

# Essential Organizing

*Free your space. Free your mind.*

## Turn Piles to Files!

### Steps for an effective filing system

We typically think of filing as what goes into a filing cabinet, but there is a subset of these files that we don't want to file away for fear of *out of sight, out of mind*. Is that you? The reality is- we're wasting over 45 minutes EVERY day just looking for things. So, what is the alternative you ask? For many of my clients, here is the light bulb: We have *reference* files, those that go into our filing cabinets because we have to keep them, but don't necessarily have to do anything with them, and we have *action* files, which are those files that require us to do something. There are several ways to file action items, but here are three ways that can be very effective. These three ways can even be used in combination with one another, depending on your needs and personality.

### Organize by Date

Folders for each day of the month and each month of the year, (tickler filing system), is one way to place items that need to trigger you to take action. For example, an invitation with directions on it can go in the folder corresponding to the day of the event. Another example could be a lead who wants you to call them back in one week. Simply put the name and number in the folder dated one week from now, and on that day when you check the corresponding folder, there will be the name and number, triggering you to action.

### Organize by Action

Any habitual activities can become an action folder. Examples of this would be utilizing a file for paperwork that requires data entry, items that need to be taken home or phone numbers of calls that need to be made. Name the files according to the particular action. For these examples, have folders called, *data entry*, *take home* and *calls*. Block time into your schedule to tackle the items in these folders, which will keep you on top of those smaller but necessary tasks.

### Organize by Category

Folders based on client names, projects or subject matter is another efficient way to manage your current work load that requires your attention. For example, if you're in real estate, you could have action folders named by the addresses of the homes you are selling or by the clients last name.

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