

Organizing your work and time

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Thriving
~~Get things done~~ in the midst of chaos.

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“NEATNESS IS A VIRTUE”

The Myth Series





PRINCIPLE

Keep track of all your commitments

“I CAN KEEP EVERYTHING IN MY HEAD”

The Myth Series

How the brain works...

MMMMMM
MMMMMMMMMM
MMMMMM
TT

Your Brain

TTTTTTTT
TTTTTTTT
TTTTTT
TM

Einstein's brain

Types of work

Routine

- Anything you do regularly

Projects

- Work that comes and goes, or is unique, and that takes several steps or days+ to complete

How to Identify routine work

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							

Keep track of Projects on a List

Work

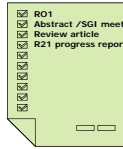
- Literature review for new grant application
- Science manuscript review **Due May 13 to Professor X
- Plan new experiment for current grant
- Hire a new technician
- Prepare seminar presentation for March 20
- Complete first draft of *Nature* manuscript
- Prepare agenda for February 25 conference call

Home / personal


- Plan vacation plan for November
- Paint the living room
- Birthday party for friend Bill
- Install computer backup program
- Prepare 2011 tax return

Project support material


1. The project list



2. Create folders for each project



3. Store all files together



Virtual

- Projects
 - Abstract- SGI meeting
 - R01
 - R21 Progress Report
 - Review Article

E-mail

- Personal Folders-2
 - Projects
 - Abstract - SGI meeting
 - R01
 - R21 Progress Report
 - Review Article

Anything you *might* want to do later.

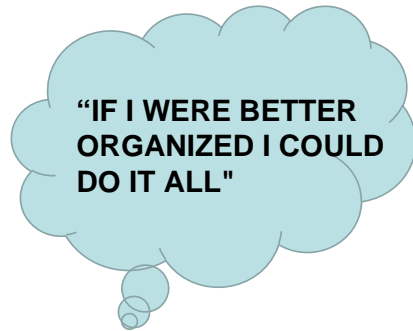
Someday / Maybe

Someday – Maybe List

- Travel to Nepal
- Buy a used purple Corvette
- Buy a 54x5 plasma screen TV
- Subscribe to *National Geographic* magazine
- Make a plan to retire by age 40
- Learn Hungarian

PRINCIPLE

Right size your workload



The Myth Series

The sane person's motto

*I may be able to do **anything***

*but I can't do **everything**....*

Too much?

- I have to
 - Can I delegate?
 - Can I reduce time?
- I want to
 - Is this the right time?
 - Value added?
- I should
 - Because nobody else will...
 - What a promise means...

PROJECTS - "TO DO NEXT"

Work

Home

PROJECTS - DELEGATED

Samir

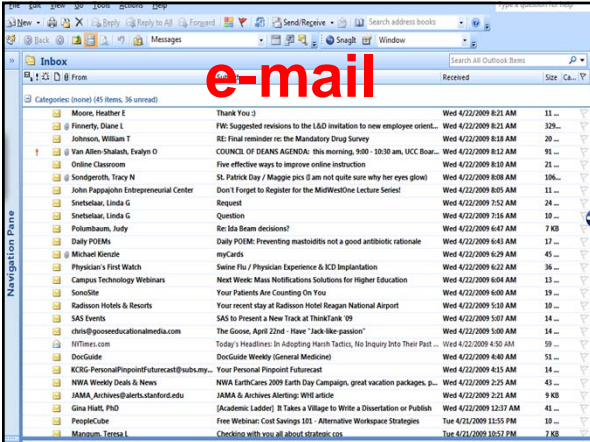
Sally

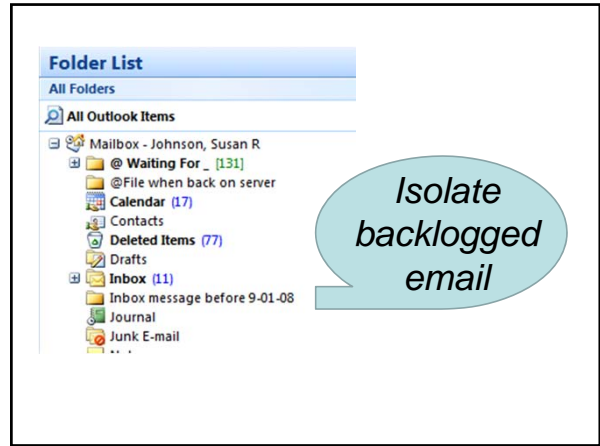
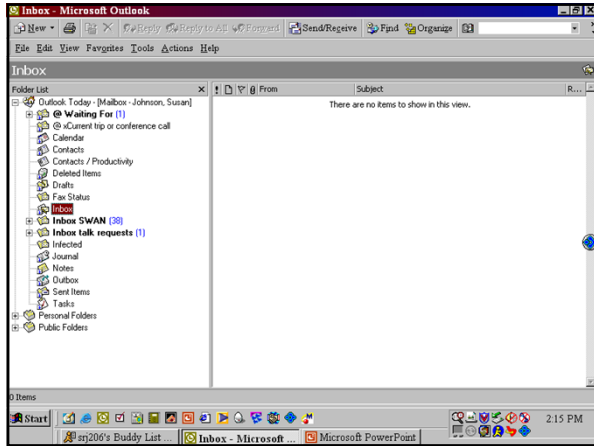
Sid

Sarah

PRINCIPLE

Streamline routine work – e.g. email





Set up folders

“Waiting for” =
you are waiting to hear back from someone else

- **Decide!**
 - Discard / File
 - Delegate
 - Do now
 - Defer →
 - Project?
 - What’s next?

Next action: identify & record

Outlook: type the next action in the subject line & save

Dear Xdrive Customer,

We recently experienced some processing difficulties with our billing system, & these issues, and want to assure you that we are taking every action possible

Other email programs: forward the message to yourself with the next action in the subject line

Options to store deferred emails

- ① Outlook: Convert to a task
- ② File in a folder
- ③ Segregate in the Inbox: flag, categorize, label or flag

Completion guidelines:

- Set a time limit
- No skimming
- No skipping.

PRINCIPLE

Take action

**The
2 minute
rule**

Calendar

Tuesday, November 21

- .. check DPR
- .. Submit sick leave for last month
- Call John Smith: 321-333-5555
- ask to Jane about the upcoming conference
- WF: Amy to call back about meeting
- WF e-mail from sj re: promotion question

8^{am}

9⁰⁰ call Garrett: 333-666-9999

10⁰⁰ Conference call

11⁰⁰

12^{pm} Action: create first draft of budget

1⁰⁰ travel

2⁰⁰ Finance committee meeting

3⁰⁰ travel

4⁰⁰

Next actions on the calendar

Format

- Timeframe: Perpetual, never-ending (not daily, weekly, etc.)
- Start items with action verbs
- Cross off items when completed
- "Compact" every week or two

Next action list

call John 351-5555 re: meeting

draft introduction to budget report

buy staple remover for office

talk to Emma re: workshop

print 25 copies of handout

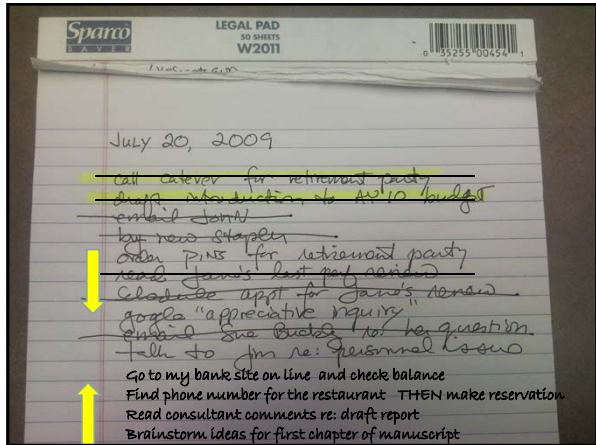
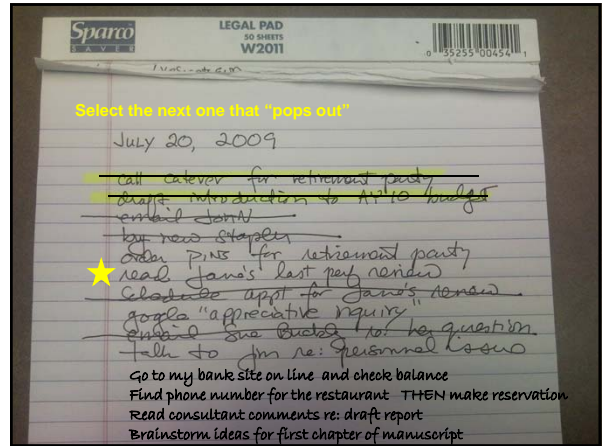
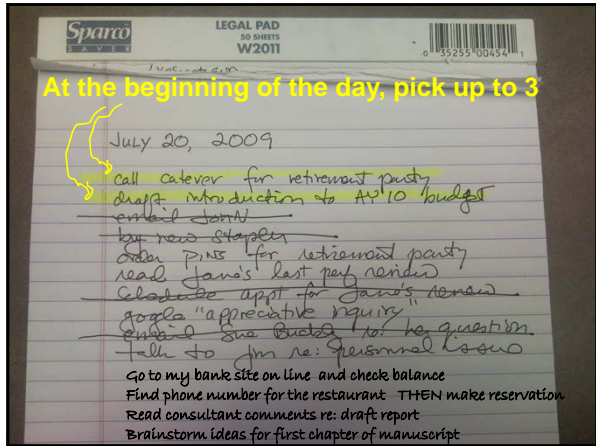

google "climbs mount everest"

purge one file drawer

read article on strategic planning

Work

the next action list

Write down what you are going to do

25 + 5
25 + 5
25 + 15
Repeat as needed

Manage interruptions

the Pomodoro technique
<http://www.pomodrotechnique.com/>

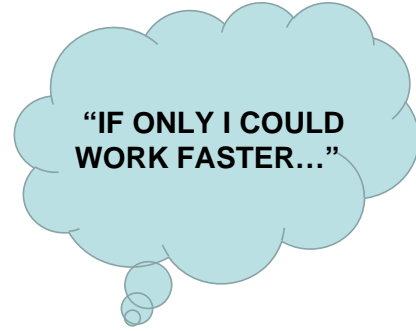
PRINCIPLE

Plan (a little)

- The Week**
- Review and update:
 - Project List
 - Next action List
 - Calendar → next 3 weeks
 - Waiting for
 - Identify foci for the week
 - Occasionally review:
 - Someday Maybe List

The Day:

- Pick between 1 and 3 *key actions* to complete by end of day
- Do one key action *before* you look at your email.
- When you need focused time, eliminate distractions
- Alternate between routine work, interruptions, and action list



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S l o w d o w n

