

A tidy desk can increase your attention span by **167%**

Action figures, bamboo plants, piles of paper—no matter what form your desktop clutter takes, it's probably undermining your focus. In a study conducted at the University of British Columbia, participants were given a task in either a neatly organized room or one littered with supplies. Those in the orderly space stuck with their assignment for 1,117 seconds before giving up, while those in the messy environment quit after 669. Researchers surmise that when we're faced with messiness, self-regulation—the internal force that keeps us going in spite of frustration—plummets since we see the chaos as a threat to our own sense of control. Other than resolving to clean up, how can we combat this? Study co-author Boyoun (Grace) Chae suggests improving your mindset by building strong relationships or by honing expertise in your field. In other words, start fresh!

STILL NOT CONVINCED?

In a separate experiment, participants in a cluttered area took 10 percent longer to complete a quiz than their counterparts in a neat workspace.