How to Organize by Prioritizing

If you're always busy on urgent tasks, but never seem to get the important things done, you need a way to decide what should be your top priorities each day. Here's how to make sure it all gets done, and in the order that ensures you are advancing your true objectives.

Follow these three principles to make sure you know what needs to be done first:

1. List all To Do items.
2. Rank by importance.
3. Re-evaluate daily.

You'll be able to quickly identify the things you need to focus on to achieve your goals.

One idea is to use a 100% Recycled Expanding File with Double Capacity Pockets to prioritize your To Do Now tasks.

List All To Do Items

- Create a single list that contains all of your To Do items. Include large projects, small tasks, urgent "must-do now" items as well as the "should-dos" that will help you achieve your long-term goals. Having all of your to-dos on one master list ensures that nothing gets forgotten.
- No matter how a task originates; from phone calls, in meetings, in your e-mail or in-basket, make sure it gets added to your master To Do list.

Rank by Importance

- Evaluate the importance of each task. Does it have a deadline? Will it help achieve your goals? What are the consequences if you don't do it right away? Don't confuse urgency with importance.
- Separate the To Do Now items from the To Do Later items.

- Make a short list of your 12 most important To Do Now tasks. List them in their order of priority.
- Use a 100% Recycled Expanding File with Double Capacity Pockets to hold the paperwork for your top 12 To Do Now tasks. Place the highest priority material in the first pocket, followed by the second priority in the next pocket, etc. Keep the Expanding File on your desktop where you can reach it easily.

Re-evaluate Daily

- Work on tasks in the order that you ranked them in the Expanding File.
- Knock off the easy items on your list as soon as possible to get them out of the way.
- Plan to do difficult tasks when you are most alert and can focus on them for longer periods of time.
- Evaluate unplanned tasks as they occur. Add them to your master To Do list.
- Each day, review your master To Do list. Make a new short list of To Do Now tasks and reprioritize the material in your Expanding File.