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How to Un-Clutter Your Desk

Did you know that a nice clean desk will help you focus and be more productive? Not only will cleaning your desk help you evaluate your work process, but it will save you a lot of time in the future. And if done right, you may only have to do this once.

A messy desk is both distracting and time wasting. A clean desk will help you focus on the task in hand. The less visual distractions the better.

The first step to cleaning your desk involves you deciding on what essential items you need to keep on your desk and what needs to either be thrown away or put out of sight. So, take a look at your desk. What are the things you use everyday. If an item, such as a USB drive, is only used once a week, then there is no need to place it on the desk. Instead it can be placed into storage for quick and easy access.

In essence, your desk should contain the bare minimum. This might include a notepad, pencil, pen and your computing devices. You will need to find an appropriate home for the rest of the items.

In terms of paper, unless it's related to something you are working on right now, it shouldn't be on the desk (apart from a notepad). Paper is the number one cause of clutter on a desk, and does a very good job at hiding and burying important things. Items like receipts, instruction manuals, letters and such can be scanned into the free tool Evernote (www.evernote.com). This amazing tool will host all your documents in a fast and easy to access platform.

Bills and other paper items that need to be dealt with at a later date need to be placed into a filing system that is date based. A good example of this would be to have a folder or envelope for each day of the month. Then it's simply a matter of putting the bill into the corresponding envelope and then looking at the current "days" envelope on a daily basis.

Instead of unsightly and messy Sticky Notes, why not use a free tool such as Task.fm (www.task.fm) to handle your reminders. It will replace your sticky notes with a digital solution and offer a more productive system.

Keeping a bin nearby and within throwing distance is a good idea. Be cruel when it comes to throwing things away and try to keep as little as possible. Ask yourself if you really need that piece of paper. Remove any unwanted scraps and litter as it happens.

Nick Nacks, trophies, ornaments and other clutter needs to be taken off your desk and put onto a shelf. Remember your desk is a workspace so treat it like one. It should be clear of anything that will just collect dust.

With only 5 or so items on a desk, you will easily be able to spot an item that shouldn't be there. This way, you can keep your desk clean without any major hassle or trouble. So start thinking minimal and create your own clean and clear workspace.