

Neapolitan

LIFESTYLE & CLASSIFIED

‘A clean desk equals a clear mind’



Get Organized

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When it comes to our personal surroundings, each of us has a distinct comfort level and sensitivity as to what makes us feel relaxed and at ease. Not surprisingly, as an inherently organized person, I’m most comfortable AND productive in a clutter-free, carefully curated and orderly environment.

In other words, if my desk is a mess, I can’t get a thing done!

← **MY SPACE**

Even if I didn’t organize people’s homes, offices and lives for a living, my office would still be the epitome of what I like to call “aesthetically refined.” My motto, which I am forever repeating to my clients, is simple, “A clean desk equals a clear mind.”



↑ **DESK**

I love my desk. It’s so me. I like the fact there are no drawers, and I love the tempered glass top, which reminds me of the glacier water coming off the French Alps. Clean lines. Spacious. Functional. Minimal. Modern.

I tried using a stand-up desk but found it difficult to use my laptop standing up. That being said, I do lots of design projects, as well as all of my editing, standing up at a drafting table, which I bought at a thrift store for \$10.

Premier Professional Organizer Marla Ottenstein offers expert residential and corporate professional organizing services. Licensed & Insured. Member: National Association of Productivity & Organizing Professionals (NAPO). Her column appears on the first Friday of each month. For more information: ProfessionalOrganizerFlorida.com or on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/ProfessionalOrganizerFlorida. Send questions about how to get and stay organized, to be addressed in future columns.



↑ **ERGONOMICS**

Function, form and comfort are paramount to my physical and mental well-being. Inspired by the visual and structural lines of a suspension bridge and designed to keep one’s spine in perfect alignment, my Herman Miller Sayl chair is one thing I can’t live without.

COMPUTER

For years, I was a PC, but now I’m a MAC. Unless I’m teaching a class or giving a presentation where I need my laptop, it stays in my office. Call me crazy, but I don’t trust “the cloud.” Part of my Sunday morning ritual is to back up all my devices — manually.

KNICKKNACKS

I confess to having a few (judiciously edited) knickknacks on my desk. My favorites include an antique stamp holder with a little dog holding a letter (a gift from a dear friend), a paperweight of a perfectly formed magnolia encased in blue glass (a gift from a favorite client/friend), a few family photos, and a repurposed candle jar filled with loads of ultra-fine point pens and pencils in every color imaginable.

← **LIGHTING**

One can never have enough light. I use a professional task light for working on the computer. For decoration, I have an elephant-shaped lamp. Someone once told me elephants symbolize power, wisdom and strength, but I just like the way it looks.



STORAGE

Upon seeing a photo of my office, my cousin Adam exclaimed, “Where do you keep all your stuff?” Since I don’t buy office supplies in bulk and don’t like clutter, everything fits just right in a closet where I’ve devised a simple storage system using wire shelving racks, a piece of white melamine as a tabletop and an assortment of labeled boxes and stackable letter trays.

← **PAPERWORK**

The few hard files I have are kept in a letter-sized rolling file cart (www.Container-Store.com). Paperwork for current projects, such as speaking engagements, pro-bono work, client projects and travel plans, is kept in a series of neatly arranged, clearly labeled plastic project folders, one folder per project.



← **CAN’T LIVE WITHOUT**

I simply cannot live without my Rolodex. A self-professed techie whose iPhone contacts are perfectly organized (of course they are), I have to admit not every contact is “iPhone-worthy.” I file business contacts by profession, not by last name or company. (i.e.: “R” for Realtor, “M” for moving companies and “E” for electrician).

