



2011 Workspace Organization Survey

January 2011

Survey of 1,000 Nationally Representative Americans

Ages 18 and Older



Kelton
RESEARCH



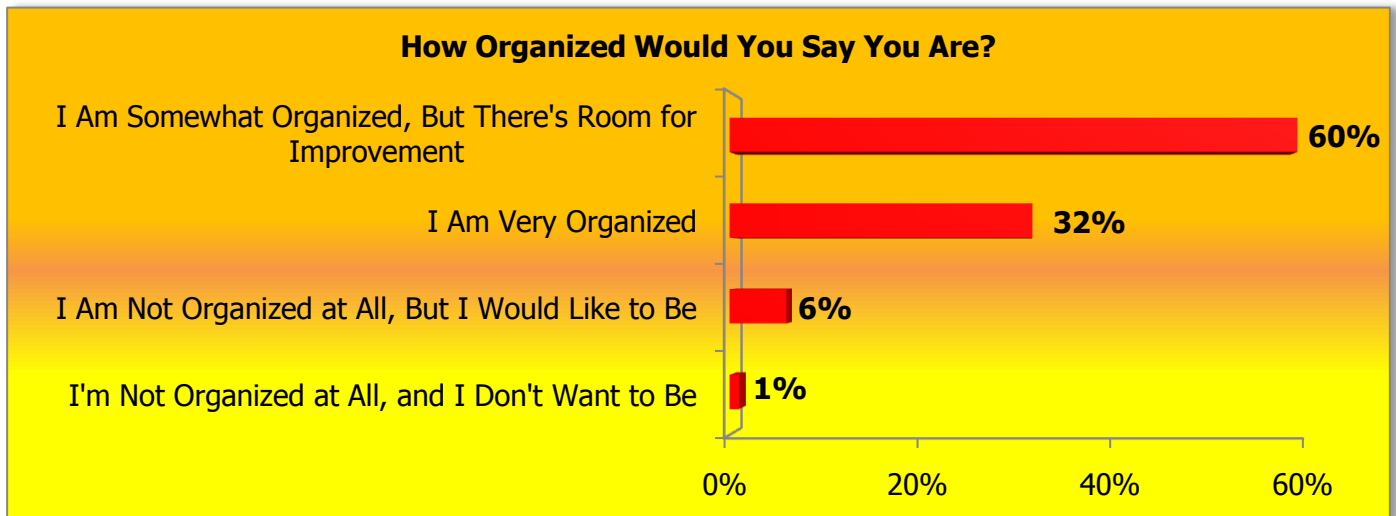
An Unorganized Nation

Americans Seek Ways to Improve Organizational Skills to Maintain Peace of Mind Even Though Many Are Critical of Themselves and Their Messy Colleagues

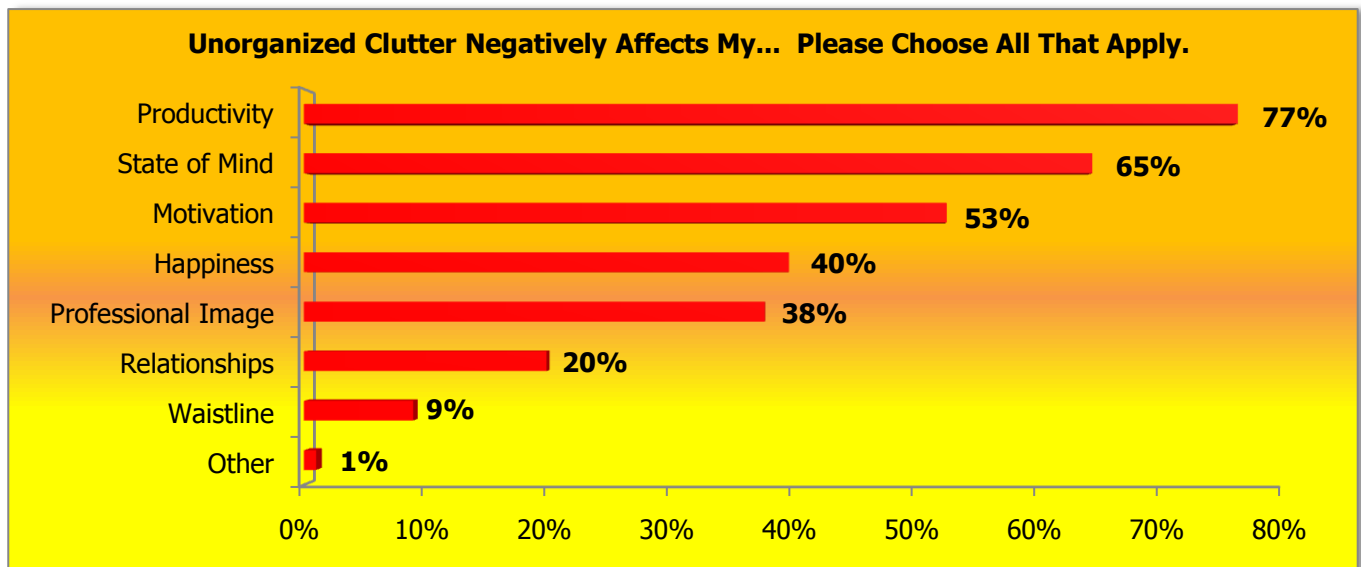
It's that time of year when Americans look back on last year's triumphs and challenges and figure out what areas of their lives could use a little improvement. Some make New Year's resolutions to lose weight, go on more dates, visit family, or just live a better life. According to a new survey by OfficeMax, many Americans are adding another resolution to the list by striving to become more organized in 2011. Clutter at home or the office plagues their productivity, mentality, happiness and confidence as many feel embarrassed by how untidy they are. Fortunately, Americans see – and even feel – the value of being organized and admit it helps them feel more in control and less stressed. For 2011, it's out with the old clutter and in with the new structured state of mind.

1) CLUTTER RULES IN 2011

- **Fill Me in.** With the New Year comes self-assessment of old habits and new beginnings. Generally speaking, more than two thirds (68%) of Americans aren't very organized and can surely use some improvement.



- **Trying to Make the Grade.** In fact, if they had to give themselves a letter grade for organization, a majority (79%) of Americans recognize they're not nearly organized enough to score an "A."
 - More men than women (82% vs. 75%) would give themselves a mark lower than an "A" if they had to grade themselves on being organized.
- **Wake Up to Reality.** While most (88%) have some kind of system to keep themselves organized, close to three in ten (28%) of these Americans are unhappy with their current set-up and would like to improve.
- **Keep the Bad Energy Out.** Nine in ten (90%) Americans admit that unorganized clutter at home or at work has a negative impact on their life. Their productivity (77%), state of mind (65%), motivation (53%) and happiness (40%) are affected when there is disorder.

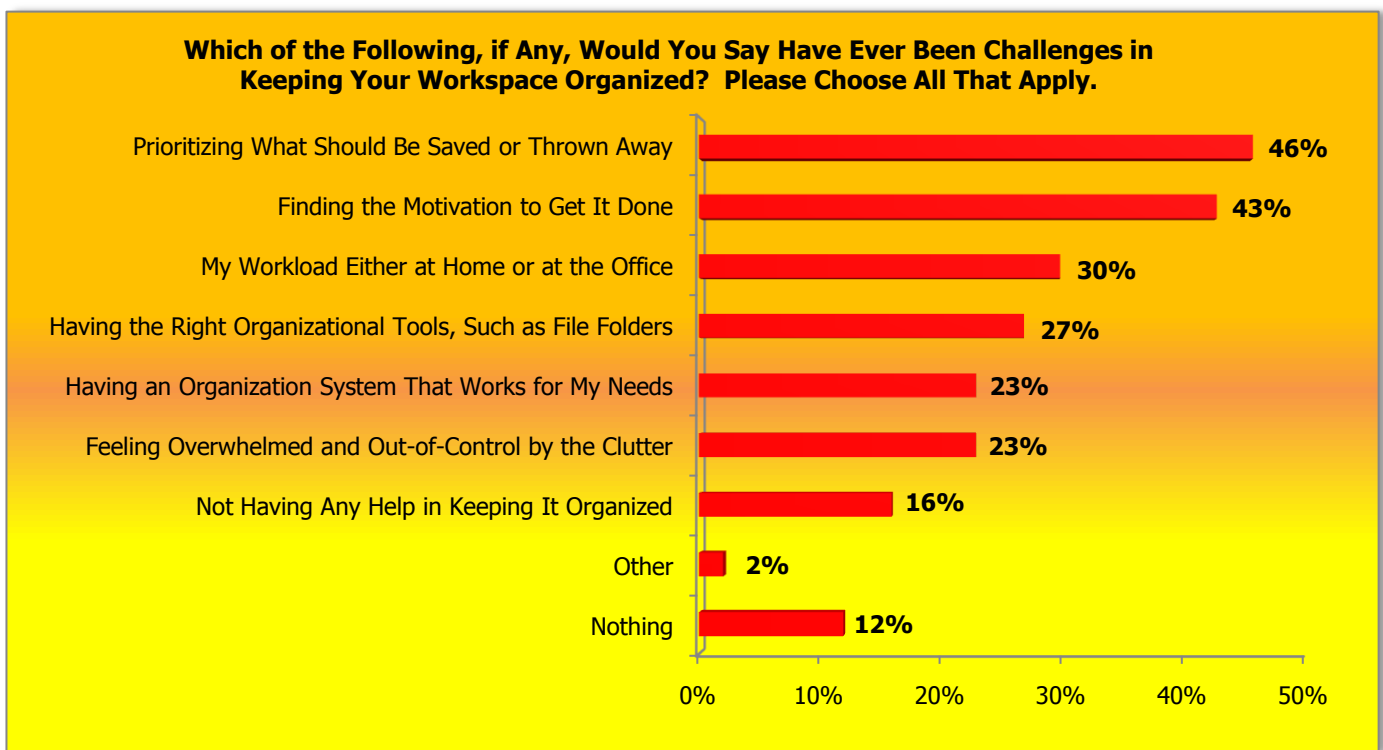


- More females than males (93% vs. 86%) are negatively affected by being messy, and are more likely to say this affects their state of mind (74% vs. 55%).
- **At Work and at Home.** This unorganized clutter can also damage their professional image (38%) and their personal relationships (20%).
- **The Domino Effect.** Americans know the consequences of being unorganized would be far-reaching. Many believe they'd feel frustrated or annoyed (63%), misplace an important document or email (56%), lose their sanity (35%) and even their confidence (20%).
 - More parents than non-parents (40% vs. 32%) would likely lose their good sense and peace of mind if they were unorganized.
- **Positivity Reigns.** However, when all their belongings have their place, Americans feel good about themselves. Close to three quarters (71%) feel accomplished when they organize their workspace, while others are in control (68%), confident (54%), motivated (52%), and relaxed (43%).

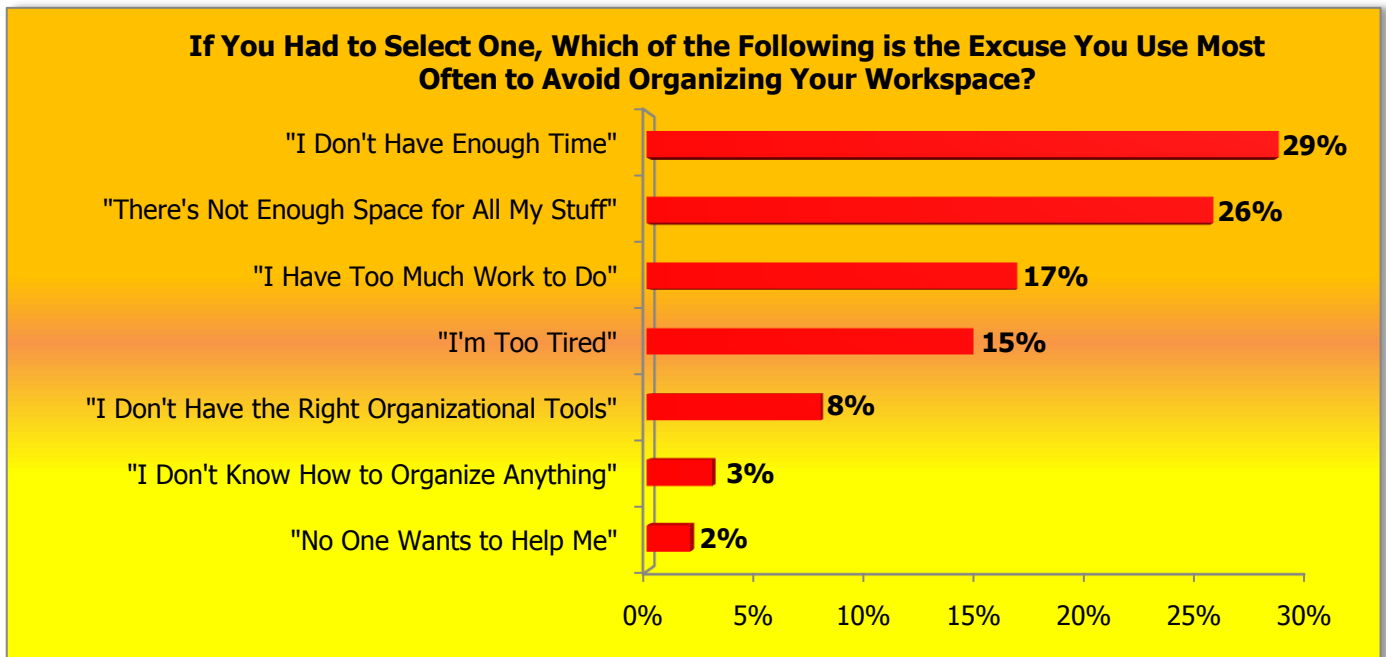
- More women than men feel accomplished (79% vs. 64%), in control (72% vs. 64%), confident (59% vs. 50%), and motivated (57% vs. 46%) when they're organized.

2) ORGANIZING ONE'S MENTALITY

- **New Year, New Outlook.** Fortunately, many have hopeful expectations for 2011. Almost half (46%) believe they'll be more organized this year than they were in 2010. But what will it take to accomplish this?
 - More Americans ages 18-34 than those 35 and older (56% vs. 41%) think they will be better organized after the New Year than they were last year.
- **Say Om.** Close to seven in ten (69%) say that maintaining their own sanity or peace of mind is what typically inspires them to arrange the disorder in their workspaces. Visitors (38%), feeling stressed or out-of-control (28%), and new beginnings, like the New Year or a new job (23%) are additional motivators.
 - More women than men (74% vs. 65%) are motivated to organize to maintain their sanity or peace of mind.
- **Understanding Challenges.** But this determination doesn't mean that there aren't some challenges that get in the way. Almost half (46%) have struggled with prioritizing what should be saved or thrown away, while others claim that finding the motivation to get the job done (43%) has kept them from keeping their workspace in perfect order.



- More guys than ladies (46% vs. 40%) have a hard time getting motivated to organize their workspace.
- **All About the System.** Others admit they've also found that not having the right organizational tools (27%) or using an organization system that suits their needs (23%) to be challenges on the path to workspace bliss.
- **Easy Interference.** Perhaps these obstacles are why 80 percent of Americans typically intend to organize something in their lives, but just don't get around to it, such as their desk or workspace (45%), digital files on the computer (36%), email (28%), or their schedule or calendar (14%).
- **Excuses, Excuses.** Naturally, the more Americans put off organizing, the more excuses pile up. Close to three in ten blame not having enough time (29%) or space (26%) as reasons they avoid de-cluttering their workspaces.



- More parents than non-parents (34% vs. 27%) say they don't have enough time to organize their stuff as an excuse they use the most often to avoid putting together their workspace.
- **Blush-Worthy Shame.** Perhaps if Americans got their act together they wouldn't feel so embarrassed if someone noticed how unorganized they were. Many would be ashamed if anyone got a glimpse of their desk or workspace (35%), bedroom closet (28%), or desk drawers (12%).
- **Professional Appearances Matter.** Not only do people judge their own organizational habits, but they are also critical of others. If they saw a colleague's cluttered workspace they would assume that this person must be lacking in other aspects of his or her job (40%) or is overworked and doesn't have the time to clean up (33%). Others take it a step further and would have a lower overall opinion of this colleague (13%).

Methodological Notes:

The OfficeMax 2011 Organization Survey was conducted by Kelton Research between December 30th, 2010 and January 4th, 2011 via email invitation and an online survey. Quotas are set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the total U.S. population ages 18 and over.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results.

In this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.