

Chaotic Times

Organised Chaos Newsletter

"Helping you to
clear clutter and
feel -

Better!"

Issue 33 - November 2011

'Tackling your paper mountain'

Dear Friends of Organised Chaos

Welcome to the November edition of **Chaotic Times!**

You'll appreciate that my clients are a pretty varied bunch. Recently, though, I've noticed there is a common theme with a lot of them.

Yes, nearly everyone I work for, has issues regarding large piles of accumulated paperwork. So, if that sounds like you, there's no need to feel embarrassed, or think there's something wrong with you!



So, how does paper accumulate so easily to the point where it gets out of hand?

There are two issues to consider here. Firstly, where has all the paperwork come from? Secondly, what is it about the paperwork that makes it unmanageable?

Manage your paper flow!

Most people get a torrent of paper through their letterbox. Some of it will be important mail, but a large percentage will be junk mail. Register with the [Mail Preference Service](#). Unwanted fliers and free papers can go straight into the recycling.

Deal promptly with post and recycle used envelopes. Create an effective filing system for household and business records - this means paperwork does not get left lying around in heaps.

Recycle your magazines when they're read and consider carefully before signing up to an annual subscription. Equally, if you receive catalogues by mail, then only keep the current edition.

When you're out and about, resist the urge to pick up lots of free leaflets and promotional literature - unless you need it, of course.

Think twice before printing information from the internet. It's easy to bookmark web pages for future reference. Save paper and space!



So, what makes paper so unmanageable?

This is not such an easy question to answer. But it needs to be answered if you're going to get any kind of insight into your leaning towers of documentation.

Printed material is dense with information. In this sense, it is unlike any other item you might have hoarded around your house.

If there's no system to manage incoming paperwork, then what happens is that trivial paperwork (which could have been recycled on receipt) quickly gets mixed up with vitally important documents.

If you have even one muddled pile of paperwork, it will take a long time to sift through it and decide what to keep. This is because a lot of it will need to be read before making that final decision. Keep? Or recycle?

Of course the other vital key to managing paperwork is to have some appropriate storage.

This means that you get it off furniture or off the floor and store it somewhere logical so you can find it when you need it. Simple!



Thorough sorting pays dividends!

Often clients tell me that they've made several attempts to tackle their paper mountain.

So, why have they been unsuccessful? Primarily because they were in too much of a hurry and didn't allow enough time. Also, because they only considered a small fraction of the whole problem.

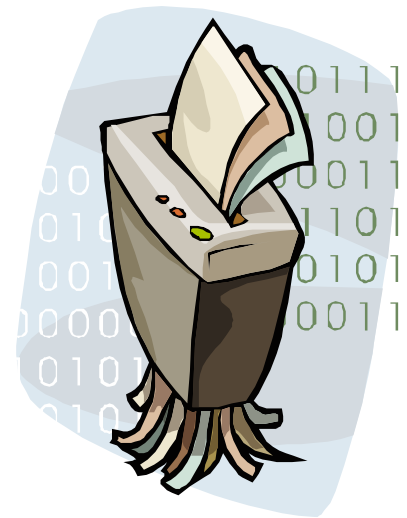
In order to know what you don't need - you have to find out what you've actually got. I'm sorry to say this means spreading out all the piles of paper and considering every last piece. I know it sounds daunting, but it is achievable if you allocate sufficient time.

Sorting your paper into piles will also reveal your habits! For instance, buying magazines you never read. When you see them all in one pile you may want to change your ways!

Other things you may like to consider are regularly checking your bank and credit card statements. This way you know where your money's going and you can shred or file your receipts. Just imagine how good it would feel to be on the ball with your finances.

You might then become aware of direct debits from your account for things you no longer require. So, this degree of organisation with your financial papers can potentially save you some money.

Chances are that tackling your papers will restore a sense of order and control to your life in general - what's not to like about that?



Well, I hope that's spurred you on to tackle your backlog of paperwork. Don't forget, if it's just too daunting - then I'm only a phone call or e-mail away!

*Best regards,
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