



6 Reasons To Clean Off Your Desk

Remember, your workspace speaks for you even when you're not there.

Spring fever is expected to reach epidemic proportions this year, so take steps to be prepared before it hits too hard. Warning signs of spring fever include daydreaming, distractibility, an obsession with the weather, and a desire to run through fields of daffodils and tulips. Before the symptoms get too severe and you'll require some "necessary" PTO, make sure you've got your workspace in order. In other words: spring clean your desk! We're not suggesting you have to get all Marie Kondo on it, but tidying up your desk not only will make you look busy, it also has real workplace benefits. Career experts offer six reasons why cleaning your desk is a no-brainer when it comes to creating an organized workspace.

1) It makes you look more professional

Having a tidy desk projects an image of competence, says professional organizer Seana Turner. We've all seen that co-worker's desk scattered with dirty coffee cups, food scraps, and mounds of clutter (yuck!). A professional business owner takes pride in his or her appearance, whether it's your outfit or your desk. Try to look at your desk from an outsider's or employee's perspective and think about what it says about you.

2) It increases your efficiency and therefore effectiveness...

Knowing where things are keeps you on top of your game. "People who pile paperwork often obscure items underneath the stacks, resulting in wasted time trying to find what they are looking for," Turner says. Filing things where they belong creates less surface clutter—and ensures you know where they're at when you need them. Efficiency is getting things done...being effective means getting the things done that get you one step closer to achieving your goal. With an organized workspace you can focus on those activities and not hunting for the right piece paper.

3) It gives you room to work

Many projects require dealing with multiple items, such as your calendar, phone, reports, books, studies and so on, Turner says. "Even in the digital age, much of our work is conducted through or with physical supplies," she says. "A functional desk will have clear space where these items can be spread out and referenced." Disorganized employees may even take over common spaces, such as a table in a conference room, because their desks are so cluttered. You don't want to be that person.

"Do as I say...not as I do!" Law 13 from the 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership says "People Do What People See". As a business owner what image are you projecting? If you want your team to be organized and effective it is vital you set the standard.

4) It keeps you on task

"What is the best use of my time...right now?" It's difficult to prioritize your projects if you're not organized. A messy desk is overwhelming and doesn't tell you where to start, says professional organizer Thalia Poulos. "Using paperwork strewn on the desk as an un-prioritized vi-

sual tickler file needs to be replaced by a prioritized written list as the road map for calm productivity." We experience distractions everyday...the phone, email, customers and staff and "bright shiny objects", a clean and organized workspace can help to get you back on task quicker.

5) It keeps sensitive information safe

If you are dealing with sensitive information, leaving it sitting around on your desk can put you or your company at risk. "Stacks of visible papers cause privacy concerns in many industries, particularly health-care," says Melissa Gratiyas, owner of MBG Organizing Solutions in Signal Mountain, Tennessee. "One HIPAA violation can cost you \$50,000." Sir Francis Bacon was the first person attributed to the phrase "Knowledge is Power". It dates back to 1597. Whether its corporate secrets, employee information, financial reports or client quotes, if it is to be shared you want to share on your terms. A piece of paper left while you step away or one that can be read by someone sitting across the desk is a recipe for disaster.

6) It keeps your supplies in one place

Now where was I? Any interruption can throw you off your game, and if you're always getting up to find something you need, it's difficult to concentrate on your projects, says professional organizer Amanda LeBlanc. "There are many studies showing that once a person gets up from something they are working on to look for supplies, they are much less likely to return to what they were working on when they left" she says. "Acrylics bins or drawer organizers are great for storing supplies and keeping them easily accessible and visible." "Inside of my control vs outside of my control." Our days are filled with people vying for our attention and our time. Our clients, team, vendors and friends and family all want a piece of our day. If we stop hunting for things, we free up time to complete the task and therefore free up time for those we love and do business with. Focus on those things completely under your control and enjoy the freedom that it brings!

Happy Spring Cleaning!!!

To your success,

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