

SMALL BUSINESS CEO

Helping Small Businesses Grow.



Hi, this is Steve Rucinski of the Small Business CEO weblog which can be found at www.smbceo.com.

Today's topic is: **60-Second Guide to Organizing Your Business**

When you organize your business and eliminate the clutter, you will feel reenergized. You will find that you are easily motivated to get straight to work when you don't have a mess to deal with. You will save time otherwise wasted looking through piles or searching for a missing document on your computer. Begin by establishing a plan. Prioritize your list, set a date with yourself and identify your motivation.

In just 60-seconds, you will learn how to organize your business.

0:60 Create a Clutter-free Desktop

Throw away items you don't use, like pens that don't write, old computer disks, and scrap paper. Keep only the supplies you regularly use on your desk. This usually includes several pens and pencils, a stapler, scissors, paperclips, a post-it pad, a note pad, a calendar and a phone message book.

Next, consolidate your office equipment by purchasing multi-function equipment, such as an all-in-one printer, scanner, copier and fax machine. Use letter trays and file sorters to avoid piles. Finally, clear out your drawers and designate a purpose for each one. If your desk has three drawers, consider creating a supply drawer, a personal drawer and an identity drawer, containing items with your company logo on them.

0:46 Generate Storage Space When None Exists

If you have faced the problem of not having enough storage space, you know that everything can become a cluttered, disorganized mess. Storage space can be easily added through shelving, cabinet installation, drawers, storage units, bookcases and file cabinets. Shelves are inexpensive, easy to install and can store books, files, binders, supplies or whatever you need. Cabinets are a more expensive, more permanent option and are nice, because they conceal your materials. Storage units and plastic containers are great for storing products you sell as well as for holding large supplies, like printer paper and folders.

0:38: Manage Your Mail

It's easy to let the mail pile up, but save yourself time in the long run and deal with incoming mail immediately. Sort your mail as soon as it arrives. Throw away junk mail, forward mail to the appropriate people when necessary, open and separate the rest of the mail and file it when appropriate. Categories for filed mail may include bills, mail that needs to be responded to right away, mail that is not urgent, publications, etc. If you rely heavily on email communication, you should check your email as often as every hour and reply immediately, if possible. Use the folders in your electronic mailbox to organize your email.

0:20: Maintain an Efficient Filing System

Files that you do not use anymore, but may need in the future are best stored in file boxes. File boxes can be stored on shelves, in a closet or at an off-site storage center to save space. Know what you can throw away and what you need to keep. Throw away outdated

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information. Keep legal documents such as contracts, warranties and tax documents. Organize your files by color-coding, alphabetically, or by type of file. Consider having separate drawers for different areas of business, such as clients, finances and media.

0:11 Maintain an Organized Computer

Keep your computer organized by using helpful software, clearly naming files, saving files to appropriate folders and creating shortcuts on your desktop. Shortcuts should be created for all Microsoft Office programs, the Internet, email and your database. Software you should own includes an up-to-date version of Microsoft Office, virus protection software like Norton System Works, a contact management database, such as ACT!, Goldmine and Microsoft Project.

0:03 Keep Track of Time

Scheduling is crucial. Have a daily plan and stick to it. Schedule your time on a planner. This can be a desk or wall calendar, an appointment book, a handheld device or a computer program. When contacting people, leave detailed voice and email messages, stating exactly what you need so the person will be prepared with the information when they call or email you back.

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