CLEAR THE CLUTTER

WORK can be hectic enough without having to sort through a mess each morning. Taking the time to create an organization method (and actually using it) can boost your productivity and, also, help keep you calm. Here's a list of 5 things you can do right now, to get everything in order.

- Trash anything that's obviously garbage or doesn't belong. Coffee cups, tea bags, food wrappers, shopping bags, etc.
- Pile all loose papers into one big mound and go through them one by one.

  a. If you can complete it in less than 2 minutes- do it now.
  b. If it takes longer than 2 minutes, but needs to be done- put it in a 'Holding' pile.
  c. If it has been completed, but needs to be saved- put in an 'Accomplished' pile. (At the end of each month, file this pile and get it off your desk completely.)
  d. If it's not for you- delegate it.
  e. If it's anything else- trash, recycle or shred it.

- Remove any Post-Its or sticky notes off your desk. They look messy and can get lost easily. Add the information to your contact book or type the message and put it in your 'Holding' pile.
- Sit at your desk and arrange folders, paper trays and notebooks so they're all within arm's reach.
- Create a spot for people to drop things off for you. Maybe it's an actual inbox or simply a folder with 'Attn: Your Name' on it—things are less likely to disappear this way and you can control which pile it belongs in.
- Before you leave the office each day, take 10 minutes to go through this system (it takes less time the more often you do it). Happy organizing!

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