

Become More Efficient and Effective

Keys to becoming more efficient and effective

Dealing with information overload, and how to assess, store and retrieve information, is a problem that confronts just about anyone in management. To deal with the amount of information that is being thrown at Managers, particularly through email, requires the adoption of a number of principles.

The first principle: "Get Organised"

This works on the principle that there's "a place for everything and everything in its place". The analogy is the top drawer in your kitchen. I am sure if you went to most people's homes, in their kitchen top drawer, you would find that the knives would be in a container all together, the forks would be in a container together, the big spoons would be in a container together and the small spoons in their own container.

If you create a place for it, then you'll put it back. If you don't have a place for your spoons or forks, then our recommendation is go out and buy it and create the place for it. It's exactly the same with electronic records like email. Many people have important emails scattered in their inbox because they haven't created a place for them. At PEPworldwide we simply suggest creating a place (folders) for all your emails (and any paper) and get into the habit of putting things into these folders, and then get organised.

To get organised, first think about your folder structure.

The way to do this is to break your job down and then decide what logical folders will suit your list of responsibilities. The filing structure has logic. Somebody may have the same job as you but a different folder structure and that's fine-it's whatever works for you. Unless someone helps you with your structure or if you don't think about the structure, then you'll end up filing things at random and you'll never remember where you've put it.

Having created the 'place' with your folder structure, develop the habit of putting things back into their place when you have finished working with them.

The second principle: "Only keep what you need"

The world is broken up into 50 per cent 'hoarders' and 50 per cent 'discarders'. While the discarders have no problem getting rid of things, the hoarders tend to think "is it possible that some time in the future I might need this?"

One way you can tell the difference between a hoarder and a discarder is to look in their garage at home. The hoarders have their garage full with things like their high school notes, things they're going to repair one day and so on. The only thing not in their garage is their car.

What you should ask yourself is: "Do I actually use this, or if I didn't have it and got rid of it and needed another copy, would I be able to get one easily and inexpensively?" If the answer to that is yes then you are probably safe to let it go.

One of the problems with too much information is that you then have the issue of filing it—finding where it fits into your folder structure. On the other hand, too much discarding could lead to that person bothering others to get them the information they need, so it's finding a balance between the two.

The third principle: "Choose what's important"

Today's environment is most difficult for perfectionists. In earlier periods, perfectionists would have been able to get all the information they needed together and then make a decision. We don't have that luxury anymore—time is against us. And also the volume of information is too great. So the challenge for perfectionists is to come to grips with the fact that they are not going to be able to do everything perfectly, they need to choose what's important.

A very important thing for people to understand is, with the volume of work today, you simply won't get it all done. It's just an issue of saying what's important and what isn't. The people who are most successful with career development or promotion are the people who work out what's important. They concentrate on that and they do a great job on what's important because you can't do it all.

Take the focus off the urgent and focus on the important!

If you want to know more about what we can do to help you change forever the way that you work then please contact us via our website

<http://www.pepworldwide.com.au/index.cfm>.

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