

# How To Save Time By Avoiding Pile Ups

2007-06-12 12:45:41



Let's face it; a lot of us seem to have the natural inclination to procrastinate. Maybe this is a leftover survival instinct that in some way benefited our prehistoric ancestors. One can imagine a hide-clothed early entrepreneur selling fire hardened spears to a neighbouring tribe by the bundle, but waiting to collect the hides owed him until the saber tooth tigers had left the valley, making the journey that much safer. In such circumstances, it is easy to see why letting something pile up before taking care of it could prove beneficial.

The new world order of today dictates that survival of the fittest includes an attention to details that might have been a drawback to our predecessors. You can lose a lot of time (and therefore money!) when you have to take a couple hours to sort through a stack of receipts that could have been dealt with individually. Let's look at some areas where work tends to pile up, with some suggestions on how to make sure everything stays manageable.

## Filing

You probably look at that pile of papers every month and despair, knowing that it is going to take you at least two hours to get it all sorted out properly, but if you don't do it now, there is no way that you can get any more work done. Letting papers pile up is a common problem in any business situation. Individual papers are small and it's easy to put them aside during a busy day, planning to get to them later. This line of thought always leads to those large piles on the desk, though, and the only way to avoid the waste of time in sorting and filing everything is to file the papers away immediately. If dealing with individual pieces in the middle of the day truly interferes with your work flow, take a couple of minutes at the end of the day to deal with all of the papers. It will still mean a lot more saved time than waiting until the month end!

## Billing

Collect money owed as soon as you complete your service. Nothing creates more work than invoicing and billing. Keep in mind that your clients are more likely to pay when the situation is fresh in their minds as well; allowing too much time to go by not only creates a stack of work that needs to be kept up with, it also interferes with the chances of receiving any kind of timely payment. If you do operate using invoices, make sure they are timely so that you don't have to spend a lot of time collecting.

## Supplies

Running around trying to re-supply your office when something runs out can interrupt a good groove, and also waste a lot of time. Keep a good list of inventory on hand, and know how low you will allow your levels to get before you buy more supplies. The last thing you need is to go out looking for printer paper in an emergency trip in the middle of a busy work day; knowing where your levels are at and picking up supplies before hand will save you a lot of little trips during the course of the month.

Keep your paper work sorted and filed, and deal with items as they come in. Operating on a deal-with-it-as-it-comes basis as far as your mundane tasks will mean that you save a lot of time in the long run; it's working smarter so that you don't have to work harder.