

# Shape Up Your Workspace

## with the Office Depot® Five-Day Office Makeover Plan



A bulging inbox and oversized stack of papers on a desk can lead to hours of lost productivity every month, costing businesses money and individuals precious time. In fact, a recent Office Depot survey found that most individuals lose almost two hours every week to disorganization – or a full workday every month. Office Depot has outlined a few core exercises that can get any business professional into tip-top shape, which entails improving the condition and overall health of your business and office space. To get you and your business started, Office Depot has updated its popular Five-Day Office Makeover Plan for 2007! The brochure, which features expert advice from organizing advisor Stephanie Winston, *The New York Times* bestselling author of “Getting Organized,” will tone-up any business in less than 30 minutes per day. Plus new this year, the Office Makeover Plan offers valuable coaching to turn anyone into a professional-caliber tax filer.

**REVISED  
AND  
UPDATED**

# DAY 1:

## Slim Down The Piles

**A slimmed down waist line is wonderful, but what can you do to help control those huge stacks of papers that are consuming your workspace?** “An organized person can retrieve any piece of paper on any topic from their desk within 60 seconds,” says Winston. To help trim your inbox and “nip and tuck” the ever-growing files surrounding your desk, Winston advises all businesses and professionals to follow her trademark TRAF system – Toss, Refer, Act and File.

- **TOSS:**

If the paper is of no interest, toss it. However, in today’s environment where identity theft is prevalent, protecting your information is more important than ever. Winston recommends using a shredder to ensure that confidential documents, personal papers and financial information does not fall into the wrong hands.

- **REFER:**

If the information in the document is more relevant to a colleague, pass it along to them and minimize your relevant piles.

- **ACT:**

Act on it and make sure to finalize the activity so it can be checked off the list.

- **FILE:**

If the document might be of use in the future, file it. More information on how to increase file flexibility is available in Day Three’s tips.

### Preventing Productivity Perils:

To keep your organizational program on track, Winston recommends:

- **ADHERE TO TIME LIMITS:**

Set aside a certain amount of time, each day – approximately 15 to 30 minutes – and your office will quickly become more organized, requiring less time per day to maintain the orderly workspace you’ve created.

- **DEDICATE A SPECIFIC TIME OF DAY TO ORGANIZING:**

Allocate the same time each day to organizing. This will ensure that TRAFing your office becomes a routine ritual that also boosts your productivity.

- **POWER THROUGH PILE BUILD-UP:**

If your piles have been lingering for months, dedicate 10-15 minutes a day for five consecutive days just to sort through the backlog. This will help eliminate the piles quickly. However, be sure to spend only a small amount of time each day on the piles to prevent the task from feeling overwhelming.

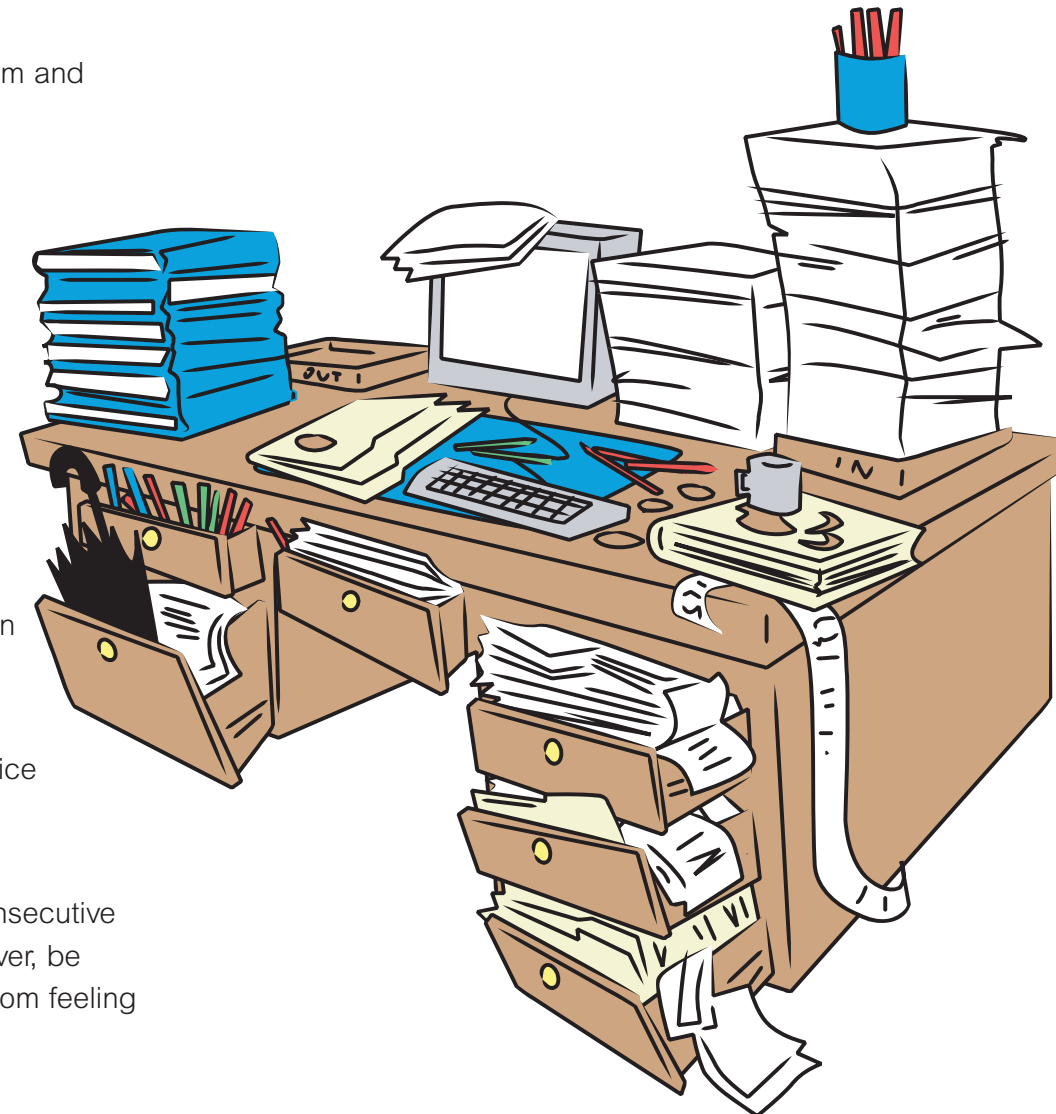
### Winning Solutions That Help Slim Down The Piles:

- **ATIVA™ SHREDDER:**

For confidential discarding, use a diamond-cut shredder to cut documents and credit cards into tiny, unusable pieces. Plus its output is smaller than the shreds created by comparable types of shredders, reducing the need for frequent emptying.

- **OFFICE DEPOT ORGANIZATION CENTER:**

Keep active files close-at-hand and organized with this combination five-slot sorter and two-tray system. Use the sorter on the top to keep folder files upright and the two bottom trays to hold loose sheets or inbox items in easy reach.



- **FILE CABINET AND FILE FOLDERS:**

Keep less urgent file folders in a nearby file cabinet, rather than on your desk. Make sure to take advantage of a locking filing cabinet for added security.

- **FILE STORAGE BOXES:**

A must-have for any organizer looking for a quick and easy archival storage system. These sturdy boxes fit legal- and letter-size records and have convenient tote handles making files easy to carry.

## DAY 2:

# Tone-Up Organizational Skills

**How do you keep it all organized?** With a dozen messages to return, reports due and calls to make, how can you be sure that everything that needs to get done is accomplished in a day? Winston, who has interviewed hundreds of successful CEOs on how they finish their to-do items every day, says, "Create a centralized, master list of to-do items and pull daily tasks from that list. You will see that you can accomplish more in a day."

Follow these tips to help get yourself organized:

- **A MASTER TO-DO LIST:**

Put all to-do items on a master list and include actions that you want to accomplish that day. To prevent the feeling of being overwhelmed by your daily to-do list, Winston recommends breaking out the list into "current" and "do later items." For example while every single idea, call, project or task goes onto the master list, only certain items will be incorporated into each daily to-do list. This approach helps you manage your time more efficiently and focus your efforts on priorities.

- **DIVIDE AND CONQUER:**

Take larger projects and divide them into manageable components with portions to be completed in the days leading up to the final project deadline. To manage sizeable projects, create a timeline and consider using a daily planner for the timeline and plot out when different portions of the project will be completed to ensure you stay on track.

- **DELEGATE:**

Seek out items that you can delegate and assign them to colleagues or vendors immediately. Be sure to follow-up on the status of the projects and impose deadlines so they are completed in a timely manner.

### Preventing Productivity Perils:

To keep to-do lists in shape with tasks that are achievable in a day, Winston recommends:

- **USE A SINGLE REFERENCE TOOL FOR THE MASTER AND DAILY LIST:**

Keep track of tasks by using a single tool that best matches your work style. This can be a PDA, an organizer, such as a FranklinCovey® planner, or a notebook. Carry this organizer with you at all times so new action items can be added with maximum ease.

- **LIMIT DAILY LISTS TO 10-12 ACHIEVABLE ITEMS:**

According to Winston, CEOs limit the number of items on their daily to-do lists. This way, they can ensure that they will not only finish what is on their lists, but also prepare for interruptions, intangibles or other tasks that need to be handled in a timely manner.

- **SCHEDULE HIGH-PRIORITY TASKS DURING HIGH-ENERGY TIME OF DAY:**

For tasks that absolutely must get done today, schedule time into your calendar early in the morning. That way you will be at your maximum energy level and will be able to enjoy peace of mind that the task has been accomplished before something unexpected commandeers your attention and your time.

### Winning Solution That Help Tone-Up Organizational Skills:

- **AT-A-GLANCE® OUTLINK PLANNER:**

Keep appointments, to-do lists and notes in a single location. The innovative padfolio insert is designed to hold your daily Outlook® Calendar printout.

- **PALM® LIFEDRIVE™ MOBILE MANAGER:**

Carry documents and browse the Web or check e-mail on a Wi-Fi network with this compact PDA.

- **OFFICE DEPOT LITE-TOUCH BINDER:**

Binders keep loose papers organized and offer flexibility to make changes on the fly. Look for a binder that has a clear front that can be labeled appropriately and changed as needed. This binder has a no-pinch design that anyone can open easily with one hand.



**Office DEPOT®**

## DAY 3:

# Increase File-Finding “Flexibility”

**When a potential new client or your boss calls, can you find the background information filed away for this particular discussion?** “Many people create files that have names which make sense at the time, but do not come to mind easily when you need to retrieve the folder,” says Winston. “Instead, create file names that outline the overarching topic of information that will be in the folder. This will help you keep your files maintained on an ongoing basis in order to keep organized.”

- **USE GENERAL LABELS VERSUS VERY SPECIFIC TITLES:**

You will find it infinitely easier to find what you are looking for if you create a master hanging folder with the broadest name that contains manila folders with more detailed names. For example, if Acquisition Targets is the general title, then each manila folder is labeled with the individual company names.

- **BREAK BULKY FILES INTO MULTIPLE FILE FOLDERS:**

When files become too large, it is hard to find the information that is needed within the file folder. An easy way to manage paperwork is to break it into smaller files, but be sure to use the same general name for the file as the original. For example, a new business development file can be broken down into active, former and future prospects, but all three new file labels need to reference that they include new business information.

- **ORGANIZE BOTH PAPER AND ONLINE INFORMATION INTO FILE FOLDERS:**

While scattered papers on a desktop are a more visible sign of disorder, electronic files and e-mail also need to be organized. Instead of keeping a few hundred e-mails in an e-mail inbox, organize them into subfolders to make retrieval simple.

### Preventing Productivity Perils:

To keep files flexible and organized on a regular basis, Winston recommends:

- **KEEP UP WITH FILING:**

Dedicate a certain time of day to file paperwork. This can happen on a daily or weekly basis and only needs to take 15-30 minutes – or less if you keep files updated regularly.

- **COLOR OR MONOCHROME:**

Many people like to use color to differentiate projects. Winston recommends that if you use color in your files, have different colors relate to state of projects versus categorizing them by the types of projects. For example, all business development targets can be in yellow folders, current projects are green and pending activities in red folders.

### Winning Solutions That Help Increase File-Finding “Flexibility”:

- **SUPER TAB SMEAD® FILE FOLDERS:**

See what your files include at a glance with these file folders that have a 90 percent larger tab for more writing space. Also, add a splash of color to everyday files with folders available in assorted boxes or individual color files. Organizing by color is one foolproof way to find what you are looking for in a pinch.

- **HANGING FOLDERS:**

Use hanging folders to organize folders within a section.

- **SELF-STICK FILE LABELS:**

Self-stick labels make it easier to re-label and reuse folders; some labels offer color options to help files stand out.

- **FILE CABINETS:**

Put files into file cabinets to keep them better organized and safely secured.

- **DESKTOP ORGANIZERS:**

These are useful for keeping active files close-at-hand for regular access.

- **CARTONS OR PORTABLE STORAGE BOXES:**

If you are moving files into storage, purchase cartons or portable cardboard or plastic file boxes. Be sure to label each box with its contents to make it easier to access at a later time. Look for a wing-lid box so it can be opened and closed easily when you need to retrieve important documents from storage.





## DAY 4:

# Strengthen Everyday Organizational Skills

**An organized to-do list will definitely help shape up your office but like any fitness regimen, you will only get results if you stick to the program.** If your desk is covered with papers, the file cabinets are stuffed and spilling over and you can't find the key information needed to finish a project on time, your hard work could be in vain. "Staying organized is an activity that needs to be paid attention to every day," says Winston.

- **KEEP A SINGLE CALENDAR:**

All appointments should be placed on a single calendar that you access every day. If you use a virtual calendar, be sure that it can be brought with you on the road, such as by syncing with a PDA. This way, appointments can be added while traveling. If you work with a larger group, keep track of the team by organizing major department tasks on one calendar. Be sure that items on the centralized calendar are also on each individual team member's personal calendar.

- **CENTRALIZE SUPPLIES:**

Searching for scissors in a messy drawer will not make you more productive. Rather, dedicate a single location to store supplies such as in a drawer or a desktop organizer. Wherever you keep these items, it should be organized and easy to access on a regular basis.

### Preventing Productivity Perils:

To keep organizational skills strong every day, Winston recommends:

- **AVOID BEING OVERWHELMED BY READING MATERIAL:**

In today's information intense environment, it is challenging for a single person to keep up with all of the reading that needs to be accomplished. Instead of trying to tackle it all individually, assign different publications to various members of the team who should share highlights regularly.

- **DO THE HARDEST ITEMS FIRST:**

When a big report overwhelms, if you focus on the hardest items first, you can finish them faster and get them out of the way. With the challenging parts completed, you will breeze through the easier items and accomplish the task in a timely manner.

### Winning Solutions That Help Strengthen Everyday Organizational Skills:

- **ERASABLE WALL CALENDAR:**

Wall calendars can be used to show a broad view of the day, month or year, depending on the calendar's style. Tasks, events and appointments can be added, tracked and erased or checked off when completed.

- **DRY-ERASE MARKERS:**

To keep wall calendars organized, use dry-erase markers so that appointments can be erased and moved as needed.

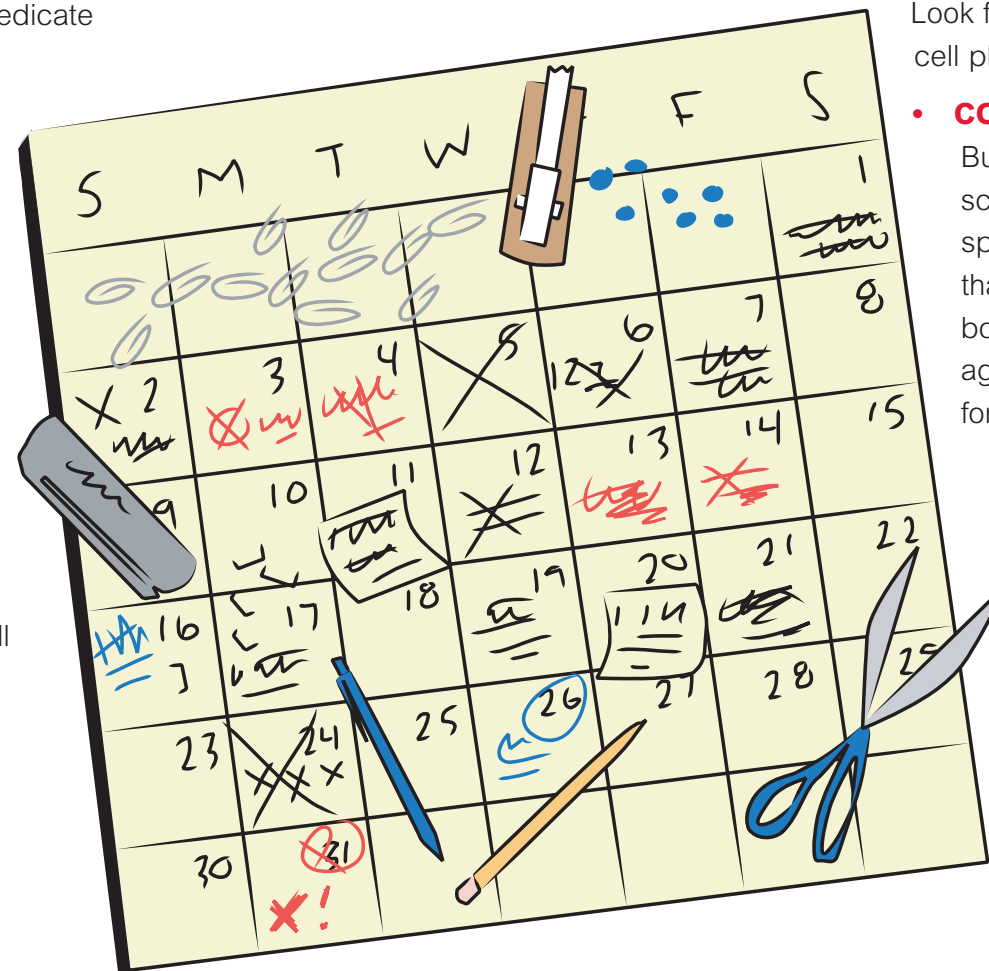
- **ORGANIZED DESKS:**

Keep supplies such as scissors, tape and pens in a single location that is easy to access.

Look for a magnetic wall board to hold notes, phone lists and cell phones to keep essentials at your fingertips.

- **COMBINE PRODUCTS TO SAVE SPACE:**

Business people need to be able to print, copy, fax and scan. Instead of purchasing individual products, save space and money by getting an all-in-one laser color printer that has a smaller footprint on your desk. Also, since paper boxes take-up so much space, look for smaller value packages of paper that are lightweight and eliminate the need for substantial storage.



## DAY 5:

# Balance Organizational Needs On The Road

**Traveling can lead to disorder.** If you work out of multiple offices or have meetings outside of the office, it is important to know what files you need to bring with you and what can stay at home. “Most traveling business people have adopted technology to help keep organized,” says Winston. “However, in many situations, you will still need paper files and other paper documents. Help keep files and other items in order by carrying a slightly larger travel briefcase that can accommodate the key items you need on the road.” Winston offers the following advice to traveling professionals:

- **KNOW WHERE YOUR FILES ARE:**

When planning for an upcoming trip, think through the documents you will need for the scheduled meetings. If you are traveling to several cities in a row, consider shipping files to the different hotels where you will be staying. This way, you can minimize what you carry without being unprepared. However, always have a back-up available on a thumb drive or CD in case your materials don't arrive.

- **CARRY A LAPTOP OR USE A BUSINESS CENTER:**

Many business travelers find that carrying a personal laptop is much more productive than trying to use a hotel business center. Plus, you can lighten your load with mini laptops or by picking up printed copies of your presentations, documents or other materials when you arrive in town for your meetings. The Office Depot® Design, Print & Ship Centers, located in all Office Depot stores, are great resources for fast and affordable printing.

- **USE FLASH MEMORY KEY RINGS TO CARRY IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS:**

Instead of burning large documents to a CD, which can get scratched in transit, use a USB flash memory drive to carry important documents and large presentations. Many new USB flash drives can be connected to a PC without needing to install special software.

### Preventing Productivity Perils:

To keep organized when traveling, Winston recommends:

- **RECORD EXPENSES REGULARLY:**

It is easy to forget little expenses, such as morning coffee or a service tip. By keeping an ongoing log of expenses, you can ensure that you will be reimbursed for all legitimate travel costs. It is also important to keep receipts in one centralized place while on the road to minimize the time it takes to file an expense report.

- **BE PREPARED FOR TRAVEL EMERGENCIES:**

Carry phone numbers for airlines, car rental companies, hotels, travel agents, etc. to call if your business travel is delayed unexpectedly.

### Winning Solutions That Help Balance Organizational Needs On The Road:

- **FORAY™ BRIEFCASE FOR TRAVEL WITH MULTIPLE POCKETS:**  
Store business cards, pens, cell phone, files and your laptop on the road.
- **ATIVA™ USB FLASH MEMORY DRIVE:**  
Carry electronic documents and other digital files.
- **ENVELOPE OR FOLDER FOR RECORDING EXPENSES.**
- **FRANKLINCOVEY® EXECUTIVE LEATHER ZIP-AROUND ORGANIZER:**  
Keep important documents crisp-looking and organized.



BONUS DAY:

## Train For A Less Taxing Tax Season

**Receipts stuffed in shoeboxes make the tax season a nightmare if you put off filing until the tax filing deadline, which falls on Monday, April 16 for 2007.** “Taxes can be less of a trial if you organize your records early and file receipts throughout the year,” says Winston. “And it’s never too soon to start getting your taxes ready for the next year to help spare yourself stress from last minute filing.” With a little planning and these tips, the April tax time rush will be much less of a workout.

- **PREPARE AN EXPANDING FILE:**

At the beginning of each year, create an accordion file with tabs to store your receipts. Label the sections for “W-2 and Wage Statements,” “Investments/IRA,” “Mortgage,” “Major Purchases,” “Charitable Donations” and monthly tabs for other expenses outside of these categories. File cancelled checks and other receipts in these files regularly.

- **SCHEDULE TIME FOR TAXES:**

Just as many people do not like to do crunches, many also do not enjoy the crunch time leading up to April 16th. So instead of procrastinating, schedule time either with yourself or an accountant to complete your taxes early in the season.

- **SAVE YOUR RECORDS:**

Keep copies of your tax returns in a safe place for at least six years. Then, make sure your personal information remains secure by shredding the documents before discarding.

### Preventing Productivity Perils:

To keep taxes on track all year long, Winston recommends:

- **KEEP UP WITH FILING:**

Filing taxes is much simpler if you periodically set aside time to maintain your files. This way, you don’t need to spend hours sifting through receipts to find appropriate deductions the day before.

- **GET IT TOGETHER:**

It’s important to have a single location that holds all tax information. File any new paperwork as soon as you receive it in a single place to ensure you have when it’s time to file.

### Winning Solutions To Train For A Less Taxing Tax Season:

- **ATIVA® PRINTING CALCULATOR:**

Check your work on tax forms by using a printing calculator to verify the correct numbers were inputted to arrive at the right totals.

- **TURBOTAX®:**

File your taxes yourself with the help of professional software that helps find deductions you might not know about.

- **ACCORDIAN FOLDER:**

Look for an expandable folder that has at least 16 sections where receipts can be stored.

- **ATIVA™ SHREDDER:**

Since tax forms have key personal information included, use a diamond-cut shredder to cut documents into tiny, unusable pieces before discarding.



# STEPHANIE WINSTON'S Recommended Organizational Products

- **ATIVA™ SHREDDER:**

For confidential discarding, look for a shredder that transforms documents, credit cards, staples and CDs/DVDs into tiny, unusable pieces.



- **FRANKLINCOVEY® ORGANIZER:**

Keep appointments, to-do lists and notes in a single location.



- **PALM-SIZED LAPTOP:**

Carry documents, browse the Web or check e-mail on a Wi-Fi network with this compact, full-featured laptop.



- **HANGING FOLDERS:**

Use hanging folders to organize folders by project or client.



- **DESK ORGANIZER:**

Keep supplies such as scissors, tape, pens and self-stick notes in a single location that is easy to access.



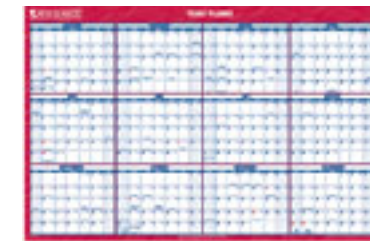
- **PORTABLE STORAGE BOXES:**

If you are moving files into storage, purchase plastic file boxes. Be sure to label each box with its contents to make it easier to access at a later time.



- **ERASABLE WALL CALENDAR:**

Wall calendars can be used to show a broad view of the day, month or year, depending on the style of calendar. Tasks, events and appointments can be added, tracked and erased or checked off when completed.



- **USB FLASH MEMORY DRIVE:**

Carry electronic documents and other digital files.



- **BRIEFCASE FOR TRAVEL WITH MULTIPLE POCKETS:**

Store business cards, pens, cell phone, files and your laptop when traveling.



- **ALL-IN-ONE LASER COLOR PRINTER:**

Save desktop space with an all-in-one that copies, prints, scans and faxes.





## **ABOUT STEPHANIE WINSTON:**

Stephanie Winston is recognized nationally as the country's preeminent professional organizer. She is Office Depot's Organizing Advisor and the author of five books on organization and time management, including *The New York Times* Paperback Bestseller "Getting Organized."

Stephanie is a member of the Author's Guild and was honored by the National Association of Professional Organizers as the founder of professional organizing. Her business, The Organizing Principle, is based in New York City.

## **ABOUT OFFICE DEPOT®:**

Office Depot provides more office products and services to more customers in more countries than any other company.

Incorporated in 1986 and headquartered in Delray Beach, Fla., Office Depot has annual sales of nearly \$15 billion, and employs approximately 50,000 associates around the world. Currently, the Company sells to customers directly or through affiliates in 42 countries.

Office Depot is a leader in every distribution channel -- from retail stores and contract delivery to catalogs and e-commerce. As of September 30, 2006, Office Depot had 1,121 retail stores in North America and another 323 stores, either company-owned, licensed or franchised, in other parts of the world. Office Depot serves a wide range of customers through a dedicated sales force, telephone account managers, direct mail offerings, and multiple web sites. With \$4.2 billion in online sales during the last twelve months, the Company is also one of the world's largest e-commerce retailers.

Office Depot's common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol ODP and is included in the S&P 500 Index. Additional press information can be found at: <http://mediarelations.officedepot.com>.

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