

# From Piles to Files: How to Organize Your Office

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# Frequency of use

- **Hot** = every day
- **Warm** = every week/month
- **Cold** = every year/archival

# In an ideal world...

- Papers reside in only 3 places:
  - Your “Hot Files”
  - Your file cabinet
  - The trash/recycling bin

# Hot Files

- A triage system for incoming mail and paperwork
- A temporary resting place for active papers

# Hot File Categories

- To Do -- General
- To Do -- Grant/Project
- Pending
- Supervisor
- Supervisee
- To Read
- To File

# Filing System

- Physically separate papers into different file cabinets or different drawers and label them
  - Administrative
  - Staff
  - Grants/Research Topics
  - Clinical Articles

# File Index

- A list of everything that is in your file cabinet

# File Index

- Administrative
  - Credentialling
  - CME
  - Professional development
- Staff
  - Folder for each person
- Grants/Research Topics
- Clinical Articles
  - Cardiology

# Benefits of a File Index

- Easier to find papers
- Easier to file papers
- Easier to share a file cabinet

# How to create an effective filing system

- Keep it simple!
- Use subject headings that are meaningful for you.
- What is the first word that comes to mind when I think of this?

“Can I throw this away?”

“*Should* I throw this away?”

- Can I get this information again?
- Will it be outdated by the time I need it?
- What’s the worst thing that will happen if I throw it away?
- Have I ever needed this type of information before?
- Did I request this information?
- ***Keep the source; discard the information.***

# Journals

- Be choosy about what you read
- Cancel subscriptions
- Throw journals away as soon as possible  
-- pull out the articles you want to read/to keep
- Keep articles in your office that are hard to find or that you use all the time, but utilize the library or Ecommons for most articles

# EndNote

- A great software program to use for
  - Bibliography
  - Database of office/library articles

# Using EndNote

- Easy to import information from Medline
- Published articles are usually available on Medline within 1-2 weeks
- Assign your own keywords that are meaningful for you (as with the File Index)

# Reading and responding to email

- Designated times of the day vs. continuous
- Your job and your personality will dictate which is better and more efficient for you
- Remember the “Two Minute Rule”: If it takes less than 2 minutes to do something, just do it!

# Filing emails

- Choose electronic or paper storage
- Create electronic folders that parallel your paper folders (e.g. Administrative, Projects, Personal, Pending)
- Your inbox should contain only your active “To Do”s (or create separate To Do folders for each project/grant)
- Use your Pending folder!

# Time Management

- How do you find the time to deal with all this “stuff” that comes into your office?
- It is just like dealing with dishes or laundry at home--it never goes away!
- Must designate the time and build it into your life (after lunch, end of the day, Friday afternoon, weekend)

# Stephen Covey's Time Management Matrix

	<i>Urgent</i>	<i>Not Urgent</i>
<i>Important</i>	I Crisis	II Long-term development
<i>Not Important</i>	III Distractions	IV “Empty” activities

# Living “at choice”

- Every time you say yes to one thing, you are saying no to something else
- Be mindful about how you are using your time

# Summary

- Hot Files
- File Index
- Journals
- Email
- Time Management