



Organization Tips

Belief: Being organized blocks my creativity, and there's nothing spontaneous about it.

Reality: Organization actually fosters and supports creativity and spontaneity. You may find your creativity being disrupted by the non-stop flood of reminders spinning around your head, such as:

- Call Kevin Smith with project ideas
- Review the P&L spreadsheet
- Review PowerPoint slide deck
- Decide which approach is better for client X

Imagine if you could clear your mind of all these lists and transfer them to Microsoft Office Outlook. You can do this by putting them in the TaskPad. This will create space for new ideas and creative thinking. Being disorganized can also stifle your creativity. Imagine you're an artist and decide to paint the Colorado autumn colors in Aspen. You drive for three and a half hours from Denver to Aspen to find the perfect spot. When you arrive, you realize you've forgotten to pack your paint brushes. That can make being creative really hard! Preparation does support your creativity.

When your calendar is booked and leaves no time to be spontaneous, this can be frustrating. However, if you pre-plan, you can block out large chunks of time with no organized events, giving you more freedom to do something on the spur of the moment.

To get control of all the "stuff" in your life, I recommend you set up an Integrated Management System (IMS). An IMS gives you a methodology for storing reference information, turning action information into tasks, and scheduling tasks on your calendar. After you've set up your IMS, you'll find that it will support your creativity and spontaneity. The best result is being able to close your system, knowing that everything is taken care of so you can relax and let go!

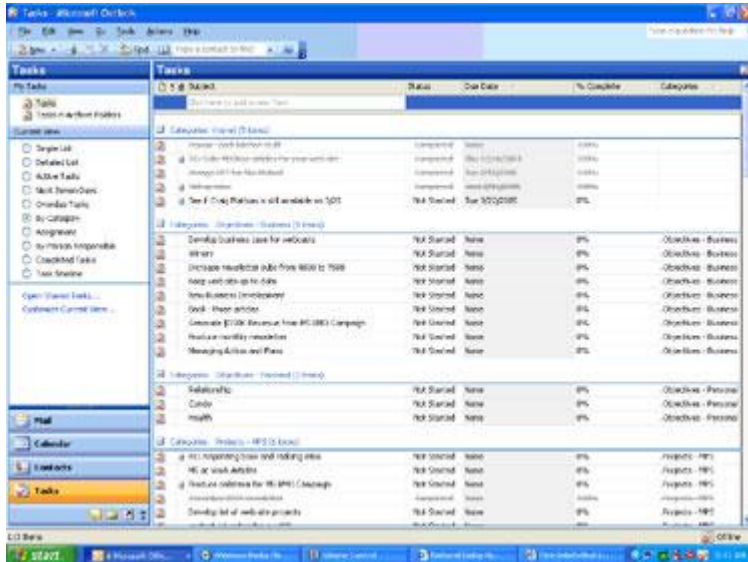
4. There's not enough time in the day!

Belief: I just don't have the time to do all the things I want.

Reality: Time is not the issue. The issue is deciding what you can do given the time you have.

As you know, managing your time with Olympian skill doesn't create more hours in the day. We all have the same 24 hours, so the issue isn't managing time it's managing what you can do with the time you have. You can't do everything, but you can do anything, as long as it fits into your calendar.

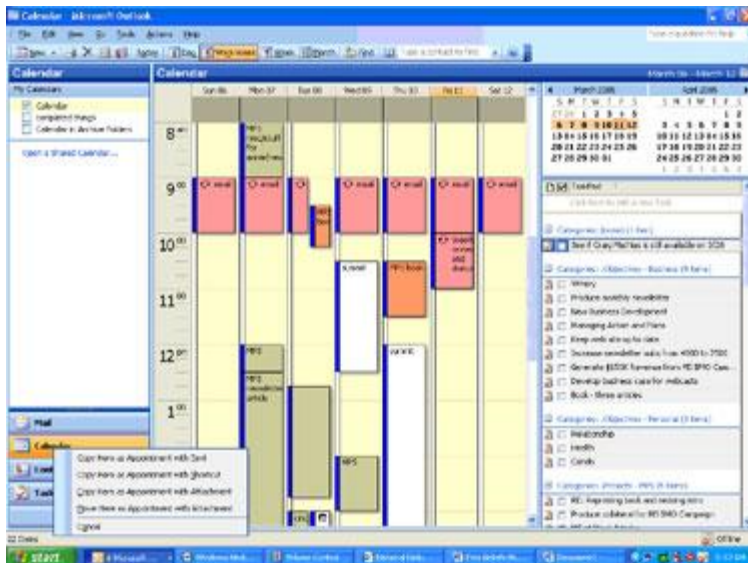
If you keep your to-do lists in multiple locations in e-mail, on a calendar, on paper, in an Excel spreadsheet, a list in your head, and notepad paper you might want to consider centralizing this list in the Outlook TaskPad. This will make it easier to centralize and prioritize this list. Then, you need to schedule your tasks on your Outlook Calendar so you will know what you can and can not do. To start, put your to-do items on your Outlook Task list.



Create a task list to see all the commitments you have.

Then, drag your tasks onto your Outlook Calendar.

If you click on a task and drag it to the Calendar, you can choose to move or copy it to your Calendar as an attachment, with all of the details intact.



View all your tasks on your calendar.

As you drop tasks into the available time on your Calendar you will immediately see if you are overcommitted and if you need to re-prioritize your tasks and, in some cases, reschedule your commitments.

5. It takes too much time to get productive

Belief: I don't have the time to set up a system. I've got too much to do.

Reality: You can save one to two hours a day using an Integrated Management System, so the return on the investment is significant.

Here are some interesting statistics. On average, people we work with spend two to three hours a day working in e-mail and 60 minutes a day finding and filing information. After setting up an Integrated Management System, they spend one to two hours a day working in e-mail and 10 minutes a day finding and filing information. That's a savings of nearly two hours a day, or almost 12 weeks a year! The bottom line is: You can't afford not to create an effective Integrated Management System.

Take a moment and consider the time you spend:

- Finding and filing information;
- Writing a to-do list, and then rewriting it a week later on another list, and then another;
- Opening e-mail, reading the message, closing the e-mail and then coming back to the same e-mail to read it again tomorrow; and
- Going to the store and realizing you don't know the model of the hardware you need to pick up.

These are just a few examples of how we waste time by not having an Integrated Management System to help us remember what, where, and when. Take the time to set up your system. You're worth it, and you can't afford not to.