Step Back...
Clear Your Mind...
What's The Next Step?

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Disclaimers

* *I am not an expert on GTD*, but I have used it for 1.5 years now, and it's been a huge help.

Disclaimers

- Some ideas presented today may or may not work for you. You know YOU best, pick what works best!

- I'm not perfect at this stuff, but I strive to implement it.

Disclaimers

* GTD is *not* about working harder; It's about optimizing the way that tasks get done with less time and stress.
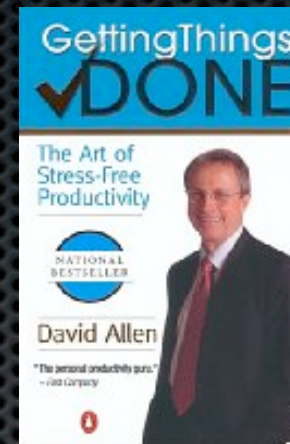
Let's Try An Experiment...

- Write down (or think about) what your biggest worry is right now on something that you need to do.

  - Work or Home project or small task, and NO, I won't ask anyone to reveal what they wrote down. ;-)

GTD

What is "GTD?"

- David Allen wrote "Getting Things Done" in 2001.

- New methods of managing life and work projects, with lowering stress.

- An "evolved project management system"

- Have a thought only once!

- Action oriented approach to your work load

- Dissolves the work vs. life myth

GTD History

- GTD has had a strong following since 2005, especially in the IT industry.

- Wired magazine has many articles on on, first in 2005

- GTD is a corporate standard for General Mills

- Well accepted, assumed practice in many businesses now

Before Implementing GTD, I...

* Kept a lot of written notes. They would sometimes get lost or replicated.

* Sometimes had problems seeing the larger picture.

* Felt overwhelmed often with the amount of work to do.

* Would have headaches much more often. Stress?

* Would make progress on projects, but with a lot of extra spent effort keeping track of it all.

Work

- "Work is anything that you want to get done but isn't done yet."

  - Buy a car

  - Install a server

  - Visiting Family

  - Buy a new waffle iron ;-)

2 Minute Tasks

* If you can do it in less than 2 minutes, just do it.

Basics of GTD

* Collect

* Process

* Organize

* Review

* Do

Collect

* Collect all of the tasks and projects that need to get done. Work or home, doesn't matter.

Process

- In each collection or project, start at the top, deal with one item at a time.

- What's the next step?

- Requires Action? Do it, Delegate it, or Defer it.

- No Action? File or reference it, throw it away, or archive it.

Organize

- Organize the tasks for the project

  - Next Actions

  - Projects

  - Waiting For

  - Someday/Maybe

Review

- Review the tasks and project - to refresh your view of the project. What's the NEXT step?

- Put your mind at ease that the system is working, and that you've trusted yourself that it's all there and won't be lost.

Do

* Do the task. That's what all of this is about!

Use a Trusted System

- It doesn't have to be a computer or an iPhone, unless technology works well for you and doesn't get in the way.

- Paper folders work well for many people.

  - 43Folders.com

    - 43 = 12 (Months) +31 (Days)

Limitations of the Mind

* The average person can only remember 7 things on a list.

* The mind can only manage so many commitments because it's limited in how many things it can remember and remind you of.

Limitations of the Mind

* Until the mind trusts that all of the commitments are in a trustworthy system, it cannot let go of it.

* Give your full attention to a task when you're working on it so that you don't waste more time on it than it deserves.

Context

- Given a location of where you're at, what can you do now?

- At your desk - make phone calls, check emails

- Team Meetings - Action Items specific to this team

Self Management

* Each person's strengths are different

* Know yourself, learn to identify what distracts you and when you need a break

Procrastinating

- We procrastinate because we could be tired, or worried about other tasks, or hoping that someone else will do the task.

Eliminate Distractions

- David Allen:

  - "Your ability to concentrate is directly proportional to your ability to eliminate distraction."

Instant Messaging (IM)

- It's great for quick, short questions

- It's NOT great for long discussions. Walk to the person's office OR call them

- Don't always make yourself available on it

Email

* It can be a HUGE distraction if you mismanage it

* Turn off the "Ding" Notifications

* Keep emails you write clear and concise - make it obvious what the action item is, and for whom

* Not obvious if an email is a quick (<2 mins) response or a much larger project.

Email

* If an email takes more thought, tell the person you're thinking on it and will get back to them.

* Filtering Email Tricks

  * Subscribe to non-essential lists with a "junk" email account

  * Colorize inbox emails - RED directly to you, orange if cc'd

Inbox Zero

- Merlin Mann of 43Folders.com

- Merlin Mann's 5 Verbs for handling emails

The Culture Changes

- Meetings
  - Have an agenda
  - Time is expensive, make them count
- Responding to Emails
  - It's ok not to answer them right away in most cases

Meetings

* Have agendas - stay focused

* Meetings are EXPENSIVE

* Try 30 Minute Meetings - this might help keep people focused and on task

* Requires a change in Culture

Merlin Mann on Time, Attention

- Need for Meeting Tokens?

- Allowing TOO much access to our time, takes us away from getting work done

- Peter Drucker - Coined term "Knowledge Workers"

- Time and Attention - Valuable Resources, Finite

Merlin Mann on Time, Attention

* We're all working on multiple projects.

* Input -> You -> Output (Deliverables)

* Procrastination occurs when there are so many things that you take as input that you can't possibly do all of them in a reasonable amount of time

Merlin Mann on Time, Attention

- So I know I should do all of this stuff, how do I actually make sure that I do it?

  - Requires a change of the way that you work and some discipline, but the payoff is huge and you will discover that it's worth it.

Merlin Mann on Time, Attention

* Renegotiation & Culture

    * How do you deal with others that aren't good with managing their time and priorities?

    * Who is allowed to get your time?

* Hallway chat - "Hey, got 30 seconds?" Problem

OmniFocus for Mac OS X

* Quick Entry from Email App

* Send Email to special email address, email filter can forward to OmniFocus' Inbox

* Demo

OmniFocus for iPhone

- Can sync data with OmniFocus app via Bonjour, MobileMe, Local Disk

- Location aware contexts can detect your location and what tasks are linked there

Tips and Tricks

* Keep work at work

* Get good sleep

* Write stuff down and put it into your trusted system

* Use technology if it works for you

* Don't check email until you're ready to spend 30 minutes on it.

* Meet weekly **with yourself** on your projects.

Tips and Tricks

* It's easy to implement GTD, and easy to get back on the wagon if you fall off.

* Can't focus on an email or project? Take a break and walk or talk with friends.

* Schedule "boring" tasks for the morning when you have more energy.

* Make meetings shorter when possible, otherwise, you risk losing a lot of people's focus.

Tips and Tricks

* Train yourself to relax. Write stuff down, trust your system and stick to it.

* Identify tasks that are repetitive or labor intensive and think about how they can be optimized.

* Remember, *It will be there tomorrow*!

What Did You Write Down?

- **Collect** - Write down what your biggest worry is right now on something that you need to do.

- **Process** - Identify what the next step is to get it done

- **Organize** - What project does it belong to?

- **Review** - What needs to be done?

- **Do** It!

Resources

* TLT Staff Blog Entry

  * **http://tinyurl.com/tltjegtd**

* David Allen's presentation on GTD:

  * **http://tinyurl.com/tltdagtd**

Resources

* Merlin Mann Presentations

    * Inbox Zero: **http://tinyurl.com/tltmmiz**

    * Time and Attention: **http://tinyurl.com/tltmmtaa**

    * Living With Data: **http://tinyurl.com/tltmmtaa2**

Resources

- Bit Literacy, by Mark Hurst

- Wired Magazine Article: **http://tinyurl.com/tltwiredgtd**