

MEMORY STRATEGIES: Prospective Memory

Prospective memory: REMEMBERING TO DO SOMETHING IN THE FUTURE

We're all bad at this kind of memory, so rather than depending on it we need to just externalize or outsource prospective memory tasks. If you find yourself saying "I must remember to..." **ASSUME YOU'LL FORGET & DO SOMETHING TO PREVENT IT**

Whatever strategy you choose, do it EVERY TIME. If you make it a habit or an iron clad rule, you don't have to wonder if you did it this time or not.

1. Whenever possible – do things right away (put the appointment in your phone on the spot; call the clinic; fill out the form; send a meeting request)
2. Set a labeled alarm or alert on your phone - reset it if you can't do it right away
3. Jot a quick phone message & hold it in your hand until you get it in the calendar
4. Write down the thing from the kitchen you need, even though you're just upstairs
5. Sticky note where you'll see it at the right time (doesn't work for repeated tasks)
6. Safety rules you never break: e.g. you never leave the room the candle is in, burner always off if there's nothing on it
7. Put a barrier in your way to cue you to follow the safety rule (put the laundry basket in the doorway to remind you to unplug the iron)
8. Put the object where it needs to be used or remembered (permission form in the lunch bag)
9. Anchor the new habit to an old one (calendar by the coffee machine)
10. Put something out of place that you'll see when you return (e.g. salt and pepper shakers on the bill you were paying when the phone rang)
11. Checklists, charts, pill boxes
12. Calendar: paper or smart phone or iPad – whatever you use, USE IT EVERY TIME
13. A shared to-do list you look at first thing in the morning & last thing before bed