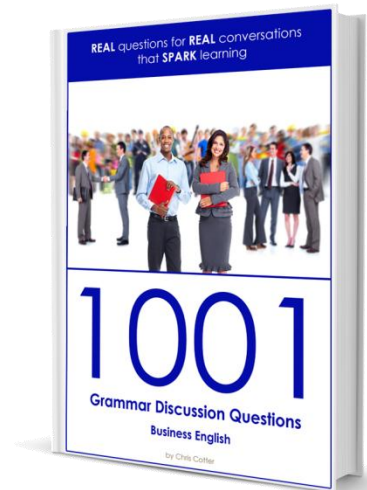
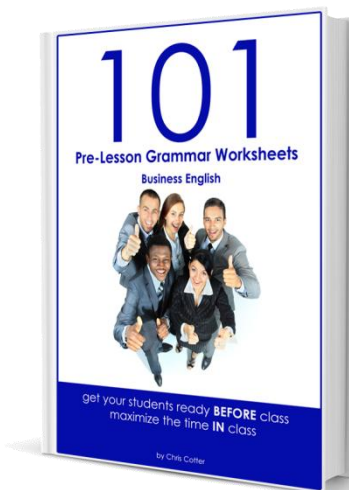


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the ARTICLE (for teachers)

Messiness More Efficient

Every office has at least one slob -- the employee whose desk looks like a tornado has struck. Papers are stacked precariously. Post It Notes from months and months ago are still tacked to the cubicle wall. The garbage overflows with takeout coffee cups and empty bags. But a business book suggests that neat people are actually less efficient and less creative, or at least so says the book's author, David Freedman.

A mess, it turns out, works surprisingly well for the person who made it, he explains. It becomes a filing system of sorts. Take Karen Jackson, who readily admits that her desk looks like a disaster area. Yet it's an organized mess, she says, because she knows where everything is. Clean it up, or otherwise disturb the mess, and the method behind the madness goes out the window.

What may come as the biggest shock, though, is how a messy workspace can serve as a natural reminder system. Old papers and notes stacked with more recent information will get picked through. As a result, connections between the old and the new become possible, which translates into increased creativity and opportunity. Filed away papers, on the other hand, usually end up forgotten, and anything thrown away is lost forever. As for efficiency, tidy employees usually spend from one to four hours per day keeping their desk clean, time more productively spent attending to the tasks at hand.

But Barry Izsak, who heads the National Association of Professional Organizers, disputes the author's claims. Izsak explains that the average person, because of the mess, will often feel increased stress. There will be accompanying feelings of missed deadlines and lost opportunities. And according to another study, that inability to quickly retrieve information can cost companies money -- \$50 per week for each employee. At large organizations, that can quickly run into millions of dollars.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.

the Article (for students)

Fill in the blank with the correct word.

tacked	accompanying	readily	surprisingly	precariously
translates	reminder	overflows	disturb	efficient
sorts	slob	attending	efficiency	retrieve

Messiness More Efficient

Every office has at least one (a. _____) -- the employee whose desk looks like a tornado has struck. Papers are stacked (b. _____). Post It Notes from months and months ago are still (c. _____) to the cubicle wall. The garbage (d. _____) with takeout coffee cups and empty bags. But a business book suggests that neat people are actually less (e. _____) and less creative, or at least so says the book's author, David Freedman.

A mess, it turns out, works (f. _____) well for the person who made it, he explains. It becomes a filing system of (g. _____). Take Karen Jackson, who (h. _____) admits that her desk looks like a disaster area. Yet it's an organized mess, she says, because she knows where everything is. Clean it up, or otherwise (i. _____) the mess, and the method behind the madness goes out the window.

What may come as the biggest shock, though, is how a messy workspace can serve as a natural (j. _____) system. Old papers and notes stacked with more recent information will get picked through. As a result, connections between the old and the new become possible, which (k. _____) into increased creativity and opportunity. Filed away papers, on the other hand, usually end up forgotten, and anything thrown away is lost forever. As for (l. _____), tidy employees usually spend from one to four hours per day keeping their desk clean, time more productively spent (m. _____) to the tasks at hand.

But Barry Izsak, who heads the National Association of Professional Organizers, disputes the author's claims. Izsak explains that the average person, because of the mess, will often feel increased stress. There will be (n. _____) feelings of missed deadlines and lost opportunities. And according to another study, that inability to quickly (o. _____) information can cost companies money -- \$50 per week for each employee. At large organizations, that can quickly run into millions of dollars.

STEP ONE

Brainstorm: Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "efficient" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

STEP TWO

Vocabulary match: Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B. Use a dictionary for any words you don't know, but be sure to check your English-English dictionary, too.

a.	slob	q.	dangerous
b.	precarious	r.	type
c.	tack	s.	quickly
d.	overflow	t.	take back
e.	readily	u.	post
f.	disturb	v.	take care of
g.	sort	w.	bother
h.	attend	x.	associate
i.	accompany	y.	pig
j.	retrieve	z.	spill

STEP THREE

Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word.

	sorts	retrieve	precariously	disturb	readily
	slob	overflows	accompanying	tacked	attending
a.	Every office has at least one ().				
b.	Papers are stacked ().				
c.	Post It Notes from months and months ago are still () to the cubicle wall.				
d.	The garbage () with takeout coffee cups and empty bags.				
e.	A mess, it turns out, becomes a filing system of ().				
f.	Karen Jackson () admits that her desk looks like a disaster area.				
g.	Clean it up or () the mess, and the method behind the madness goes out the window.				
h.	Tidy employees waste time, time more productively spent () to the tasks at hand.				
i.	There will be () feelings of missed deadlines and lost opportunities.				
j.	According to a recent study, that inability to quickly () information can cost companies money.				

STEP FOUR

The Article: 1) Read the article, but don't worry about the missing words. 2) Fill in the blanks with today's vocabulary, followed by all the other words. 3) Read the article again, and circle any unknown words/phrases. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the words or phrases you circled. 4) Answer the questions to check your comprehension.

a.	How does the article describe the office slob?
b.	Why does Freedman consider a mess as a sort of filing system?
c.	Why does a mess increase creativity?
d.	How many hours does the average employee spend tidying his/her desk?
e.	Why would the average employee feel stress from a messy workspace?

STEP FIVE

Discuss: Write down five vocabulary words from today's article that you want to use.

a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

Now talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Every time you use a vocabulary word, place a check next to it.

a.	Do you think that messy people are more or less efficient than neat people? Why?
b.	Are there any very messy people in your office? If yes, does their messiness bother you? Why/not?
c.	Are there any very neat people in your office? If yes, does their neatness bother you? Why/not?
d.	Are there any negative connotations to being messy? If yes, what?

Score yourself:

10 or more times: Fantastic! Be sure to review the words at home.

6-9 times: Pretty good! You're on your way to acquiring today's vocabulary. Try writing your own sentences at home for additional practice.

5 or less times: Try harder next time! To acquire new vocabulary, you need to use the new words as much as possible.