

# KANTNER'S Tire Service

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## Ask SCORE

### SPRING CLEANING FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

Staying organized is one of the most important jobs you have as an owner running a small business. It is also one of the most challenging. Busy small business owners are running full steam ahead and it can be tough to stop long enough to file away receipts and clean out your inbox. Taking time out of your busy schedule to get organized will actually save you a lot of time in the long run. That is why once a year (or more) every small business owner needs to give their business a good 'spring' cleaning.

While every small business is unique, here are four steps every owner can take right now to clean up your business and create a huge boost in productivity.

**Back-Up What You Need, Purge What You Don't** – Filing your (digital) paperwork is small business spring-cleaning 101. And, just as important, is removing documents and files that you no longer need. File or store important documents in the cloud, on an external hard drive, or in a filing cabinet. If you have a stack of old paper documents containing sensitive information, shred them.

**Clean Out Your Inbox** – Getting emails into folders and out of your inbox is a spring-cleaning task that will make a big impact on your ability to stay organized. You will feel less overwhelmed and reduce the risk of that all-important email getting lost in the clutter.

**Declutter Your Workstation** – Clutter creates stress – something no business owner needs. The items on your desk should be ones you use each day, like pens, notebooks, a laptop or tablet, and any specialty tools your work

requires. Everything else should have a home in a desk drawer, on a shelf or somewhere else close-by. An easy and inexpensive way to keep your workstation clean is with drawer organizers, shelves, and a filing cabinet.

**Find Tools That Help You Stay Organized After You Clean** – Once you have finished your small business spring-cleaning, look for simple ways to stay organized. If you are most productive when you create a list of to-do's, invest in a daily planner and note pads. If you prefer using apps and other tech tools to do business, there are several apps out there designed specifically for staying organized. Look for apps that allow you to manage lists, take notes, connect to your calendar or planner, and set reminders. A few examples of organization apps include trello.com, todoist.com and evernote.com.

The best spring cleaning plan is continued maintenance throughout the year. If you can create a process for maintaining those tasks tied directly to your productivity – like filing documents once a month or taking 20 minutes every Friday to reset your workstation – you'll increase the health of your business, get more done in less time and, ultimately, be more profitable.

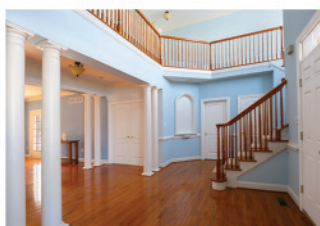
When creating a plan to stay organized, it is always helpful to take guidance from an outsider looking in, like a SCORE mentor. A SCORE mentor will not only help you get organized, but they'll work with you to uncover and set up the tools that will best help you stay organized and be more productive. Contact a SCORE mentor today to get started.



## STEVE LADNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Published in GQ, Harpers Bazaar, French Vogue,  
I live and work in the Chester Springs area.

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