

29 Keys to getting a grip on your paper and information war

Robyn Pearce

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- 1 Efficient systems come naturally for only a handful of people. Most people have to work at it, and many learn from someone else. Who can help you?
- 2 No one can be fully efficient unless they have enough shelving and places to put things. What changes do you need?
- 3 Don't make two movements when one will do.
- 4 Create an attractive environment that encourages productivity for everyone.
- 5 Place your constantly used items within arm's reach from your workstation. Your closest space is your most precious commodity.
- 6 The things you use the least should be furthest away from where you're sitting.
- 7 Create flexible storage. The only certain thing in life is change. Tomorrow's office and classroom needs will be different from today's.
- 8 As soon as you have more than one place to look for an item, time is wasted thinking and searching, not just by the original person but also by future users.
- 9 Clutter clogs creativity.
- 10 Put like with like.
- 11 Wherever possible, stand materials up rather than lie them down.
- 12 Drive your desk – or it drives you.
- 13 Clean out clutter and you kill confusion.
- 14 Do it fast, and do it now.
- 15 Any time a task seems too big or too difficult, break it into small pieces and suddenly it becomes much easier.
- 16 You'll never read everything that comes your way – the power is in being selective. What lists or subscriptions can you get off?
- 17 Only read what's relevant now. Throw out the old magazines you've been hoarding.
- 18 Be a decision maker, not a procrastinator! Handle paper as little as possible.
- 19 Pick an area to clean up, but if you're not used to this, just focus on a small area.
- 20 If you struggle with letting go of obsolete items, get a neat freak friend to work with you. Allow them to ask the tough questions such as "do you really need this?" and "when did you last use it?"
- 21 A computer is only the electronic version of a physical filing cabinet – don't be scared of re-arranging it!
- 22 A cluttered Inbox is as stress-creating as a cluttered desk.



- 23 Turn off your email alert on your computer, phone and tablets. You hardly ever need to instantly know you've got mail.
- 24 Whenever you find yourself re-writing any information, turn it into a macro or template if it's a big document.
- 25 If the rewriting is in email, turn it into a Signature. (A full explanation is at www.gettingagrip.com/save-time-with-electronic-signatures)
- 26 Effective information management is a very important leadership function.
- 27 85% of what we store is never looked at again. Do you *really* need that document?
- 28 Storing information is knowledge management – expensive but necessary. Remember to consider the invisible costs.
- 29 Bad habits with archival and disaster management cause expense and inconvenience.

If you'd like more help, grab a copy of *Getting A Grip On The Paper War* (available in both ebook and hard copy) at <https://www.gettingagrip.com/>

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Robyn Pearce is known around the world as the Time Queen, helping people discover new angles on time. Check the resources on her website <http://www.gettingagrip.com>

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