

I Don't Have Time to Manage Records and Information



Fast Facts:

Eric Schmidt, former CEO of Google, has stated that between the dawn of civilization through 2003 about 5 Exabytes of information was created. Currently, that much information is created every 2 days.

Information overload refers to the difficulty a person can have understanding an issue and making decisions. This can be caused by the presence of too much information. Over 50% of knowledge workers feel the amount of information they are presented with on daily basis is detrimental to getting their work done.

Industry reports indicate that:

- * Knowledge workers spend up to 40% of their time searching for information;
- * 28% of office workers time is spent dealing with emails;
- * 70% of information is recreated instead of reused;
- * 60%-80% of workers say they can't find information they need;
- * 66% of knowledge workers feel they don't have enough time to get all of their work done; and
- * 94% of those surveyed at some point have felt overwhelmed by information to the point of incapacity.

Technological advances have increased the volume of records and information collected, created and received. Often, the organization, storage and disposal of this information is controlled by individual employees (e.g. in email accounts, personal file shares, workstations, etc.). It is understandable to feel you don't have time to manage records and information, however:

- You are already doing it: If you work with records and information you are regularly making management decisions including defining content, providing access, determining where it will be filed, how it will be named and whether it needs to be kept at all. You may be already doing this, but can it be done more effectively?
- Applying best practices on a regular basis improves time management: Good records creation supports faster access, appropriate sharing and reuse. Ongoing disposal means you can focus on priorities.

Some best practices include but are not limited to:

- Know what information needs to be kept and what can be securely disposed of. The [Management of Information Act \(MOIA\)](#) has different requirements for government records that have long-term legal value versus transitory records that have no ongoing value.
- Process information as it comes in. Set a recurring appointment to sort, file or delete/destroy. Consider grouping it in three buckets:
 - Action: Records related to your mandate you are responsible for managing. Delete unnecessary drafts as soon as possible.
 - FYI: Information for review but does not require action. Move to the transitory folder on review.
 - Transitory: Securely destroy or delete as a regular course of business (e.g. daily, weekly, etc.).
- Collaborate effectively, especially internally where shared technologies can be used. For example, store files centrally and then email links to the location for review instead of using attachments.

Learn more about IM:

- Speak with your supervisor to learn about IM rules for your work group
- Review OCIO best practices on the OCIO website
- Complete [IM@Work: Making Information Management work for You](#)