YOUR MIND IS FOR HAVING IDEAS, NOT HOLDING THEM.™
— David Allen
01 CAPTURE
COLLECT WHAT HAS YOUR ATTENTION

Use an in-tray, notepad, or digital device to capture 100% of everything that has your attention. Little, big, personal and professional—all your to-do's, projects, things to handle or finish.

WORST PRACTICE

Keeping It In Your Head

BEST PRACTICE

Getting It Out Of Your Head

Notes
Take everything that you capture and ask: Is it actionable? If no, then trash it or file it as reference or for later review. If yes, decide the very next action required. If it will take less than two minutes, do it now. If not, delegate it if you can; or defer it to do as soon as you can. If it has a multi-step outcome, identify the project.
CLARIFY
PROCESS WHAT IT MEANS

WHAT IS IT?

IS IT ACTIONABLE?

WHAT'S THE NEXT ACTION?

YES

NO

DEMAND IT

TRASH IT

REFERENCE IT

INCUBATE IT

DELEGATE IT

DO IT (<2 min)

DEFER IT

Is there a project?

Notes
Create Next Actions list(s). Sort them into categories if it makes sense. For example—calls to make, errands to run, emails to send, etc. Create Projects list to hold multi-step outcomes.

Huh? Blended Stacks

Clear Categories
Look over your lists as often as necessary to determine what to do next. Do a weekly review to clean up, update your lists, and regain focus.
05 ENGAGE SIMPLY DO

Use your trusted system to take appropriate actions with confidence.

The Busy Trap Make A Trusted Choice

Notes
CAPTURE AND CLARIFY

WHAT HAS YOUR ATTENTION?

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NEXT ACTION

OUTCOME / PROJECT