



Action Programs

Becoming Exceptionally Well Organized

We all know how useful To-Do Lists are when we get started in our careers. However, To-Do Lists can quickly become overwhelmed when we take on responsibility for multiple projects – as many of us do when we become managers.

One of the problems is that, for most of us, our To-Do Lists are not planned, focused, action lists. Rather, they are a sort of a catch-all for a lot of things that are unresolved and not yet translated into outcomes. For instance, specific entries, such as "Call Tina in Sales," might exist along with vaguer aspirations, such as "Write marketing plan." Often, the real actionable details of what you have "to do" are missing.

Another problem is that once you have more than, say, 20 entries on your list, it becomes cumbersome and difficult to use. This means that you start missing key activities and commitments.

This is where Action Programs are useful. Action Programs are "industrial strength" versions of To-Do Lists, which incorporate short-, medium- and long-term goals. They help you to plan your time, without forgotten commitments coming in to blow your schedule apart. And, because they encourage you to think about your priorities properly, you can focus on the things that matter, and avoid frittering your time away on low value activities.