



Do some mental de-cluttering and identify those 5-minute jobs

Here is a brain dump and mental de-clutter exercise to free up your mind, get some order, and get on with what you have to do.

This is all about bandwidth; about writing things down so you don't spend time worrying you will forget about them; and it's about getting rid of the guilt of not getting things done, because you now have a plan to get them finished.

Caveat: This is going to take more than five minutes, but will, I assure you, be very cathartic. I give some indications of timing - but just take the time you need.

Step 1: Set yourself a timer for 15 minutes and during that time list down below everything you have going on in your head, and all the things you have to do.

Step 2: Go through the list of things and identify those things that have been on your to do list for at least six months (10 minutes).

For each of those things, think about them and ask yourself "is this really something that I need to do?"

If it is, work out when you can get it done and off your to do list.

If it isn't something you really have to do, let's get ruthless - you haven't got to doing this in the last six months, what are the real chances you will ever get to it.

So, give yourself permission to just take it off the list. That's right, go through that list and score those "I aint never going to get to them" jobs.

Step 3: Identify the jobs on your list that are small, precise and would take less than five minutes, and move these to a separate list of five-minute jobs (10 minutes).

We do this exercise to identify the small manageable things that can be done easily and then you can mark as done. This is a great thing to do to feel back in control and able to move on with things.

Step 4: Go through the list again and simply prioritize what needs doing when and work out when you are going to get them done (10 minutes).