

Being Organized: Is it Worth the Effort?

To have freedom of time, (and other kinds of freedom as well), you need to be organized. It's one of the many paradoxes of life.

People often think that the processes of getting and being organized take away from their available time, and it's true - as far as it goes. There is a commitment of time involved in bringing order out of chaos and then maintaining order.

Unless you're already perfectly satisfied with the organizational state of your office or home, it will take some effort to bring things to the point where being organized is clearly saving you time, energy, and money.

The question is whether the effort is worth it to you.

Another way to frame the question is to ask what is the price you're paying for being disorganized. Does it cause conflicts in your relationships - business or personal? Do you have a pattern of being unable to quickly locate things you need, resulting in daily doses of irritation and stress?

Disorganization certainly wastes time and energy. It also costs money.

Sometimes the cost is indirect: missed opportunity from not having your act together. But there is also the direct cost of having to replace things that have permanently gone missing in the midst of chaos.

On the other hand, being organized allows you to find what you want when you want it.

The payoff of being organized goes beyond merely saving time, energy, and money. Organization also results in better relationships. An orderly environment helps reduce conflicts among household members. At work, the image you present by being organized advances the respect that colleagues and clients hold for you.

Organization also increases the likelihood of success in achieving your goals. A productive environment is a setting in which everything around you supports your goals and who you want to be. It is an intentional environment.

If you've decided to get organized, make a commitment, a specific plan with a deadline and some accountability. Start small, but start somewhere because organization is a process, not a destination.

Step by step, you can bring your home or office to the point where it supports your life, as your environment should do.

1. Identify something to organize. A suggestion of where to begin is to eliminate clutter in a specific area: a drawer, a closet, a room.
2. Give yourself a deadline by which you will have it done. Make the deadline feasible - the point here is to achieve success, no matter how large or small the initial project is.
3. Build in some accountability or consequences: what are the positive consequences of getting it done on time (reward yourself in celebration); or the negative consequences of missing your deadline.

Once you've accomplished your first objective, then build on success. Choose your next small but specific area, and so on until you're satisfied.

Organization is a practice, not a natural tendency as so many people believe. It's true that there are those who enjoy the process of putting things in order more than others do, but anyone who chooses to be organized can be.

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Lila Norden combines 14 years experience in education and consulting to offer valuable information and insights for advancing your business, education, or career. For helpful resources, strategies, and additional articles, visit <http://ftoffice.com>