

Volume 09, Issue 12: Habits of Highly Organized People

I wanted to study about the habits of highly organized people to see if there are commonalities to my attributes of organization. I found out that most highly organized people were not born organized, they learnt the art. I think being organized is not something to be left for a few people who we presume were born that way, we all can benefit a great deal from making an effort to be a bit more organized.

Before we talk about what highly organized people have in common, let's consider some of the reasons why you should want to be more organized;

- o You will be more focused on what you want to achieve*
- o You will be able to prioritize your tasks*
- o You will be able to set and achieve your goals more efficiently*
- o You will manage your time more effectively*
- o You will work more economically*
- o You will be more productive and less stressed*
- o You will achieve more balance in your life and be more flexible*

Habits of Highly Organized People

Written by Lillian Chebosi
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o You might even have more energy and enthusiasm once you have achieved freedom from chaos

Highly organized people realize that like everybody else, they have a lot going on and it can be a real challenge to get in control and stay there. They therefore establish systems to govern how and when they do things. Here are some of the habits of highly organized people;

- ***They develop routines about when and how they do things***

Highly organized people create a set of routines for things they have to do every day or week. This helps them manage their time more effectively and saves them the mental effort of continual planning and rescheduling. They turn their important tasks into routines and fit the rest of their lives around them, and not the other way round. Highly organized people determine the best time to study, to have quiet time, to exercise, to socialize, to do house keeping, to relax and so forth, and establish routines for each. They develop morning and evening routines for their regular tasks and activities for a smooth flow of daily life.

- ***They write things down***

Highly organized people do not rely too much on their brains to store information. They understand that our memory is fallible, that things fade especially when we don't use them. When they want to remember something, highly organized people put it in a system that they trust. One that is not going to lose their data, is easily accessible, is easily searchable, and one that they can take with them wherever they go.

Do you sometimes come back from shopping to realize you forgot to purchase an item that you really needed to bring home? I maintain different lists on my phone, such as a grocery shopping list to record the things I need to remember to buy in addition to the standard milk and bread on my weekly grocery shopping errand. It's a running list that I delete from and add to every week whenever something I need to get comes to mind. I also maintain a meal prep list that I update every week with the different meals I want to make, a daily reminders list of the things I want to be sure to do in my day, a town list for what I need to remember to do or get when I make my rare trips to the city center, a house keeping list of what to do when, a list of movies I want to watch, so that when I sit down to relax with a movie or two, I don't lose time flipping through movies I may not enjoy, and so forth.

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- ***They respect the value of putting everything in its place***

Highly organized people have a place for everything and put everything back in its place after use. They give everything they have a home, so everything belongs somewhere and nothing is left lying around aimlessly. Books are put back in their assigned slots after each reading session, and they hardly have things scattered on their countertops. The few things on their countertops are there because the countertop is their purposefully assigned home. Everything I have has a home of sorts, a place where it belongs. Inside my hand bag or gym bag are a couple of mini bags that hold different things, such that everything or every set of like purpose things in the bag is first housed in its own bag.

- ***They keep a current and detailed to-do list***

It takes planning to be organized. Highly organized people work backwards by starting with their end goal and then determine what smaller steps it will take to get there. They keep lists for daily tasks as well as for longer term projects either on paper or digital devices. They give themselves deadlines to help get things done and crossed off the list. To eliminate paper clutter and to have everything in one place and with me wherever I am, I maintain all my lists digitally. My lists hold me accountable to myself. One of my lists is generated from my goals' action plans where I listed down daily, weekly, bi-weekly and monthly actions that pop up accordingly, before hand to remind me, and afterwards for me to cross each off the list once completed.

- ***They live by the mantra two is one, one is none***

Highly organized people have a backup of anything they use on a regular basis, especially if running out of that thing in the middle of their work will hamper the rest of their day or evening. If running out of something will cause an inconvenience in their lives, they make sure they have a backup for it. That way they can use the backup, go on with their day and then replace it when it is convenient for them to do so. I don't want to have to run out to the gas station in the middle of a cooking episode, so I have two gas cylinders. When one runs out I have it refilled soon after as I use the spare. I always have an extra packet of flour and everything else.

- ***They toss things daily and purge routinely***

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Highly organized people regularly declutter and get rid of things they don't need. They don't wait for a free weekend or an open block of time to get themselves and their lives in order. They constantly cross things off their lists and throw things away, re-evaluate what they own and tidy up their spaces and the way they operate. They may take a few minutes each day to get rid of expired food from the fridge, tidy up their desk or wardrobe, and delete old files and emails. To them, organizing is not a separate event, it's part of their day. I delete old emails every day, and I never need to set aside time to do a major tidying up of my wardrobe because I keep it tidy day by day.

- ***They don't spend more time and energy than they have to on organization***

Organization is a means to an end. Highly organized people are deliberate about the things they accumulate, what they buy and what they choose to keep. They are careful to buy only the things that bring them value, joy and utility. They don't pick up things that aren't useful to them and end up cluttering their space. They understand that the more they own, the more energy and time they have to spend maintaining them and keeping them organized. Whenever someone is trying to sell me something I didn't set out to buy, I often pose the question, "where am I going to keep it, or what am I going to do with the one I currently have?"

- ***They don't wait for the weekend or holiday to enjoy basics***

The same way they don't wait for an open block of time to tidy up, highly organized people don't wait for the weekend to enjoy sleep. Because they understand the importance of rest in their success equation, highly organized people deliberately program sleep into their daily schedules to make sure they get enough sleep every night. I find it strange when people who don't work crazy hours say they can't wait for the weekend, or to take an extended break from work to sleep. Most highly organized people go to bed around the same time every night and wake up around the same time every morning irrespective of season.

Incase this got you interested in improving your levels of organization, the key is to keep it simple and not to aim for perfection, keeping in mind what's important - progress. Don't try to be organized to impress people, and don't hold back in order to fit in. Do it for yourself. Do it to enjoy freedom from the chaos that come with the absence of organization.

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For His Glory,

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