23 September 2021 - George Knight, Training Consultant

MASTERING YOUR INBOX

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Working Together, with Tech!

Some things remain the same

- Timekeeping
- Confidentiality
- There's no such thing as a silly question
- Experiment and take risks – see possibilities not limits
- Respect – space and values for others
- Participation – involvement/contribution
- Bit of fun!

Some things because we're virtual

- Where possible, video always on during whole group or breakout room discussion
- Audio switched off unless speaking
- When we break, whether as a group or you need a break, feel free to switch AV off

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… a virtual handshake

With the end in mind…

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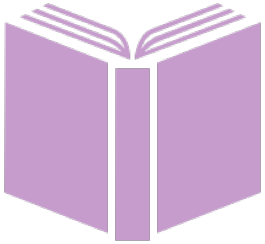
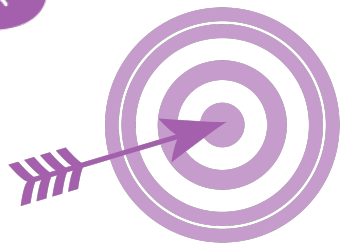


Prepare

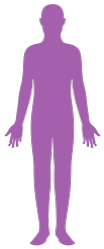
Train



Targets

Implement

Review



Teach

Share

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Key takeaways

- Developing your own communication style
- Effectively managing communication
- Tools to support your communication

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Before communication

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What is the biggest communication challenge you face?

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100+

Per day

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What is important is seldom urgent, and what is urgent is seldom important.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

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Modern communication

- Occurs over multiple channels
- No longer focus on just email
- More than one way to communicate

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Communication channels

- Email
- Work collaboration tool (Teams, Slack etc)
- Phone calls
- Texts / messaging
- Face to face
- Other?

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Which is the best to use?

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TASK: Communication channels

- What are the pro's and con's of the following:
  - Email
  - Work collaboration tool
  - Phone calls
  - Texts

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Communication channels task

Email

- Pro:
  - Audit trail
  - In your own time
  - Permanent record
  - Gives you time
  - Links to outlook calendar
  - Accessible
  - Easier than picking up the phone?
  - You can CC
  - Quick
- Cons
  - Quantity
  - CC
  - Passive aggression
  - Easy to waffle
  - Reply all
  - Can be confusing, one dimensional

Work collab tool

- Pros:
  - Face to face
  - See peoples expressions
    Video chat
  - Increased collab
  - Quick short messages
  - Fills a void missed from office
  - Screen share
  - Multitask?
- Cons:
  - New technology
  - No recording unless minutes
  - Messages pop right away
  - Learning to use it
  - Poor internet / bad connection
  - Distracting
  - Saying Unmute
  - Things getting lost in chat

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Communication channels task

Phone calls

- Pros:
  - Instant answer
  - Best way to make a decision
  - Sense of tone
  - Personal
  - Hard to be ignored
  - Quicker to explain
- Cons:
  - Ties you up
  - Interruption
  - Personal phone
  - Mobile reception
  - Not recorded
  - Catch at bad time
  - Hard to keep short

Texts

- Pros:
  - Quick
  - Accesible
  - Sharing photos
  - Outside of work chat
  - Stored history of chat
  - Asking multiple at one time
  - Control notifications
  - Share good news
- Cons:
  - Pressure to reply
    Can feel like a personal space
  - People can see read receipts
  - Not everybody wants to be in a whatsapp
  - Annoying notications
  - FOMO

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It is about prioritising

- My communication order:
  - Urgent: Phone calls
  - Important, but not for reference: Teams / Texts
  - For later reference: Email
  - Non-work: Texts

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Getting it right

- Internally
  - I now only receive emails that are about something I will need to reference or action
- Externally
  - Still use like normal for most clients
  - Slowly moving clients to more natural channels
    - Texts / Phone calls

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Talk to your colleagues

- If you need me urgently call me
- If you want to mention something to me text or message me
- If you think I will need to keep a reference of that info email me

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Your priority order?

- What is your priority order?
  - Out of:
    - Email
    - Work collaboration tool
    - Phone call
    - Text messaging
    - Face to face
    - Other?

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So you have a messy inbox?

- Folders
- Flagging

- Different between:
  - Outlook
  - Gmail
  - Apple

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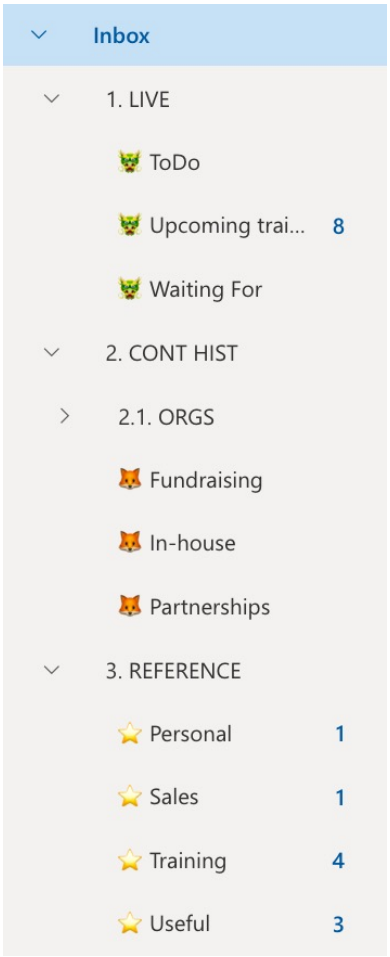
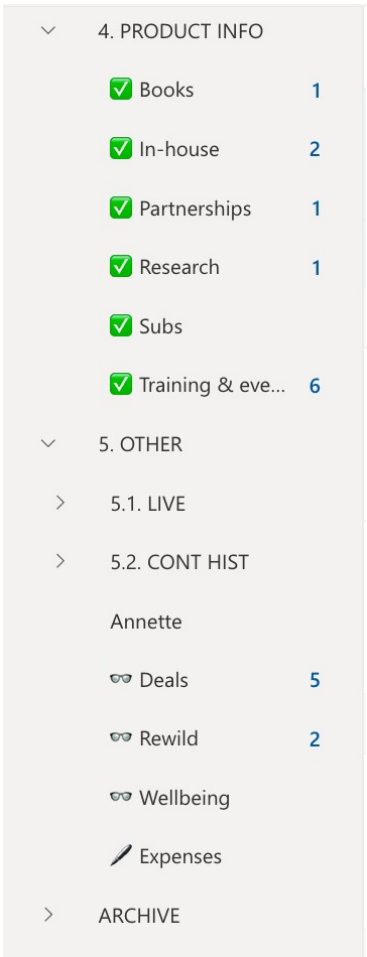
Folder system





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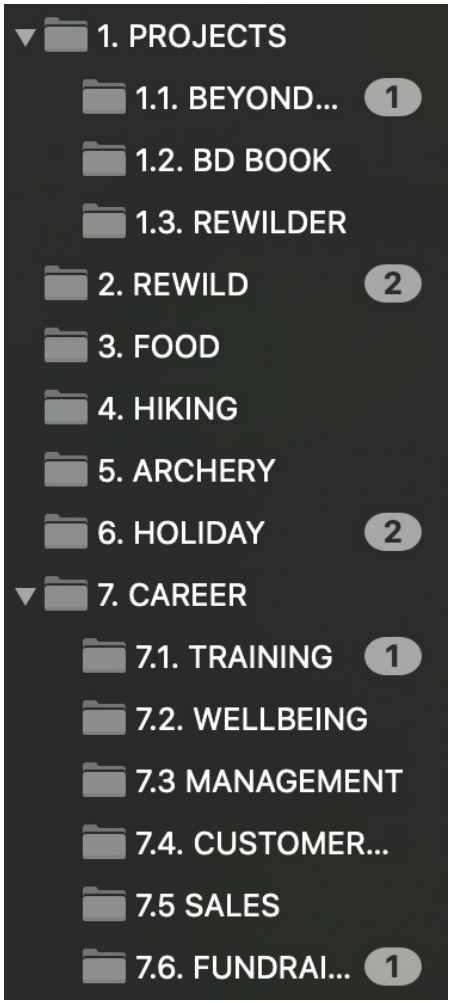
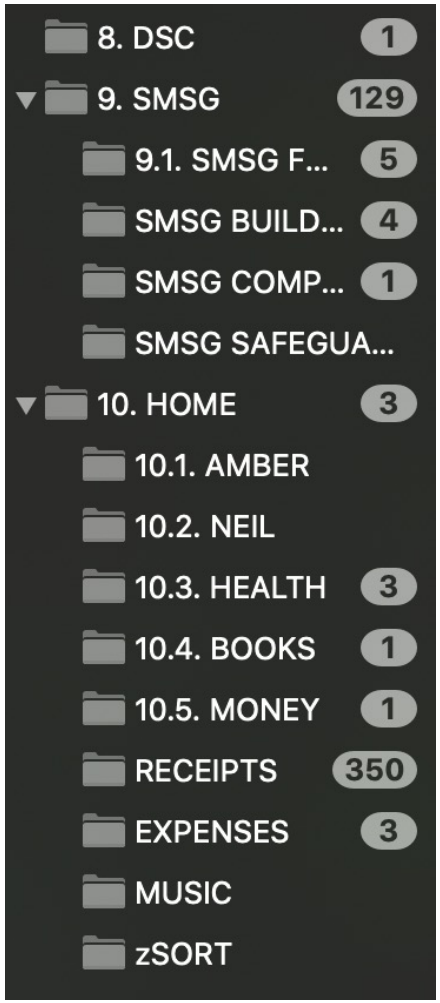
Folder system





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How could we automate email?

- IF:
  - Sender = invoices@dsc.org.uk & Subject = Invoice
- THEN:
  - Put in Folder “DSC Invoices”

- Smart folders in Outlook
- Labels in Gmail

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What else can we do?

- Flagging
  - Record an action to come back to
- Signatures
  - Most frequently answered questions stored as signatures
- FAQs
  - Record of frequently answered questions

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During communication

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Make it a calendar event

- I check email between
  - 09.30-10.00
  - 12.00-12.30
  - 15.30-16.00
- You have more email, you schedule more time
- Honour your calendar

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Calendar tip

- I check my calendar the work-day before and set alarms for all my meetings
- Calendar is open to be viewed by all colleagues
- Always tackle my biggest objective before emails
- Open online calendar so you can close emails

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Started at the bottom

- Anything that takes under 2 minutes, complete!
- Anything that is allocated to a later task, mark!
- Anything urgent, complete!

- Still got time? Keep going!
- No time? Schedule additional calendar event for remaining emails.

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If you have URGENT emails?

Set a calendar event first thing

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If you have IMPORTANT emails?

Set a calendar event for when practical

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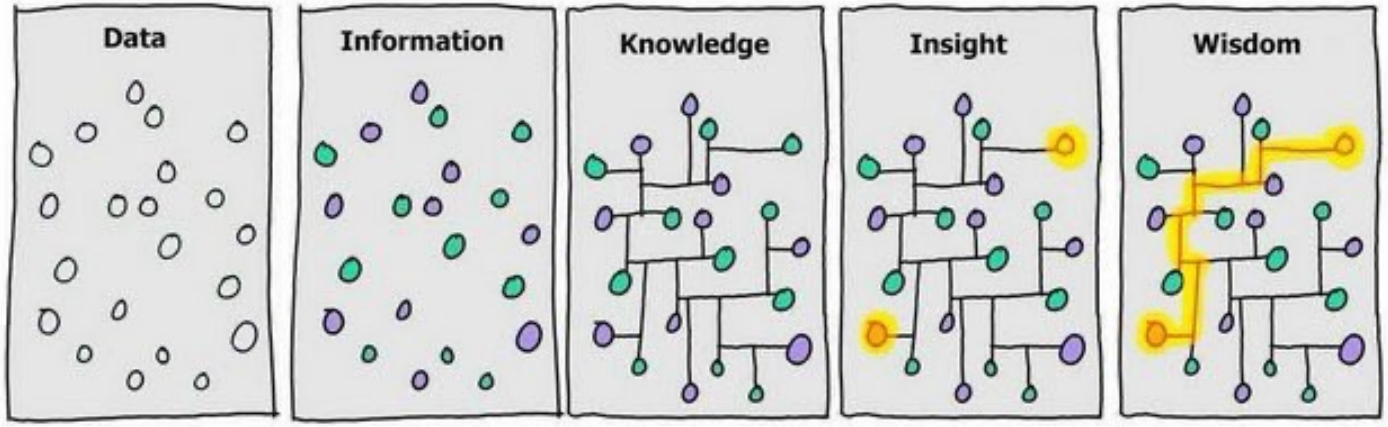
Set time for when suits you

Regular, quick emails

- Create templates
- Save them as signatures?



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How many times should you ‘touch’ an email?

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Organising the inbox

- Deal with anything that takes under two minutes
  - Just do it, please.
- Deal with urgent?
- Flag important or regular tasks

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Turn off notifications

- Can you make that final brave step?
- Not just email
  - Social media
  - Shopping
  - Anything fighting for attention
- What notifications do we want?

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Key tips

- New folders should take less than 1 minute to add an organise
- The power of *unsubscribe*
- Please try not to touch emails more than once or twice

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After communication

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What do we do now?

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Empty / actioned inbox?

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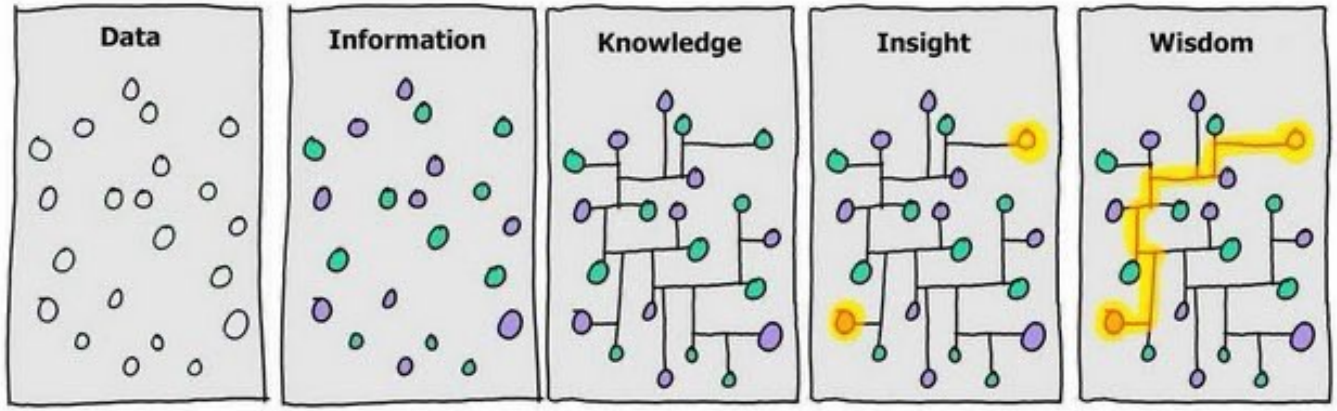
Update calendar

- Schedule one-off tasks
- Make new regular tasks?



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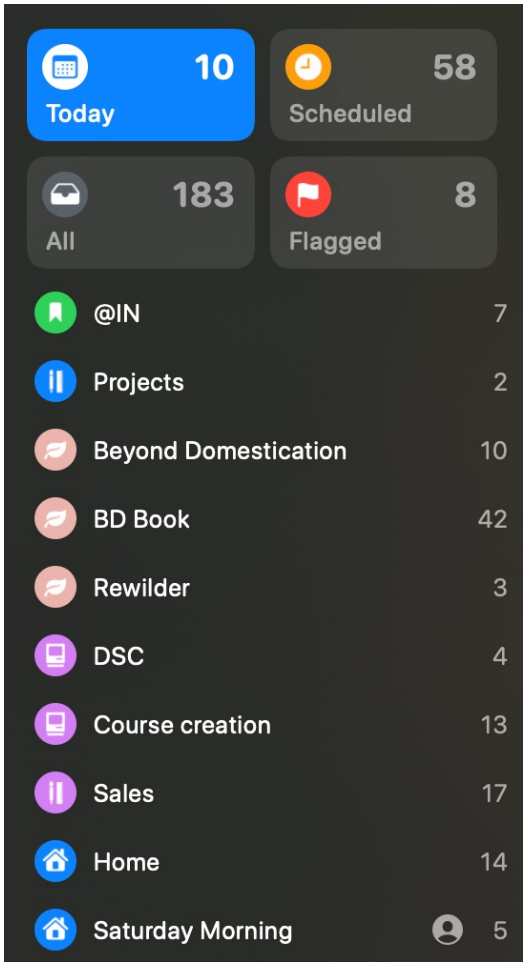
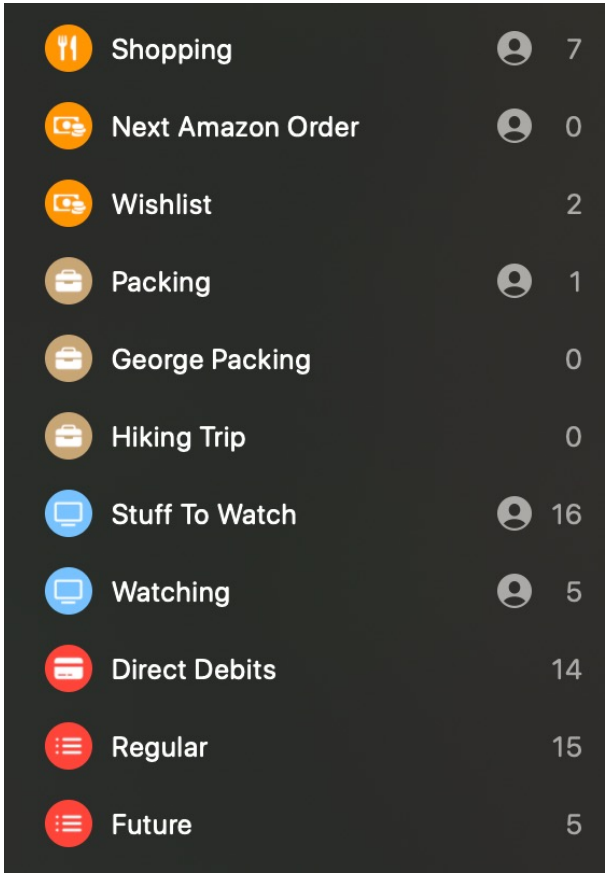
Use a to-do list?





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Combine home and work?

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Final step

Close the window / app

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Good practice

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What is important is seldom urgent, and what is urgent is seldom important.

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When you check your email, will define your productivity.

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Do not touch emails more than once or twice.

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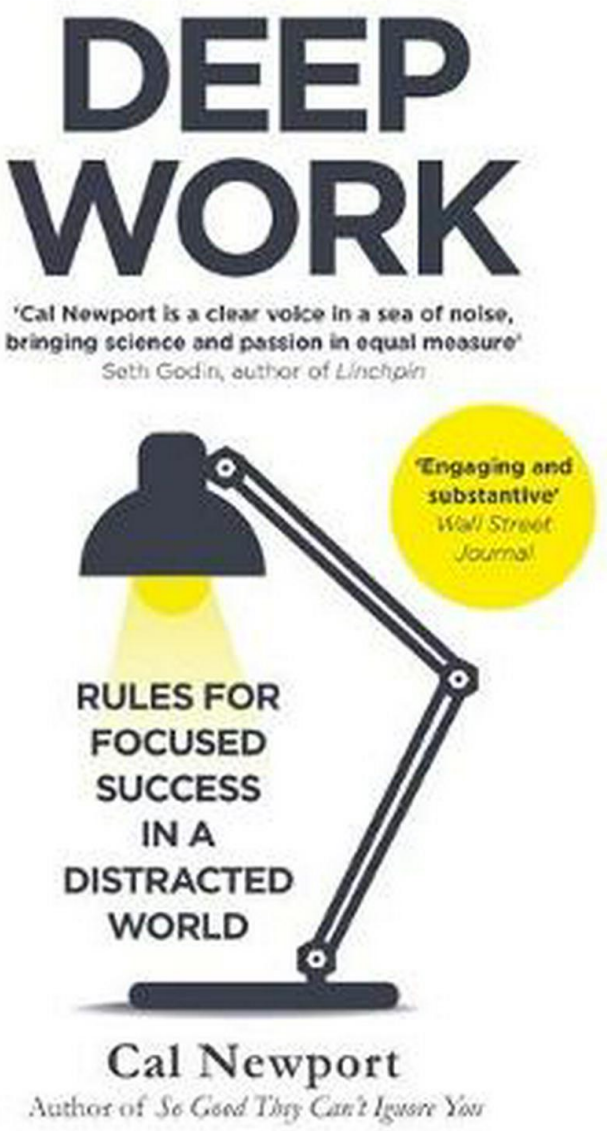
Clean out your digital office?



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Getting Things Done

the art of stress-free productivity

from the New York Times bestselling author

David Allen

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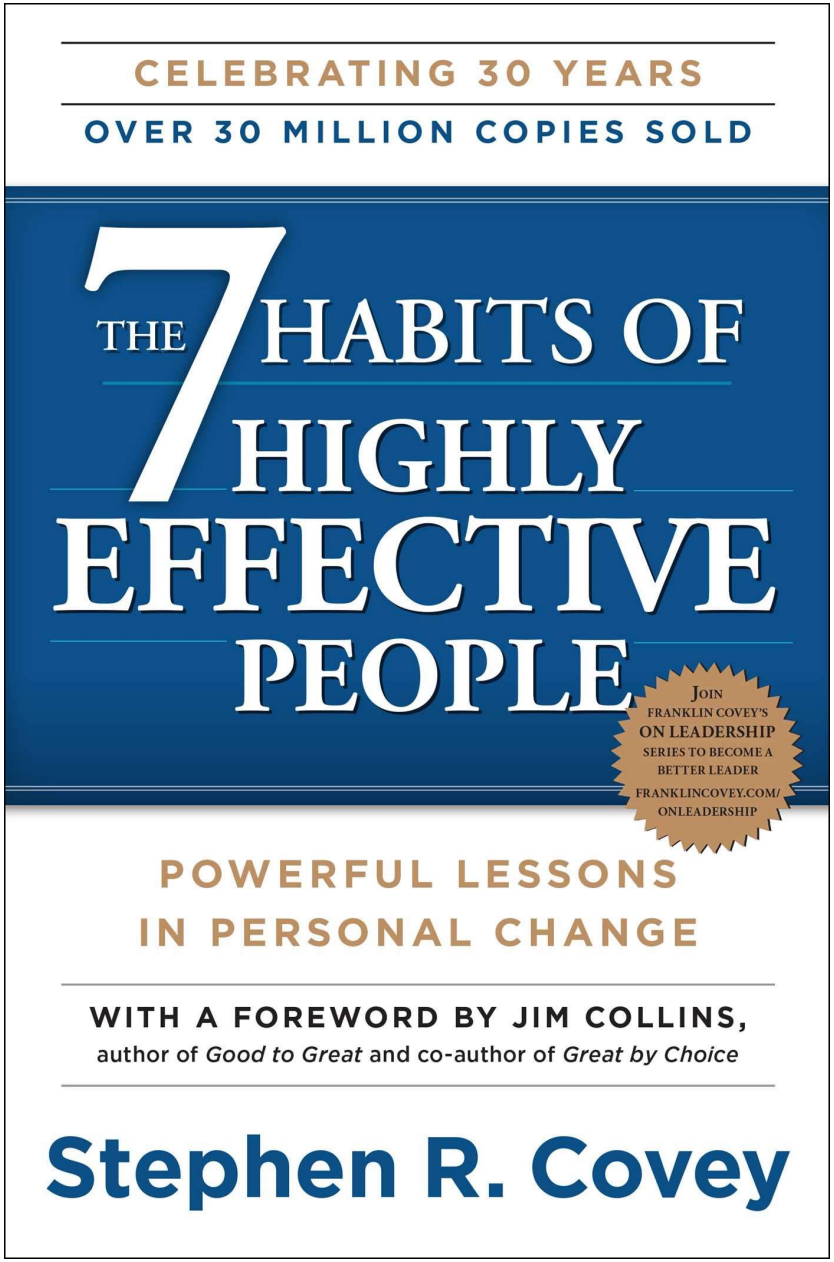

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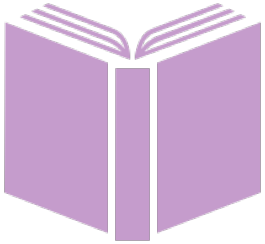

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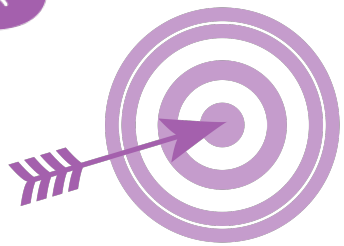

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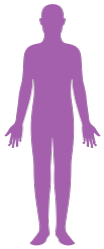

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Any questions?

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Thank you

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