



“How easily and quickly you can find the files, folders and documents you have saved on your computer can save you time or be a huge time waster.”

Electronic/Digital Organization

As we move into a paper-less era, our desks and workspaces may be less cluttered with paper, files and hard copies of documents, but what does our computer organization look like? Have you ever considered your level of organization from a digital or electronic perspective? This is just as important as the

management of your physical space and time. Actually, it is inherent in good time management – how easily and quickly you can find the files, folders and documents you have saved on your computer can save you time or be a huge time waster.

Here are some tips:

1. Naming items:

- Be consistent in your naming choices.
- Using consecutive numbers in naming can be helpful ie: if you have multiple versions of a document that keeps getting revised.
- Use as much information in the name as you can to identify the item ie: is it a letter or memo? To whom is it addressed? Who or what is it regarding?

2. Folders:

- If you have 4 or more of something – make a folder for it.
- If there are folders, within folders, within folders that you use daily – make shortcuts on the desktop to get there faster.
- If you haven't had any need to look in a particular folder for a long period of time, perhaps a year or more – chances are you don't need it. Delete it! (Or back it up to a storage device if you think you may need to access it in the future.)

Tips Continued

*If you
know
you
won't
need it –
Delete it!
Be
clutter
free!*

**3. Email:**

- If you have many emails coming in every day and some require action and some do not, make folders to help you sort them by priority. You could try a “today”, “this week”, “next week” style or you could try “action”, “no action”, “pending”.
- If you know you won't need it – delete it! Keep it as clutter free as possible.
- If there is something you can't bring yourself to delete, but don't think you will need it anytime soon, save it to the computer rather than leaving it as an email.
- Use your “calendar” or your “tasks” to help remind you of upcoming appointments/deadlines/ to-do lists etc.
- Make email templates if there are certain emails you find yourself composing over and over again. You can alter the addressee or any other component each time.
- Colour code items – Outlook and many other email software provide a “categories” choice with which you can assign colours to items within your inbox or a folder.

4. General tips:

- Try to save everything in one place.
- Try to stay in sync – try to use software and hardware that is compatible to what you already have so that you can sync up things such as your calendar with all your devices ie: blackberry and home computer.
- In a folder – choose the “details” view of the contents. That way you can easily sort by size if looking for a big document, name if you are looking for something uniquely named, date if you've worked on it recently or know the approximate date you created it or any other criteria that may be useful.
- Re-order the tools in your tool bar to help you choose the ones you need faster.
- Delete those tools you never use and add the ones you do use that don't automatically appear.
- Learn keyboard shortcuts. They can help you do things quicker than always mousing.
- Do some spring cleaning – choose a time of year to go through folders and delete or back up what you don't need. Test your storage devices to make sure they are in working order or invest in new ones if need be.