

Personal Productivity with the Mac

"Getting Things Done"

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What is GTD?

"We need to transform all the 'stuff' we're trying to organize into actionable stuff we need to do."

"The key to managing your 'Stuff' is managing your actions."

- David Allen
- <http://www.davidco.com/>
- The concepts presented here are based upon some of his principles, but are also expansions by others, including myself, and using this ideology with Mac OS X.

- Check out Merlin's Website, chock-full of GTD-related information, ideas, and innovative Mac applications:

✿ <http://merlin.blogs.com/43folders/>

GTD Basics

5 Levels of Organization

- Collect
- Process
- Organize
- Review
- Act

Collection

- In-Box (Papers)
- Paper Collector (Notebook, Notecards)
- Electronic (PDA, Palm, etc.)
- Voice Recorders
- E-mail

The purpose of the collector is to gather what Allen terms “open loops”—ideas, tasks, responsibilities that are floating about in our lives, throughout our e-mails, and for some, stressing us out with days filled with too much to do and accomplish.

- **Inbox**—unread, unprocessed
- **Respond**—quick action
- **Action**—actionable, but takes longer
- **Hold**—short-lived reference
- **Waiting**—actions that are delegated
- **Archive**—reference, project-folders
- **Trash**—things you don’t need...

Needs for Collection

- Good-quality e-mail application
- Physical box
- Paper, notebook, cards, etc.
- File folders
- File cabinet, or File holder

Process-Organize

Work Flow

- http://www.davidco.com/tips_tools/tip32.html
- When you encounter something, determine if it is "actionable," or—is it something you can or need to deal with?

Actionable No...

- Then...
 - Eliminate it (Trash)
 - Incubate it (Someday-Maybe)
 - File it (for Reference)

It is “actionable”?

- **Great!** How does it fit in with your current projects?
 - Delegate it (waiting for list)
 - Next Actions (lists, folders, trays)
 - Quickie (do it now if it can be done quickly, i.e., less than 2 minutes)
 - Is it an appointment or fit a schedule?— Add it to your calendar...

Review

Weekly Review

- http://www.davidco.com/tips_tools2.php
- There are a number of steps you can take to review your work on a weekly basis...
- It all boils down to:
 - Organizing what you have accomplished;
 - Preparing for the week and tasks ahead;
 - Tidying up your organizational system.

When do I review?

- Planning time
- After School, Before School
- Fridays

Calendar Review

- Use an electronic calendar!
- Set up to-do lists to “tickle” the mind—these are responsibilities (actions) you have that require completion by a set date—called **ticklers**.
- Augment, and change your calendar during review—include notes about old events if you like, for reference.

Action

Action Items

- One of the keys to a GTD system is putting your tasks in new light: **establish a list of action items—in concrete, discreet terms**—that says what specifically you have to do, and what’s involved.
- **Organize these lists** by context—where you have to do them—as opposed to by project

Example Actions

- @Home
 - call Time Magazine at 1-800-665-5555 to cancel subscription of *Time* by end of the month.
- @Desk
 - make 50 photocopies of science worksheets for Wednesday’s lesson.

Example Lists

- @Waiting For...
- @Home
- @Classroom
- @Meeting
- @Computer

Let's Review...

GTD = Workflow

- Get everything in a physical, or better, digital format that can be manipulated
- Organize content by its need for completion, or "action"
- Organize reference material by project
- Organize actions by "quickies," or into discreet steps in lists, or pass them along to others for delegation, or set-aside in a "someday/maybe" list

Workflow = Worryfree

- Scale your organization model into your physical work environment (inbox, files),
- and your Digital environment (folders, e-mail, productivity tools)

Digital Organization

- Starting a GTD-inspired workflow may start best in the digital realm—it's simply easier to begin organization with software tools fit for the task...
- Use the conclusion of each week to collect together new ideas—open loops—and set actions for the week and days to come.

The End