

It's that time again, time for New Year's resolutions. This fresh start fills us with feelings of great optimism and inspires us to take on even the most daunting challenges. So, what are you inspired to accomplish in this New Year?

Getting better organized is always an excellent option. In fact the entire month of January is dedicated to doing just that - it's **Get Organized Month**. Ok, so maybe an entire month dedicated to getting organized feels too ambitious for you, then how about just shooting for one day, January 11, to begin the process. It's

National

Clean off Your Desk Day.

Cleaning off your desk may not sound very "sexy" as resolutions go, but it can do amazing things for your life. It can lead to things like projecting a more professional image to clients and co-workers, feeling more confident and in control of your day, and leaving the office on time because you're not wasting up to 30 percent of your day searching for misplaced items.*

If you're ready to conquer your cluttered desk, here are five ideas to help you get started:

- 1) Set aside time to do it. I mean actually schedule time in your planner with minimal interruptions (or none if you can swing it). Dedicate at least 30 minutes or up to a couple hours depending on your "accumulation." Take small breaks if you find your mind wandering or feel overwhelmed, or put on your favorite music for inspiration and energy.
- 2) Sort papers into categories; for example, take action, reference, delegate, recycle, etc. Then, sub-divide as needed (for example, reference legal, reference client, reference contracts, reference insurance, etc.).
- 3) Establish homes for all items to be filed. Use a tickler file to track all your action items, and create reference files for items that don't require action but you would like to hang onto "just in case."

- 4) Recycle any papers you don't need. (Hint: If you can easily find the information on the Internet or another handy source, ask yourself if you really need to keep a printed copy.)

- 5) Organize all your supplies (paperclips, pens, sticky notes, etc.) in drawers or containers on top of your desk for handy retrieval. If you have a supply closet to draw from, don't keep more supplies than you can use in a couple weeks at your desk.

You'll be amazed how much more productive you'll be with a clutter-free desk!

***30 percent of all employees' time is spent trying to find lost documents.**

Source: Von Bergen, Jane M.. So many reasons to neaten up, but it's too imposing. Boston Globe 03/12/2006 Statistic by/from Delphi Group