

ORGANISING OUR ADMIN

DISCUSSION AT MAYFIELD BUSINESS FORUM ON TUESDAY 5TH JULY 2011

This was a short discussion since we had willingly spent a long time at the beginning of the meeting sharing details of our business with each other, particularly with the two new members who were attending their first meeting.

We discussed the different aspects of administration

- Basic paperwork
- Diary management
- Contact management
- Finance and tax

and looked at the different approaches that were possible.

Some people preferred paper based solutions (e.g. carrying around a diary which was always quickly and easily accessible) and others favoured electronic solutions (e.g. Google Calendar or Outlook Calendar which make repeating events easy to manage and also are good for organising teams).

Similarly there are those who like to complete admin tasks as soon as possible, e.g. updating expenses after each trip, and those who prefer to dedicate time at regular intervals e.g. put aside half a day each quarter for doing VAT returns.

You can choose whichever of these different options suits you best but you should follow two rules to use any of them efficiently:

- Use them consistently – e.g. if you have a diary, carry it with you whenever necessary, add in recurring appointments; if you use an electronic diary, find a solution (e.g. mobile phone access) to have it available wherever you are
- If you are going to handle work at some later date, create some pending files where all the relevant papers or computer files are stored together until needed. If you have trouble finding papers or computer files, you decide on a better way of filing them and spend a few minutes each day to organise them

Lastly, several people were interested in using storage “in the cloud” but were concerned about security issues. Graeme Hird addressed this and has expanded on the subject in his interesting blog on the MBF website at

<http://mayfieldbusinessforum.com/dont-hide-it-under-the-bed-and-other-things/>

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