☐ **Rethink multitasking.**

In some positions, multitasking is necessary. However, if your project is something that requires concentration and detail work, you might want to rethink that concept.

Research shows that going back and forth between tasks can actually slow our brains or cloud our judgement. It can even release cortisol, a stress hormone that can affect your concentration and ability to make decisions.

☐ **Be mindful.**

Take mindfulness breaks throughout the day to reduce stress and boost your brainpower. Take time occasionally to focus on your breathing. Try clearing your mind before you start a new activity. Make the walk to your next meeting in silence so you can clear your thoughts and start the meeting with a fresh outlook.

From your local library to international professional development sites, there are countless resources available to help you continue developing your skills at your own pace. Let us help you sift through the possibilities to pick the best classes, tools, and even informal learning opportunities that suit your needs.

Check the State Civil Service YouTube Channel for all the Success Series episodes at:
https://goo.gl/Yc1PdK

For handouts from all the Success Series Webinars, visit:
https://bit.ly/2Kbn6Qa

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

A Method To x100 Your Productivity | Robin Sharma - YouTube

16 Ultimate Productivity Skills
https://bit.ly/35OUPdj

How to Get Organized at Work
https://bit.ly/2qt0J3C

Daily schedules for Productivity
https://bit.ly/2fLUcLR

Tame the Chaos
https://tek.io/31B7HjQ

ORGANIZATION TIPS

This month's Success Series Webinar focused on methods to become more organized and productive. This handout includes information from the session, as well as the resources to find out more.

☐ **Create a Master List.**

A Master List can be a lifesaver to "Let paper remember so you can forget." Start with a "brain dump" to list every project, task, and idea that's cluttering up your thoughts. You can do this electronically or on paper. You might even find an app that helps you collect these. The next step is to organize these into different categories – work, home, school, etc. Then you can create master lists for each of those categories, or just use one for all your tasks.

Each week as you begin to schedule your time, look at your Master List and determine which of those need to go into this week's schedule. And remember to go back and put a check to show what you've accomplished.

A Master List can also be a real morale booster for those times when you think you haven't accomplished anything. Just take a moment to look back at all those check marks!

Organization Tips

☐ **Design your workspace.**

Create "zones" to make your workspace more efficient. Consider Zone 1 as the area around your main workstation that you can reach while seated. What things do you use most often? Pens, stapler, highlighters? Reserve this space for those items. Zone 2 is the area a little further away, but still out in full view. This is the place for major projects that are in progress, equipment and supplies that you use frequently, and your in/out box. Zone 3 is your area for storage of files and documents. These can include your filing cabinets, shelves, and overhead bins.

If you organize these zones, you'll find that you spend less time searching for and retrieving items that you use on a regular basis.

☐ **Design your virtual workspace.**

Some tips that will help keep your computer organized include:

Use the same filing system for electronic files that you use for your paper files.

Create a system of folders and subfolders that works for you so you don't have multiple files cluttering your desktop.

Clean your email on a regular basis. For a great starter session, try grouping all last year's emails into a single folder. Then, search for keywords so you can delete entire groups of outdated emails at one time.

Create folders in Outlook for ongoing projects and business relationships. Try color-coding to help you visually recognize projects in your emails.

Instead of copying files, start creating shortcuts. These keep us from creating duplicate files and ensure we are always working with the latest version. If you're working with others, you can do the same thing with documents on a shared drive or in the cloud.

☐ **Make organization a daily activity.**

Create your own morning and evening rituals.

Spend time organizing and prioritizing your tasks, and don't open your mail until after you have completed that first uninterrupted session to review existing tasks. This will give you a more realistic view of what is important that's already in progress before you start the "fire-fighting" of a regular workday.

Identify three things that would make this feel like a successful day and try to ensure you accomplish those so that you have a boost at the end of the day when you see what you've achieved.

☐ **Go paperless … for real.**

It's not realistic to think that we can go paperless overnight. However, those small steps we take will make a big difference. Ideas to start your journey to less paper include:

Ask for meeting agendas and reports in a pdf version instead of on paper.

Use online methods to collaborate without paper. SurveyMonkey, PollEverywhere, and other programs can help with the collaboration you do – and not a single sticky note will be needed.

Schedule regular sessions to start getting rid of paper files. Review the files to see if they are available electronically. See if there is any legal or organizational reason to keep the paper version. Then clear out the duplicates.

Scan documents that you think you might need in the future.

Experiment with digital versions of your usual paper products like a planner, a pad for meeting notes, OneNote for folders, and pdfs of books and documents.

☐ **Break your day into segments.**

There are times of day when we are more creative. And there are times when we are more suited to recurring tasks that don't take much thought.

Use these cycles to create your daily segments, scheduling your most productive time blocks for work on important projects that take your full concentration.

Use your less productive blocks of time for those tasks that take less focus, and make these the times when you're available for interruptions and impromptu meetings.

☐ **Schedule breaks.**

Have you ever found yourself stumped by a problem, stepped away from it, and then found the answer magically appeared to you? If so, you know the value of a break. Tips for breaks include:

Try a movement break – a brief walk, change of scenery, or a stretch. It doesn't have to be long. Even five minutes can make a difference.

Move away from your workstation during a break. Your brain needs a signal that this is not your regular worktime.

Whether your break is a step outside, a snack, breathing, meditation, daydreaming, playing, or a cup of tea with a friend, it's a valuable way to recharge your energy.