.

2. Minimize Distractions

According to Psychology Today, it takes workers 25 minutes to return to a previous task after being distracted. So start focusing on your work and stop focusing on things like junk email and personal calls.

3. Carry A Notebook

But don't just carry it - use it! Write stuff down. Take notes at meetings, with clients, with your boss - this shows that you're serious about results and outcomes.

4. Know Your Priorities

What does it matter if you dedicate a week of exceptional work in creating a color-coordinated timeline that cross-references every detail needed, if it is such a low priority that nothing will ever be done with your chart? That sounds like you just wasted your time. So prioritize your work. Keep asking yourself, "What's the most important task I should be working on NOW?"

5. Focus on One Task at a Time

Are you guilty of talking on the phone and typing an email at the same time? How effective are you at really listening to the person on the phone? We are not as good at multitasking as we want to believe! It is more productive to focus on the task in front of you and complete it well the first time, before moving on to the next.

Here are some quick tips on how to avoid multitasking:

- *Batch your email responses: check emails when you start the day, after lunch, and at the day's end. Don't sit on email all day long!
- *Turn off the email alert on your computer when starting a conference call.
- *Turn off your computer screen when meeting with a person in your office.
- *Put down your phone when talking with someone in real life - even stop texting.

Have you ever noticed the correlation between organization and effectiveness?

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