

## Quick Guide: Never forget a thing

Except of course, the knot in your hankie! If you have a sea of Post-it Notes® all around you, a pile of papers you have to deal with at some point and a constant feeling that there is something you have forgotten, you are probably being distracted and less productive. So here are the **top ten tips**, including the three golden rules, to help you set up, use and trust your bring forward system:

- 1. If you prefer paper** set up a concertina file, suspended files or ring binder with plastic wallets. You will need sections 1 to 31 (days of the month) and 1 to 12 (months of the year).
- 2. For every reminder, task or chase-up**, make a note in your diary (paper or electronic) and put the reminder papers or papers to work on in the relevant section or wallet (by this month's date or by month).
- 3. If you prefer to use your computer**, scan your papers and attach them to your electronic task list or diary, on the date when you will deal with them.
- 4. Don't use Post-it Notes!** They can too easily be lost, blown away or attached to something else. Make a note in your bring forward system instead.
- 5. If you must use Post-it Notes**, make sure they are electronic ones on your desktop. (Windows One Note, or Stickies™ (from Zhorn Software) are a couple of examples.) You can drag these to your calendar, file them, email them and move them from date to date. So versatile and very useful!
- 6. The paper version of a bring forward system** is also a useful storage tool for items that would otherwise clog up space on your desk, for example travel tickets, booking confirmations, meeting agendas, etc. Just put them into the date section for when you will need them.
- 7. Rule No 1:** The bring forward system **must** be looked at every day. You can then use the contents to schedule tasks and plan your day.
- 8. Rule No 2:** Others must know how it works and have access to it (paper/electronic) in case of absence or emergency.
- 9. Rule No 3:** Make it your only reminder system. Get into the habit of using the bring forward system instead of the array of reminders you currently have.
- 10. Ditch your disorganised pending tray.** Then you will have a clearer desk; things should not appear at the last minute; things will not be forgotten; and all your pending action will have been part-processed. How good is that?

**Compiled by Des Whitehorn**