

Getting Things Done

The Art of Stress-Free Productivity

Based on David Allen's book of the same name

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This Presentation

- Is taught by a rookie
- Is an overview only
- May motivate you to get the book (do it)
- Applies to email also
- Discusses how computing devices can help implement it
- Demo of “Things” on an iPod Touch

Managing Actions is the Key

- You can train yourself to be more...
 - Proactive
 - Responsive
 - Focused in knowledge work
- Projects can be overwhelming
 - Real problem is a lack of clarity
 - Challenge is to determine the next step

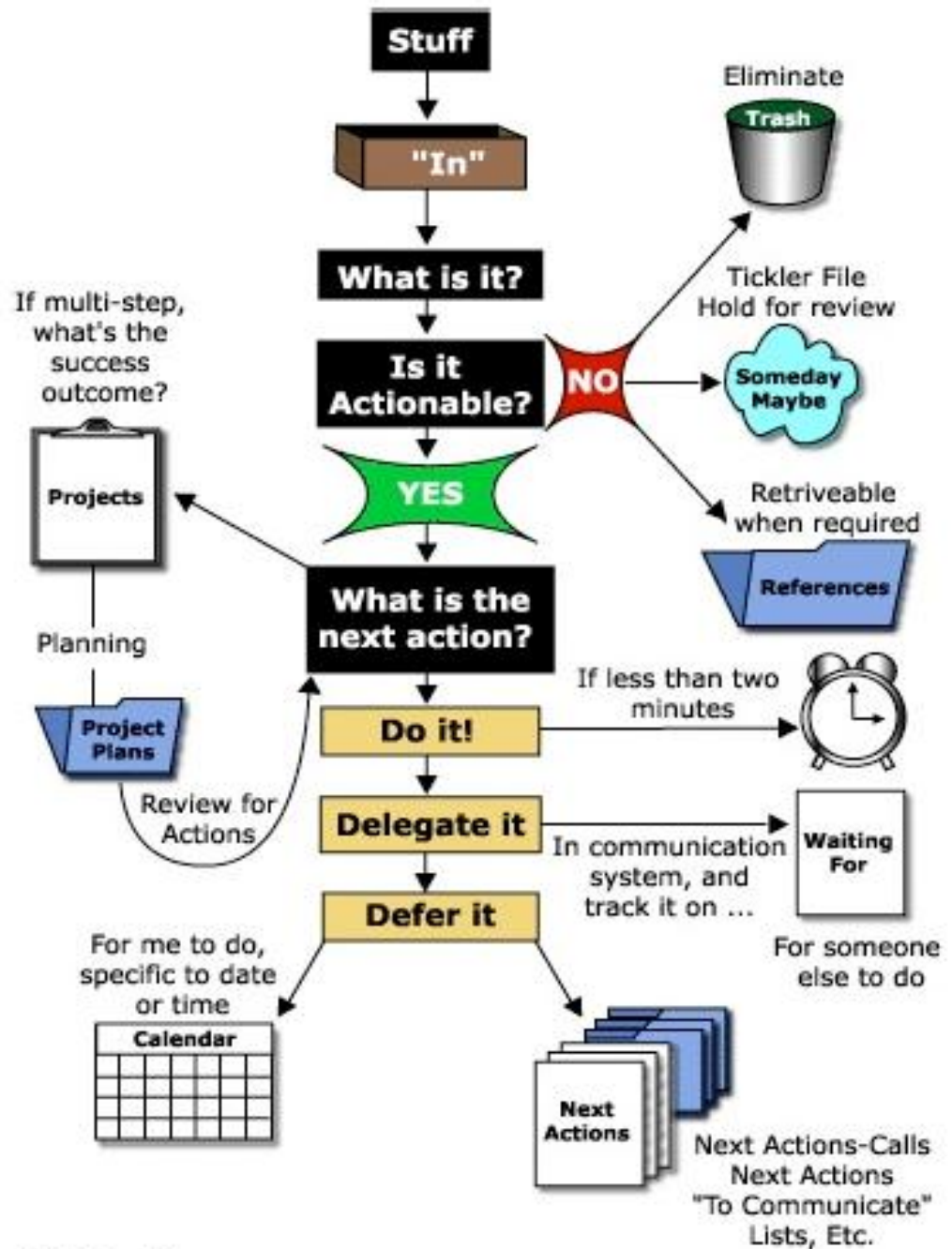
Here's What It's About

- Capture *all* the things you need to get done
 - Now, later, big, little, someday, work, personal
 - Put them into a system
 - Get them out of your head
- Discipline yourself to make front-end decisions about your things to do
 - Provides a structure to get them done

5 Stages of Mastering Workflow

1. Collect
2. Process
3. Organize
4. Review
5. Do

The Flowchart



Workflow Diagram

Collect

- Key: Minimize # of collection buckets
- Types of collection tools
 - Physical in-basket
 - Paper-based note-taking devices
 - Electronic note-taking devices
 - Voice-recording devices
 - E-mail
- Must empty them regularly
 - Don't put "in" things back "in"
- Goal: Get an empty in-basket

Process

- Item-by-item thinking is required to move things from in-basket
- Is it a project? A project is more than one step
- **Just determine the next action**
- If it will take less than 2 minutes, do it now

Organize

- Item-by-item thinking is required to move things from in-basket
- Determine the next action
- Only 3 things go on a calendar
 - Time-specific actions
 - Day-specific actions
 - Day-specific information

Review

- Common to all good productivity methods
- What to review when
- System is organized with...
 - Projects list
 - Calendar
 - "Next actions" lists
 - "Waiting for" list
- Weekly review is vital

Do

- If you've collected, processed, organized and reviewed all your commitments, you're in great shape to now do them

Tips for Handling Email

- Goal: Get your inbox empty
- Create folders in Microsoft Outlook
 - Outlook puts these at the top
 - @WAITING FOR
 - @TASKS TO DO
- Move emails from your inbox into these folders
- Makes tracking progress easy

Tips for Handling Papers

- Goal: Get your inbox empty
- Ideal setup
 - 4-drawer heavy metal file cabinet
 - No hanging folders
 - Use manila folders
 - Labels made with handheld labelmaker
 - Held up with sliding plate at rear of drawer
- Put all your papers into the inbox
- Process papers starting with the top
 - Toss them or file them
- I tried it – it works

Create a Tickler File

- Helps you never forget date-related stuff
- Get 43 manila folders
 - 31 in front, labeled 1 thru 31
 - 12 in back, labeled January thru December
- Put papers in folders 1-31 to process during present month
- Put papers in month folders to process when that month arrives
- For this to work, must review it daily

GTD on a PC

- “Getting Things Done Outlook”
 - Add-in to MS Outlook for \$74.95
- “Clear your Outlook Inbox...knowing you will be able to act on the messages at the appropriate time.”
- “Apply Getting Things Done functionality to appointments and tasks you enter into Outlook, seamlessly integrating them with appointments and tasks you create from emails.”

GTD on an iPod Touch

- “Things” is all about Getting Things Done
 - \$9.95 from iTunes Store
- First create Projects
- Put new tasks into Inbox
- Process tasks from Inbox
 - If it can be done in one step, move to Next
 - If more than one step, move to Projects
- Add date when to do each task
- It moves tasks to “today” when due
- It has helped me get things done