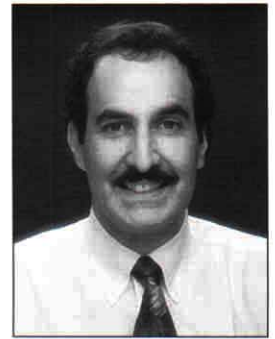


CONDITIONING YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT



By JEFF DAVIDSON

Life is a desk. To prehistoric man, life was a spear and fire. To the frontiersman, life was a rifle. Today, especially to entrepreneurs, life is a desk. Your desk has to be a comfortable place for you. What does it say if your desk is a continuing mess? You met the din, and the din won.

The quality and ambience of your work space works best when it demonstrates the quality and ambience of your life or how you would like your life to be. What do you want and need on your desk, in it, and near it? It varies for each of us.

Suggested for the top of your desk:

- Electronic desktop publishing equipment
- Clear, open space
- Telephone or communication device
- Items used frequently

Periodically assess different items that support your desktop arrangement, such as computer trays, hanging lamps, and swivel mechanisms to conveniently move equipment as needed.

To create more surface space, you could create a mechanical arm that hoists your PC monitor over the desk. It swings forward and back, and left and right. I have one and don't know how I lived without it.

One of the benefits of product overload is that you can find exactly the item you need or want to make you feel more comfortable and be more productive at your desk.

Whatever the item, as you begin reaping the benefits, you will quickly forget the cost. Would you give up your fax machine to get the money back?

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Joe Sugarman, in his book, *Success Forces*, explains that by clearing your desk every evening, you automatically have to choose what to work on the next day. Though such reasoning is contrary to the advice of "time management" experts, I wholeheartedly endorse it. It is a discipline that yields a marvelous sense of breathing space with which to start each day.

Every evening after you've cleared your desk, acknowledge yourself for what you accomplished that day. Don't beat yourself up for what you didn't do. You're doing the best you can. If you can do better, you will, maybe not at once, but soon enough.

Use the end of the day, slow periods, or periods of low personal

energy to revamp your files, keep your desk orderly, and better prepare yourself for high octane output when you're ready to get started again.

What else do you need? I keep a pitcher of water nearby. For me, dehydration, more than anything else is the major grounds for low productivity. In half of the cases when you think you're tired, you're really only thirsty.

To create my own workout, I keep some items on the far end of the my desk so that I have to reach to use them.

Fresh air: You may need two desks. "Two desks?" I am not suggesting that the solution to the clutter that you face is more filling and desk space. Indeed, more space is seldom the answer to being better organized. You may need the second desk, or clear surface area to do creative work, if your present desk is primarily an administrative outpost.

Administrative outposts are useful and necessary for coexisting with the din. Yet, often they are not conducive to ground-breaking tasks, original thinking or emergency projects.

What about inside your desk?—Include frequently needed supplies, but remember: a desk is not a supply cabinet. Maintain a drawer of personal items—your desk is there to support you. Tissues and Velamints are okay.

Include any needed forms or heavily used items, but leave a 20 percent vacancy. To manage the "beforehand" means reserving space

