

**"Give Shannon McGinnis just 10 minutes
and your office will thank you forever!"**
—Peter Walsh: Professional Organizer from
OWN's hit series *Enough Already!*



MINUTE TIDY

108 Ways to Organize Your **Office** Quickly

SHANNON MCGINNIS, CPO®

The 10-Minute Tidy: 108 Ways to Organize Your Office Quickly

Shannon McGinnis

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Second Edition

Getting Started

Most of us have not been taught how to handle all of the paper and electronic information that bombards us every day. My clients often feel embarrassed by their overwhelm, and are frustrated that they don't know how to be more organized.

Take a deep breath, release your stress, and know that you now have quick, simple solutions right in front of you!

The 108 Tips in this book are written so that you can take just a couple of minutes to read one short tip and then have 10 minutes to implement that suggestion. That's the beauty of this book: each 10-Minute Tidy tip focuses your attention on just one task at a time. Why? It has been proven that you are more productive when you are more focused. You will be amazed that you get more done in your office and spend less time doing it.

It is my intention that the following 108 Tips offer you fast, simple solutions for increasing your efficiency and productivity at the office. Take a look at the table of contents and see where you want to get started.

Your Office: The Big Picture

Your office is whatever area you have designated as a place for you to have a computer and get things done. Now, for some this may be a counter in the kitchen, a comfortable chair and table in the living room, a designated room in your home, or a place outside of your home. For the office space outside of your home, you may have a specific office that's your own private room, a cubicle, or you may have the traveling office where you work from various locations. No matter where your office is located, you need to have it be a place of productivity, where you can concentrate, and be able to accomplish designated tasks.

Before launching into specific tips and suggestions, take a moment to visualize your office. How does it look and feel to you? What do you like about it? What would you change? Realize that having more space may not be the solution. You can learn to function more efficiently with less space by implementing the solutions in this book.

Tip 1: Your Office is Your Business

Whether you work for yourself or work for a huge corporation, your office is your business. It reflects who you are, how you work, and gives others an immediate impression. Be sure that you take responsibility for your office and all that it represents. Take the time to look at it objectively, or ask a friend or coworker who can offer you an honest opinion on what your office says about you.

You can choose personal items that reflect your friends and family, hobbies and outside interests. Also choose items that are inspirational and motivating. Whatever you choose as decorations for your office, make sure that they are workplace appropriate as well as uplifting. Take the time right now to remove anything that no longer represents who you are right now. Get rid of files you are no longer working on; they can be archived. Be sure to only have vibrant plants and flowers. Look at your desk chair. Are you sitting in a chair that is either too big or too small for you when you are running your own business? Having the proper support under you is just as important as what you surround yourself with.

Also, does your office have enough light? Are there noisy overhead lights, or do you have a desktop lamp that offers enough light when working on specific tasks? Give yourself all the light you need to feel awake and productive in your office.

Tip 2: Set Up Your Business

If you are very new to starting your own business or becoming part of an established business, take time to set things up in ways that best support your productivity.

If you are just starting your own business, take the time right now to obtain the required federal, state, and local licenses or permits and ID numbers your particular type of business needs. Do you need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS? Take 10 minutes right now to do some research, download the forms, or fill out the forms you have had sitting on your desk.

Be sure to have phone and Internet lines up and running at your new office prior to moving anything there. If you're changing your phone number, be sure to get that - as well as your new address - out to your most important contacts.

If you are joining established business, take the time to read the orientation manual if there is one. Learn about any confidentiality, PR, or safety concerns the company may have.

Tip 3: What is a Visitor's First Impression?

When people come to your office, what is their first impression? Would they even be able to find your office? Do you need signs as to which door or room your office is in? When you are out of your office, do you redirect people to call your cell phone? First impressions are important, so it is imperative that others are able to easily find you.

Once people find your office, what do they see? Do they see your cluttered desk or do they see the beautiful artwork and orchids you have in your office? Do they see the back of your head or are you able to look up and greet them? View your office with beginner's mind or ask a friend or colleague to give you an honest first impression. If you share mutual respect, they may be able to offer you their perspective and perhaps some good advice on how to improve your office. The 108 tips in this book will also provide you with easy to implement solutions for decreasing stress, increasing productivity, and becoming more organized in your office.

Tip 4: Planning the Space in Your Office

Efficient use of space in your office can greatly increase your productivity and how well you get things done. Whether your office is small or large, your immediate work surface and what surrounds you and your computer affects how well you will be able to concentrate and actually accomplish specific tasks.

If you have a large room for an office, there are online space planning websites that will allow you to move furniture around visually to determine the best location for each piece. Two free websites I recommend for space planning are: icovia.com and floorplanner.com. By looking at both 2D and 3D floor plans of your office, you will be able to determine the best location for your furniture and equipment. You may be surprised how helpful this is.

For example, depending on the location of doors and windows, I would encourage you to place your desk in a way that enables you to see the door to the room as well as being able to look up from your computer screen and refocus your eyes out a window. The following tip talks more specifically about locating your desk in the empowerment position.

Whether you are in a cubicle and don't have a choice of which way your desk faces, or you are rearranging your office floor plan, you will want to consider which side of your desk your printer, phone and files are on, depending upon whether you are primarily right or left handed. Creating an efficient workflow of papers and projects into and out of your office enables you to better concentrate and therefore accomplish more.

Tip 5: Your Desk in the Empowerment Position

I believe in the principles of Feng Shui. Whether you believe in the principles or not doesn't matter— putting your desk in the empowerment position will still benefit you! The empowerment position will have you facing the door of the office when you are sitting at your desk. Ideally you would have a solid wall behind you and if your office has windows, it's great to be able to look outside. In this way, you are in the command position in the room.

Along with the position of your desk, consider the desk itself. Do you love it? Does it command respect? If you are running a business from a student-sized desk, what message are you sending your clients and/or coworkers? It's important to have an appropriate size desk that suits you, that it offers the space and storage that you need, and allows you to be in the empowered position in the room.

Tip 6: Your Office Chair

Yes, a 10-minute tip on the importance of your office chair. It will only take you a couple of minutes to read this but then you may want to take the time to evaluate how well your office chair fits you, your desk, and the position you are holding in your business.

If your office chair is too big or not at the proper height for your body, you could be doing damage to your wrists, shoulders, and neck. There are three contact areas at your workstation that will affect your posture: the seat, the work surface, and the floor. To ensure the most comfortable posture possible, two of these factors have to be adjustable. An adjustable chair allows you to have the proper relationship between your feet being firmly on the ground and to also have your wrists above your desktop or keyboard. Consider having an ergonomic consultant come in and evaluate your chair, desk, and body relationship if you are experiencing pain after sitting at your desk for hours.

Be sure to stretch at least once an hour so that you reduce the repetitive strain on your body. Here are simple stretches you can do right at your desk:

Wrist Stretch: Extend arm in front, palm up and grab the fingers with other hand. Gently pull the fingers towards you to stretch the forearm, holding for 20-30 seconds. Repeat on the other side.

Lower Back Stretch: Sit tall and place the left arm behind left hip. Gently twist to the left, using the right hand to deepen the stretch, holding for 20-30 seconds. Repeat on the other side.

When considering the size of your office chair, also evaluate the type of chair you are using. How does it make you feel? What does it represent to you? Just as important as your desk, you want a chair that commands respect. You want to feel in control of whatever aspect of business you are conducting while you are sitting in that chair. Be sure to choose a chair with a solid back.

Tip 7: What Are You Holding Onto?

We are still looking at the big picture of your office. Take 10 minutes right now to ask yourself what you are holding onto that may no longer serve the best and highest good for you, your business, or your company. Do you have old furniture that you don't like? Do you have client files for people that have passed on? Do you have plants in there that should be composted?

What are you holding onto that is holding you back? I bet you could eliminate or replace at least 5 items that are no longer at the high vibration you are wanting to project, attract, and create in your office. Take the time to remove or replace these items, donate what you can, shred what you must, and get rid of the rest.

I am a firm believer that clearing clutter in your office brings in new energy to help you and your business grow and prosper.

Set an intention for personal and professional growth!

If you enjoyed these 7 tips, consider purchasing the 10-Minute Tidy: 108 Ways to Organize Your Office Quickly! 10minutetidy.com

About the Author

Shannon McGinnis is a Certified Professional Organizer, author, and consultant. Shannon founded Organized 4 Success, Inc. in 2003 and her company is dedicated to simplifying the way people organize their homes and offices.

As one of the nations first Certified Professional Organizers, Shannon offers her clients expert advice on a variety of topics such as space management, time management, and general organizing principles.

She has been featured on Oprah XM radio, NPR, and is a popular speaker around the country.

Visit her online at 10minutetidy.com and organized4success.com. There are more organizing resources available for you on these websites.

