



MONDAY MOTIVATOR

CREATED BY PERFORMANCE STRATEGIES
MANAGEMENT CONSULTING GROUP

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CLUTTER!

Have you ever entered someone's office only to wonder where the desk is? Office clutter, and specifically desk clutter, has many negative effects. Perhaps the most impactful are the time and focus distractions such an environment creates. Also there is the image it portrays of the person in that office. Lack of organization means lack of focus and that means lack of productivity.



As the year winds down why not take a little time to clean up your work area and create space for your best thinking and planning? The experts tell us that a cluttered work space comes from not completing a task when we have the chance. For example, we open a letter then decide we'll respond to it later and set it aside for that future plan.

The problems start to pile up when we do the same thing with so many other papers, files, books, magazines, journals, memos or CDs. Over time our work environment becomes a place we dread to return to. So what advice do we have for you even if your office is only ten percent of the image above? To start with let's get rid of anything that is more than 90 days old unless it needs

to be kept. If it does need to be kept then invest in a few file cabinets and organize your way out of the clutter. Here is an image that gives us some direction on creating a neat and efficient work space. The most important item not shown in this image is a nice large trash can under the desk:



Here we can see that we have space for the days' papers and even they will be put into organized spaces at the end of the work day. Perhaps the most useful item on this imaginary desk is the computer. There we were told we could do away with papers forever. It did not quite work out that way but a lot of content can be stored on computers with the aid of email and scanners.

In one study that was conducted by Performance Strategies, Inc. we learned that people like to have a printed copy of some emails even though the content of the email is far easier to access when organized into files on a hard drive. There's just something about holding a memo in your hand and feeling the paper. It seems to give the memo more legitimacy, more authority. By committing to cutting down on sheets of paper you'll save money, time and manage clutter more effectively.

One office we know of requires all business cards to be scanned into a computer app and organized into a data base that more than one person has access to. The cards are then tossed out. Other automated solutions include networking apps that allow collaboration between people working on the same project. There is any number of them available ranging from very

affordable up to customized apps that are very expensive. There's something for everyone in this category.

Speaking of apps some of the more popular ones include “cloud apps” that make collecting, organizing and storing grouped topics online easy and accessible by any number of devices. One that we like is called Evernote <https://evernote.com/> Our experience with this handy app is that for a minimal annual fee we can send emails with their contents to the cloud service that also allows us to place the email into pre-arranged folders so the content is easy to find from just about anywhere there is an internet connection. Many similar service apps are also available. Here's a link that will show you the top 12 such apps: <https://zapier.com/blog/best-note-taking-apps/>

Now and then we hear our clients tell us they just can't run a business without some degree of clutter around the workspace. We like this image to show that a well-organized desk can allow one to run the entire country (albeit with some help from about 550 other staff members).



In case you're wondering what office this is – it's the oval office in the White House where the President of the United States conducts business on a daily basis.

In summary it is possible to clean up our working environments by avoiding sitting each thing we handle down on our desk or credenza each time we handle it. It's a habit. Just try doing this for a few weeks and you'll be amazed how much less clutter you will be looking at each time you sit at your workspace. You'll notice a better self-image, lower degree of stress and better time management as well. Not a bad return on a little organization.



This wraps up this edition of the Monday Motivator. We'll have a new one for you next week. As always feel free to share this with your associates, teams, friends or family. We enjoy supporting you in your quest for more effective performance strategies.

In summary, you can't function like a professional if you're trying to do it in a trash can.

If you'd like to read a little more on this topic check out these links:

<http://paruresishelp.com/clutter-bad-health/>

<http://bebrainfit.com/declutter-stress-health/>

Until next week, if you know of any business that would benefit with a little coaching in the areas of organization, time and task management, social media, sales, marketing, customer service, operations, HR, leadership or team-building, have them give us a call at 562-577-7000 or send us an email. We will keep you in the loop on how it's going.

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Our consulting and coaching focus supports management, sales, customer service and operations. Included are sales and management assessment surveys as well as leadership, teambuilding, sales operations efficiency and online tracking projects. Our other team members bring additional disciplines as well. We will showcase them in future editions of this business journal. We are all committed to driving the results you want.