

PANORAMA

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WHY CAN'T I GET
OR**G**AN**I**Z**E**D

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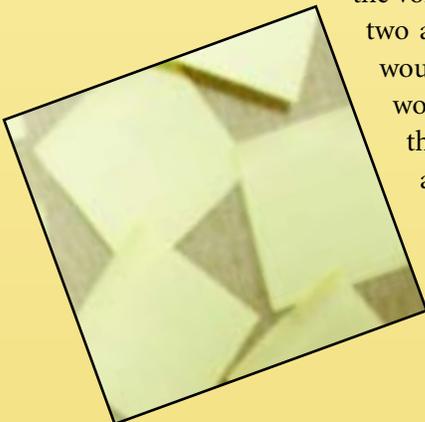
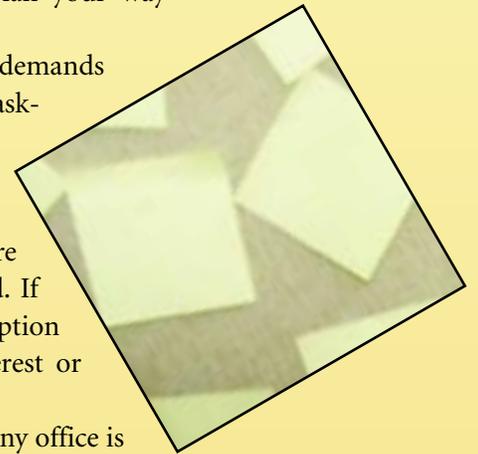
WHY CAN'T I GET ORGANIZED

Organizing is a hot topic in the media these days. Most people recognize that the benefits of being organized include both increased productivity and reduced stress. Why then do so many people continue to work in a disorganized environment?

Just as in many other areas of life, wanting to be organized is not enough. There may be a number of obstacles that are preventing you from achieving your goal of becoming organized, and before you can be successful, you will need to identify these obstacles and plan your way around them.

I don't think anyone will argue that workplace demands have increased over the past 10 to 20 years. Multi-tasking is the order of the day. The prevalence of computers means that many of us are performing tasks that previously would have been handled by secretaries. We not only have more paper, categorizing it becomes more complicated as our roles become more and more varied. If you are a business owner, you may wish to consider the option of outsourcing tasks that are outside your area of interest or expertise to a virtual assistant or other professional.

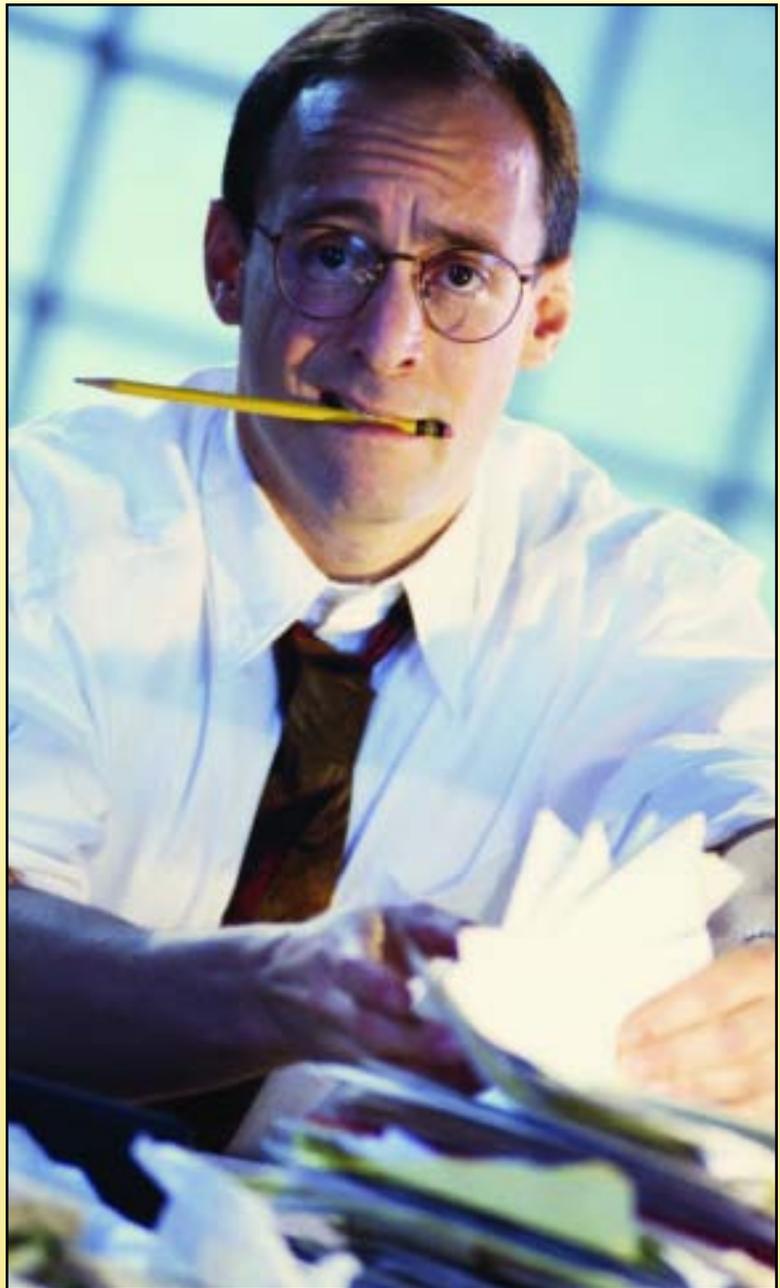
One of the largest challenges faced in any office is the volume of paper that passes through. A decade or two ago, the experts predicted that by now everyone would have a computer on their desk, and there would be no more need for paper. Unfortunately, they were only half right. Most everyone does have a computer on their desk, but the paper flow has not stopped. If anything, it has increased, as printouts from websites and emails get added to the pile!



One way to lessen paper clutter is to think twice before you press the print button. Do you really need a printed copy of this document? If so, do you need to keep it, once it has fulfilled the purpose for which you printed it? Documents stored electronically take up much less room, and can be easily located using your computer's search function.

Even the best intentions to get organized can go awry if you are continually interrupted by clients and colleagues wishing to talk to you either by telephone or in person. The best way around this is to schedule your organizing during off hours, if possible. If not, schedule an appointment with yourself to focus on this activity, and during this time, let your calls go to voice mail and close your door to unscheduled visitors, if necessary.

Before you try once again to get organized, take the time to identify the obstacles that have led to your current situation and to develop ways around them. Unfortunately, not all of our challenges come from the outside world – sometimes we can be our own worst enemies! A professional organizer can be very helpful at this stage, by offering a fresh perspective as well as the experience of having dealt with similar situations. 



Janet Barclay, Founder and Chief Consultant of Organized Assistant, offers office organizing services in and around Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and virtual assistance around the globe. For more information and additional resources to help you organize your office, including The Organized Assistant Resource, a free monthly ezine visit www.organizedassistant.com

