

Clear the Clutter!

By Michelle LaBrosse, PMP®, Chief Cheetah and Founder of Cheetah Learning, and Kristen Medina, CAPM®, Co-Author

They have shows on it. Thousands of professionals are hired every year for the sole purpose to get rid of it. Most people hate it, but find a hard time getting rid of it. What am I talking about? Clutter!!

Even though the show “Hoarders” exemplifies the clutter problem to the extreme, most of us, if we were being honest with ourselves, would say that we hold on to more stuff than we need. In today’s world of consumerism, it can sometimes seem counterintuitive to get rid of things. Or to not acquire things that we don’t really need. Every day we are being told too by expert marketers that “more is good” and that we need more “stuff” regardless of if it is the truth or not. This spring, take a stand to clutter, in both your home and in your mind.

Project De-clutter

Have you ever had very good intentions of spring-cleaning, but the results that you imagined never quite materialized? That is because intentions are not a plan! 75% of all project end up failing due to poor project management. Use the PM skills that you have honed in your office to tackle your spring-cleaning tasks. Define what deliverable you’d like to achieve, and what success will look like when you achieve it. When you treat your de-clutter goals like a serious project, your chances of success significantly increase.

Engaged Commitment

What people in your life also have a stake in your spring-cleaning project? These are your project stakeholders for Project De-Clutter. This is an aspect of spring-cleaning that is often overlooked by the person heading up the task. When you face spring-cleaning alone, it can appear to be very daunting.

Don’t go at it alone. Enlist help, and when you play to your stakeholder’s strengths, you will be surprised at how willing they will be to help. Is your spouse a fantastic sales person? Have them organize a garage sale and see how much they can get rid of and how much money they can make using their awesome sales skills. Is your son super excellent at playing video games? Ok that might not help, but perhaps if you restrict his games until he has given you all the clothes that he no longer wears anymore so you can pass them on to Salvation Army.

You get the point. Rally the troops! A part of being a good leader is in the ability to effectively delegate tasks and speak to the self-interest of those that are helping you.

Timebox to Tidy

Ok we get it - you’re busy! You’re much too busy to clean out your entire garage. But, are you too busy to clean off and organize that one shelf in the garage?

The key to successfully achieving your goals is to set micro-goals, and then achieve them again and again. Give yourself an hour to tackle one small project, and don't let any distracters deter you from your progress. Do this once a day for a month, and you will be amazed at the progress you make.

More Organization = More Time

Imagine your garage is in disarray. You are running around trying to find your tennis rackets and soccer ball from the kids lessons, and while running around sweating in the summer heat, you trip over the debris that is accumulating in your garage and sprain your ankle. And you were supposed to go to the beach tomorrow!

The whole idea behind spring-cleaning is to get ready for a stress free summer. When you are organized, you create more time for yourself. Time is the most valuable thing that we have, so make sure that you preserve it when it matters most. Get organized to gain hours of free time this summer to do what is important to you.

Success Breeds Success

When you achieve success in this year's spring-cleaning project, you will have set up a standard process and expectations for future years to come, and each year it will become easier to implement Project De-Clutter.

Get started on your spring-cleaning success story today! If you want to improve your Project Management skills at the same time as you are decluttering – check out Cheetah's online course – PM of Spring Cleaning.
www.cheetahlearning.com/pmspringclean.

About the Author:



Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, is an entrepreneurial powerhouse with a penchant for making success easy, fun, and fast. She is the founder of [Cheetah Learning](#), the [author](#) of the [Cheetah Success Series](#), and a prolific [blogger](#) whose mission is to bring Project Management to the masses.

Cheetah Learning is a virtual company with 100 employees, contractors, and licensees worldwide. To date, more than 50,000 people have become "Cheetahs"

using Cheetah Learning's innovative Project Management and accelerated learning techniques.

Recently honored by the Project Management Institute (PMI®), Cheetah Learning was named Professional Development Provider of the Year at the 2008 PMI® Global Congress. A dynamic keynote speaker and industry thought leader, Michelle was previously recognized by PMI as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world.

Michelle's articles have appeared in more than 100 publications and websites around the world. Her monthly column, the [Know How Network](#), is carried by over 400 publications.

She is a graduate of the Harvard Business School's Owner/President Management (OPM) program and holds engineering degrees from Syracuse University and the University of Dayton.