



The Holidays are Upon Us . . . Let the Organization Begin!

As we wish you the happiest possible holiday season and ending to your year, we remind ourselves that our organizational skills are a great gift.

On that note, here is our dream wish list. We would love to receive an organizer's time and skills to make our lives easier and smoother, more productive and stress-free. Whether it is a closet, a home office, a corporate executive or professional's office, a garage, a basement or even the linen closet, we can't think of a more wonderful gift, to give or receive.

For those organizers, develop a list of your organizing services as a gift certificate idea for friends, families and clients. With a minimum of a three hour gift certificate purchase, you might even consider offering special clients a free hour. This may well be one of the most guaranteed to please gifts this year. We see this as a multi-faceted tool to help you advertise your business to clients as well as a gift resource for yourself to highlight and promote your business. You become the gift, whether you give it yourself or encourage others to do so by helping them think of organizing as one of their best and most creative holiday gifts.

Here is our gift to you....think of the following as a Holiday buffet with something that appeals to everyone whether you are a small business owner; an organizer; a stay at home Mom; an empty nester; the confirmed bachelor, a senior, a newly-married couple; the downsizers or right-sizers, or the professional executive:

- **Repurpose your holiday decorations** - take out your holiday decorations, review and purge what no longer works for you and donate to your local Goodwill or other charity, prior to the holidays beginning, to extend holiday cheer. You might also consider running a neighborhood decoration exchange.
- **A Green Holiday Idea** - In this day of environmental awareness, consider the "greening" of the holidays by taking a second look at all those holiday cards you may have accumulated. While watching a TV show, or the children's hockey practice, or any activity where your presence but not your hands is crucial, cut off the backs of all those mini works of Holiday art until you have stacks of resources for your local day care centre, elementary school or community centre and then shred the rest.
- **A Gift of Time** - Select a few of your very special clients. Package up some organizational ideas that you know would benefit their productivity and lower their stress, offer them one hour of your time as a thank you bonus for past – and future – work, and deliver it with a time line of up to 6 months to use.
- **On-line shopping** - Become up close and personal with the world of internet or virtual gift shopping. Be very aware of shipping deadlines (usually a minimum of 2 weeks at holiday time) and shipping costs; as obvious as this may sound, try and lay out your gift lists either by person, potential gift category, or budget, so you can troll the major sites for ideas and capitalize on shipping.

- **Gift wrapping** – if you are the “wrapper”, with many competing commitments, wrapping may have lost its luster and become a test of your holiday spirit so here is an idea. At your local dollar store, purchase one color of gift bags – your favorite, of course. Choose armloads of coordinating tissue, either one or two colors that you will use for all the bags. You might also consider designing and printing your own personalized gift tags. Use colored markers to add the recipient’s name and tie onto the bag with a small piece of raffia or coordinating ribbon that you also pick up at the dollar store. Add present.....and be proud of your unique look for the year. Next year you can change your colors.
- **Make it a technological Christmas** – for now and evermore! If you haven’t already discovered the convenience and portability of the “virtual” Holiday planner, this might be your year. Use your Outlook to organize your calendar, task and gift list and sync with your blackberry and cell; your schedule and lists are always with you, along with all the addresses and phone numbers required for shipping. However, if you are still paper driven and feel more secure with a hard copy in hand, print out a paper copy of that critical holiday schedule and gift list. Keep one copy in the glove compartment of your car or in your purse and another in the command centre of your home and/or office. This is the modern day equivalent of a security blanket.
- **Frugal and Creative Decorating from an organizational perspective** - Choose a holiday theme early and plan around it, from both a budget and esthetic perspective. Review what you love and what you have and see if you can create a fresh color theme to refresh and renew that still honors tradition and your families’ expectations. It will help you avoid mistakes, clutter and maximize your decorating impact and budget if you select one or two key colors with a third color in a supporting role.
- **Postal Service time saver** – in some places, pre-stamped business sized envelopes are offered for the price of the stamp – another gift of time for those of us without postage machines or staff. This can be a motivator for you to write that annual Holiday letter this year with family input.

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To stay on top of your game requires focus and dedication to constant upgrading of your skills. ProfessionalOrganizers.com is a learning solutions company that gives professional organizers access to training and education that allows them to stay ahead. Our comprehensive program offers innovative content and high-tech support for both start-up and continuing education programs. Learn more through the links below:

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