# Instructors Guide

On the following pages is a sample module from our Instructor Guide. It provides the instructor with a copy of the material and a Lesson Plans box.

The key benefit for the trainer is the Lesson Plan box. It provides a standardized set of tools to assist the instructor for each lesson. The Lesson Plan box gives an estimated time to complete the lesson, any materials that are needed for the lesson, recommended activities, and additional points to assist in delivering the lessons such as Stories to Share and Delivery Tips.
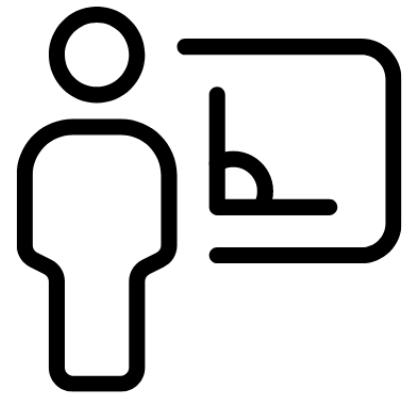
## Module Two: Remove the Clutter

One of the hardest parts about getting organized is sifting through and getting rid of the things that cause distractions and take up space. When you find yourself among the stacks and piles of stuff and items, it can seem overwhelming. By taking it one step at a time, and remembering to breathe, you can begin to de-clutter your life and start on the path to successful organization.

## Just Do it

Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed about taking on the task of removing our clutter and tend to make excuses as to why it doesn't get done. We can claim that we don't have the time, or that there is too much to do at once. But as Nike says, we have to "Just Do It" and we have to throw away our excuses and dive in. Make a plan on how you can get started, such as making a 'cleaning calendar' or choosing an area to start on. Stick with your plan until the job is complete, and don't let the same excuses hinder your success.

Helpful tips:

- Make a calendar with time to clean

- Divide the areas that need to be conquered

- Make a list of tasks

- Decide where items go beforehand

| Estimated Time | 10 minutes |
|---|---|
| Topic Objective | Learning to get started on removing clutter |
| Topic Summary | Just Do It<br><br>Identify the excuses we make for not cleaning clutter and how we can overcome them. |
| Materials Required | Worksheet 1-My Excuses |
| Planning Checklist | None |
| Recommended Activity | Complete the worksheet individually. Share your ideas with the rest of the class. |
| Stories to Share | Share any relevant personal stories or ideas. |
| Delivery Tips | Encourage everyone to participate. |
| Review Questions | Why is it important to "Just Do It" with your clutter? |

## You Don't Have to Keep Everything

You know who you are – the person that exclaims *"I have to keep [this] because I might need it later!"*

In reality, we can throw away over half of our saved documents or items without feeling a sense of withdrawal or consequence. The decision to keep everything can drive us to make inappropriate choices with organization and contributes to more clutter. We can break that thought pattern by examining what we are holding on to and by realizing we can't live by the *'what ifs'* an item may have. Go through your clutter and clarify how it is useful to you right now and get rid of anything that doesn't have a clear purpose. Once you have removed the items you don't need or have use for, you are no longer wasting time on useless clutter, but are developing better organization for the things you did keep.

Ask yourself:

- Am I going to use this in the near future?

- When was the last time I needed this?

- If I keep this, where does it belong?

| Estimated Time | 10 minutes |
|---|---|
| Topic Objective | Learning to let go of clutter |
| Topic Summary | You Don't Have to Keep Everything<br><br>Examine your current clutter and learn to 'let go' of unnecessary items |
| Materials Required | Worksheet 2-What Do I Keep? |
| Planning Checklist | None |
| Recommended Activity | Complete the worksheet individually. Voluntarily share your answers with the rest of the class. |
| Stories to Share | Share any relevant stories or ideas. |
| Delivery Tips | Encourage everyone to participate. Take note that many may not respond since answers may be personal. |
| Review Questions | What is one way we can determine if we need to keep something? |

## Three Boxes: Keep, Donate, and Trash



The most common approach to clearing out clutter is the Three Boxes method. This method forces a decision to be made about each item you touch as you go through your clutter. You don't get to put it aside or come back to it later. Pick up an item, one at a time, and think about which box it should go in. Try not to release the item until a decision is made.

- **Box 1 – Items to Keep:** This box is for items you would like to keep or maybe even put away for safe keeping (such as heirlooms or special gifts). This is not to be confused with the *'things I might need later'* type of thinking. Only keep items that have value and meaning to you.

- **Box 2 – Items to Donate:** This box is for items that you realize you no longer need or want. Items in this box can be donated or sold at a rummage sale, just as long as it leaves the clutter!

- **Box 3 – Trash:** This box is for the things that you do not need or want and cannot be donated or given away. This often includes old papers or documents, mail, or broken items. Once this box is full or complete, remove it from the area right away and don't give it a second look.

| Estimated Time | 10 minutes |
|---|---|
|  |  |

| Topic Objective | Determining how to sort the clutter |
| --- | --- |
| Topic Summary | Three Boxes: Keep, Donate, and Trash<br><br>Learn to individually review clutter items and realize how they should be sorted. |
| Materials Required | Various household items |
| Planning Checklist | Bring in a box of random household items, such as stuffed toys, office supplies, or kitchen gadgets. Leave them in the box until ready for the presentation. |
| Recommended Activity | Pull an item out of the box and ask the class to determine which of the three boxes it should go in. Listen as the class responds with different answers. Do the same thing with the other items. Then discuss how each person bases their answer on different reasons and how one item (such as a stuffed bunny) can mean something different to someone else. Emphasize why it is important to look individually at our clutter and decide where it goes. |
| Stories to Share | Share any relevant personal stories for this section. |
| Delivery Tips | Encourage everyone to participate. |
| Review Questions | How can the Three Boxes method be customized to each person? |

## A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place



One factor that contributes to our clutter is where we decide to keep it. When something is not in its proper place, everything else can seem chaotic and disorganized. While we are thinking about where things need to go, think about what the item(s) is/are and where it/they would be best suited. This may require refreshing your memory and searching for every available open space that can be used. No matter the amount of stuff you plan to keep, once it has found its proper place in your office, it will no longer be in the way of your attempts to organize your space.

Ask yourself:

- What do I need to put here/there?

- Where would this be best suited?

- Will it be in my way/contribute to clutter there?

| | |
|---|---|
| **Estimated Time** | 5 minutes |
| **Topic Objective** | Finding a place for your kept items and how they fit in your office. |
| **Topic Summary** | A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place

Realize the importance of proper placement of your belongings. |
| **Materials Required** | Flip chart/ Dry erase board, markers |
| **Planning Checklist** | None |
| **Recommended Activity** | Discuss with the group how various items are kept at work and how they are can affect our organization (such as-archived records *do not* go in the active records drawer because why?). Review the effect of having the right item in the right place and how it impacts our organizational skills. Take suggestions from the group and write them on the flip chart or dry erase board. |
| **Stories to Share** | Share any relevant personal stories. |
| **Delivery Tips** | Encourage everyone to participate. |
| **Review Questions** | What does A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place essentially mean to our organization plans? |

## Practical Illustration

Stacy decided she would spend her Saturday afternoon clearing out the clutter that has built up in the family den. She knew she had put it off for too long, and decided this would be the best time. She took her three boxes marked Keep, Donate, and Trash and began picking up items one by one. As she picked up old papers and broken toys, she knew it was an easy decision to throw these things away. But then Stacy started to find old keepsakes lying around, including her children's old clothing and photo albums. Her immediate thought was to put them away; until she remembered that it isn't necessary to keep everything and that she can, and will, have to part with some things.

By the end of the afternoon, Stacy had managed fill a donation box with items she knew she no longer needed or wanted. She also threw away several boxes of garbage. When she was left with just the items she wanted to keep, she had no trouble organizing everything and finding a permanent place for it all.

# Module Two: Review Questions

1.) What is one reason we do not remove our clutter?

   a) We make excuses
   b) We like how it looks
   c) We find it convenient for our stuff
   d) We wait for someone else to do it

   One of the main reasons we do not act on removing our clutter is that we make excuses and delay taking actions to correct the problem.

2.) What is one way we can "Just Do It" with our clutter?

   a) Move it all to another room
   b) Put it off for a better time
   c) Work on one area at a time
   d) Make someone else clean it up

   By working on one area at a time, we are actively attacking the clutter problem without letting it overwhelm us.

3.) Why do we commonly feel as though we need to keep something?

   a) We like the color
   b) We need it to keep it for a friend
   c) We want to donate it to someone
   d) We might need it later

   The most common reason we keep something and contribute to our clutter is because we think we will need it at a later time, and thus feel less reluctant to just let it go.

4.) In general, we only need about _____ of the items we keep.

   a) All
   b) Half
   c) One quarter
   d) None

   Generally, we need about one half of the items or papers that we keep or tell ourselves we need to keep, which causes use to accumulate more clutter.

5.) What is an advantage of the Three Box approach?

    a)  It is the fastest method of cleaning
    b)  It can be done with a friend
    c)  It forces a quick decision
    d)  It increases our charity donations

The Three Boxes approach forces us to make a quick decision about an item, which keeps us from dwelling on our 'ifs' or 'buts' and focuses and what needs to be done.

6.) What is a disadvantage of the Three Box approach?

    a)  It can be time consuming
    b)  It forces us to get rid of our stuff
    c)  It can be boring
    d)  It can be overwhelming

The Three Boxes approach can take a lot of our free time to do since we have to stop and examine each object individually, depending on the amount of clutter we have to go through.

7.) If items are not in a proper place, they can make the area seem _____.

    a)  Friendly
    b)  Cluttered
    c)  Inviting
    d)  Eccentric

When we have stuff or items that have not been put in a proper place or stored correctly, they can make the area seem cluttered and disorganized. When we put these items away properly, it improves our organization.

8.) What is one suggestion when discovering a proper place for things?

    a)  Throw older items away
    b)  Stack items on top of each other to make room
    c)  Try to store everything in one room
    d)  Evaluate available storage spaces

When finding a place for everything in our office, a good suggestion is to go through and evaluate the available storage space you have, including closets, shelves, etc. Once we know what area we have available to us, we can better assess where our things can belong.

9.) When you find yourself among the stacks and piles of stuff and items, it can seem _____.

    a) Fun
    b) Exciting
    c) Overwhelming
    d) All of the above

When you find yourself among the stacks and piles of stuff and items, it can seem overwhelming.

10.) Which of the following is a helpful tip when trying to organize?

    a) Decide where everything goes
    b) Make a calendar
    c) Make a list
    d) All of the above

Helpful tips: Make a calendar with time to clean - Divide the areas that need to be conquered - Make a list of tasks - Decide where items go beforehand

# PowerPoint Slides

Below you will find the PowerPoint sample. The slides are based on and created from the Instructor Guide. PowerPoint slides are a great tool to use during the facilitation of the material; they help to focus on the important points of information presented during the training.
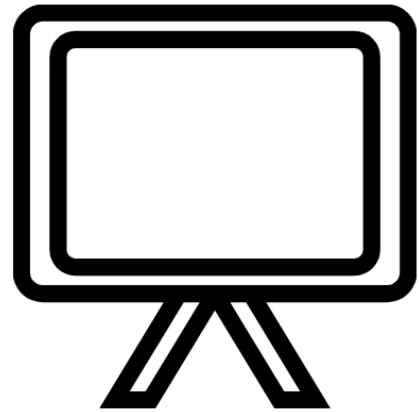
> *Out of clutter, find simplicity.*
>
> *Albert Einstein*

# Remove the Clutter

By taking it one step at a time, and remembering to breathe, you can begin to de-clutter your life and start on the path to successful organization.

## Just Do It

- Make a calendar with time to clean
- Make a list of tasks
- Decide where items go beforehand

## You Don't Have to Keep Everything

- Am I going to use this in the near future?

- When was the last time I needed this?

- If I keep this, where does it belong?

# Three Boxes: Keep, Donate, and Trash

Items to Keep

Items to Donate

Trash

# A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place

- What do I need to put here/there?

- Will it be in my way/contribute to clutter there?

## Practical Illustration

- Just Do It
- You Don't Have to Keep Everything
- Three Boxes: Keep, Donate, and Trash
- A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place

## Module Two: Review Questions

1. What is one reason we do not remove our clutter?

A. We make excuses

B. We like how it looks

C. We find it convenient for our stuff

D. We wait for someone else to do it

# Quick Reference Sheets

Below is an example of our Quick Reference Sheets. They are used to provide the participants with a quick way to reference the material after the course has been completed. They can be customized by the trainer to provide the material deemed the most important. They are a way the participants can look back and reference the material at a later date.

They are also very useful as a take-away from the workshop when branded. When a participant leaves with a Quick Reference Sheet it provides a great way to promote future business.

# Organizational Skills
## Quick Reference Sheet

## Divide Tasks

Now that you've made a list and categorized all of the things you want to accomplish, it can seem overwhelming or even intimidating to get started. But by dividing tasks into smaller groups of things to do, you will feel more empowered to get them done. Tasks can be divided any way that is convenient, such as things to do for one particular project or maybe even things to do that involve going through papers. They key is to find what combination works for you.

### Helpful hints:

➢ Sort tasks by each specific project

➢ Decide what tasks can be done the fastest

➢ Determine what tasks will need more time
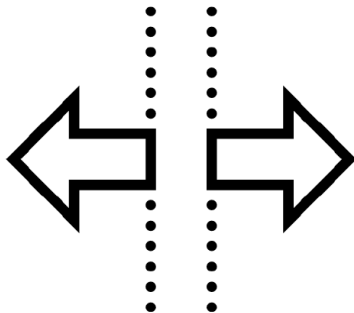
## Plan for Tomorrow, Today

If you're waiting for the beginning of the following day to start your organization plan, chances are you are already headed to disorganization. Start today and make a plan for what you want to do in your life, including on a daily, weekly, monthly and even a yearly basis. When you determine what you want (such as becoming more organized!), you can make plans today to reach those goals in the future. Make a to-do list and plan a time to tackle it, instead of waiting for the 'urge' to do it, as that may never come. Make plans to motivate yourself and plan rewards for productive behaviors. Set deadlines for yourself and stick to them. When we plan ahead and manage our time effectively, the stress and anxiety of becoming more organized will feel much lighter and a lot less like a chore.

### Tips:

➢ Make short- and long-term to-do lists.

➢ Plan ways to execute each list.

➢ Find ways to keep yourself motivated to stay on task.

➢ Don't forget to plan deadlines or plan to meet those already in place.

## Only Have Current Projects on Your Desk

You may have a variety of stacks of papers and projects on your desk, but the key is in knowing what is in them. Keep your desk more organized by only keeping projects that you are currently working on, in your work area. Projects that you have finished should be filed away in the appropriate place, while projects that you haven't yet started should not be in the work area until you do. Having these projects in sight with your current projects can cause confusion and a lack of focus on unimportant details. Stay focused on current projects by keeping them on your immediate desk area.

**Questions to ask yourself when keeping projects on your desk:**

➤ When does this need to be finished?

➤ Is it something that can be completed later?

➤ Has this already been completed?

# Handouts

Each course is provided with a wide range of worksheets.
Worksheets help check your participants' understanding. If a lesson calls for a worksheet, it will be listed in the Lesson Plan box under Materials Required. All worksheets are customizable and can be found in the Appendix of the Instructor Guide and the Training Manual.

As a trainer, icebreakers give your participants the opportunity to get to know each other better or simply begin the training session on a positive note. Icebreakers promote collaboration, increase engagement, and make your training more light-hearted and fun. Below is an example from the Icebreakers folder.
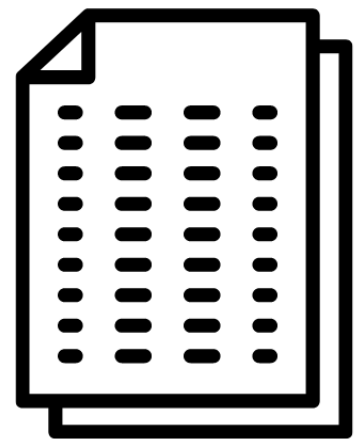
**Sample Worksheet 1**

# *My Excuses*

Using the spaces below, identify what excuses you use that keep you from cleaning out your clutter. Then decide what action you can take to overcome those excuses.

Excuse:

_____

Solution:

_____

Excuse:

_____

Solution:

_____

Excuse:

_____

Solution:

_____

Excuse:

_____

Solution:

_____

**Sample Worksheet 2**

# *What Do I Keep?*

Thinking back to what we've learned in this section, review what clutter you have kept at either your home or at work.  In the space provided, determine if you have items you don't *have* to keep and what you can do to help clear some of the excess clutter out.

Clutter at Home:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Clutter at Work:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

# Icebreaker: Categories

**PURPOSE**
To help participants get to know each other.

**MATERIALS REQUIRED**

None

**PREPARATION**

Prepare a list of categories, such as:

1. Favorite color

2. Favorite season

3. Number of siblings

4. Astrological sign

5. Shoe size

6. Favorite subject in school

- 

**ACTIVITY**

Ask participants to stand. Explain that you are going to ask them to arrange themselves by different categories. For example, you might say, "What is your favorite color?" Participants will look for other people who share their favorite color and form groups. Once everyone is in a group, ask the groups to identify themselves. Repeat the activity with four or five different categories.

# Certificate of Completion

Every course comes with a Certificate of Completion where the participants can be recognized for completing the course. It provides a record of their attendance and to be recognized for their participation in the workshop.
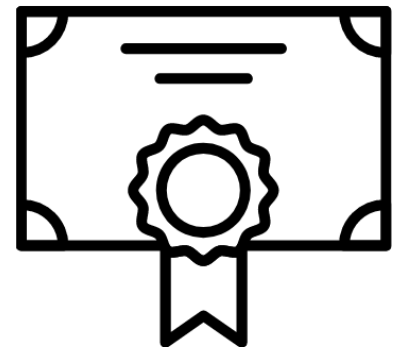
# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

## [Name]

*Has mastered the course*
**Organizational Skills**

Awarded this _____ day of _____ e _____, 20 _____

_____

Presenter Name and Title