

For 10 Years This Plan Has Saved Time And Nerve Wear And Tear

This plan is unique. It's effective, too. Perhaps every man who reads it can't use it, but one thing is sure: You can't tell how much it may help you out until you do read it. And it's in the users own words. This is a filing plan that suits me down to the ground. It will suit you, too, if you do the same general kind of work I do, or have about the same problems when it comes to finding "that document" in a hurry. What is my work? It is of a non-routine nature. It is always different. No steady stream of reports and correspondence flows across my desk, the same day after day, to be handled by "referring" it to "the proper party" or answering by dictated letter. It runs, instead, eternally along new paths. First, there is some condition in the business, not yet covered by routine or ruling, that needs to be pruned or watered. We discuss the matter. We reach a certain unanimity as to the right kind of pruning or watering. Then these remedial measures must be translated into detailed procedure and concrete words and acts. I expressly abstain from stating the name of my job. The minute I do that every man whose job has a different name concludes this article is not for him. In reality, this article is for anyone whose work, in essence, is pro- motional and involves masses of hodgepodge memoranda, letters, blueprints, schedules, reports, notes of conferences, and the like. It is for the man who frequently "wants what he wants" out of this mass instantaneously to clinch his point in the eager talks so characteristic of uncharted work. It may be a complaint from a consumer; it may be a clipping from the morning's news; it may be a rough drawing by one's favorite artist; but one wants it quick! Here's the plan: the moment I can get any paper or document off my desk and into a drawer I do so. I use only one drawer. Everything is put into it, one thing on top of another. This is no sorting, no classification. Into the drawer it goes, the latest always on top, to be covered in its turn by the next paper, and so on. When I want to get any recent paper, I simply look in this one drawer for it. Evidently, the more recent it is, the oftener I shall want it and the more recent it is, again, the nearer the top it is, and the easier to find. That is the first half of the system. The basis is not alphabetical, nor subject, nor nature of document. " Recency" is the sole basis. By simply laying one thing in one drawer, hour by hour, day after day, you automatically insure that the oftenest wanted paper is the one nearest the top and therefore easiest to find. You "file" as you go along. Whatever you want you will find in the drawer. You always get it. You get it inside of 30 seconds; often instantaneously. There is no pressing the button for the "filing clerk"; no wait for her to return, dismayed and fearful of rebuke, to report that the paper cannot be found but "the boys are looking for it; they think Mr. Drew had it, but he is sick today." That is all eliminated. "But what," you ask, "happens when this magic drawer becomes full to overflowing?" When that happens, and it happens regularly, of course, I take out the entire mass and lay it on my desk upside down. The oldest pieces are now on top. I turn each piece over in its turn and one glance tells me whether it should remain in the drawer or whether, by the lapse of time, it has become "dead" and it is wonderful how many papers, in constant use one week, snatched out and exhibited time and time again, become later mere antiquities because the work they represent is done and disposed of. The trashiest of the "dead" pieces go in the waste basket. The rest those that may possibly come to life some day or be wanted in connection with another task are filed this time in the ordinary and accepted sense of the word "file." They go either into the general office files, if they belong there, or they go into my own private subject file if they are such that no other department could or would want them. So I go on, working from the bottom up until the newness and recency of the pieces I encounter warns me they are likely to be wanted any moment because they concern work still unfinished. There I stop, and restore the now much reduced pile to its drawer, to be the foundation of today's and tomorrow's and next week's accumulations. I got this system from an advertising expert who is one of the shrewdest and cleverest judges of office methods I ever met. He has used the method for years and it works perfectly. I never knew him to be flurried or hurried in laying his hand on any paper. The precise document he needed seemed to appear in his hand as though it had materialized from thin air. He would simply reach to the one drawer and draw out what he required while he was talking about it. A good many business men retailers and other heads of businesses unconsciously carry out the first part of this system. They let papers accumulate in piles from day to day. Very much so! But this is planlessness rather than plan. These men allow papers to pile up unsorted, not because they have any method in so doing, but merely because that is a lazy man's way. "When they want anything from the heap, there is a hurried, scrambling search, with subdued "cussing" perhaps, but the desired document seldom is found. I sometimes think my method has a kind of philosophical basis. If we look upon a file as a kind of mechanical memory (and sometimes it is called so) then the ideal basis for filing would be that of the human memory and we all know that facts are filed in our brains mostly by "recency." "We remember today's events best, yesterday's less well, and so on." I have used this system for 10 years, with infinite saving of nerve wear and tear.

About the Author

There are a total of [114 Plans to Save a Busy Man Time](#) This is merely one of them. Purchase the ebook for \$37 to read all 114

Source: <http://www.article-zine.com>