Work Type: Immediate Reference

Immediate reference refers to items you need to access right away or that you use frequently.

You can greatly reduce the amount of time it takes to find information you use on a daily basis by putting it in an immediate reference. Think of phone numbers you need to call frequently, requests for information you get on a daily basis, or bodies of information that guide your work on a weekly basis.

Immediate reference includes people, projects, and general information.

Who are the people that you work with on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis? What projects are you currently working on? What information do you commonly need for yourself, your co-workers, customers, or partners? By capturing this information in a single reference area, you will save yourself valuable time every day.

Break down immediate reference material into topics related to your work.

Since every industry and job is different, you should create a filing system that fits the way you work and the general topics that apply to your job.

Easy access to immediate reference puts you in control of your business.

It enables you to respond quickly to requests that are important to your business. Whether it's your boss needing a quick reply, or a customer who requires an urgent response, you can find what you need quickly.

Apply the Smead Organomics principles for organizing immediate reference information.

You can find what you need quickly, if you remember these simple steps:

Make groups.

Think of how you search. Where's the first place you would look for this kind of thing? Create categories that are logical to you.

Put in order.

Arrange items within each group in an order that lets you find them quickly. Set up file headings so you can find information the fastest. Use color-coding if possible to save time.

Keep close.

Then, keep them all within easy reach. Ideally, you should be able to reach immediate reference information while you are on the phone or at your computer.

Follow these principles to keep your most-used information handy. Having things right at your fingertips makes you highly productive and feel totally in control.