

# Getting Things Done (GTD)

## Problem

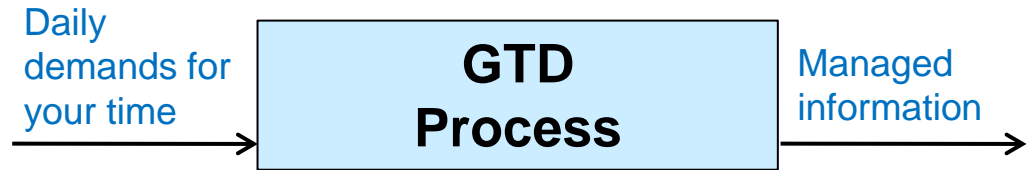
How to manage day-to-day activities?

## Difficulty

Easy to use

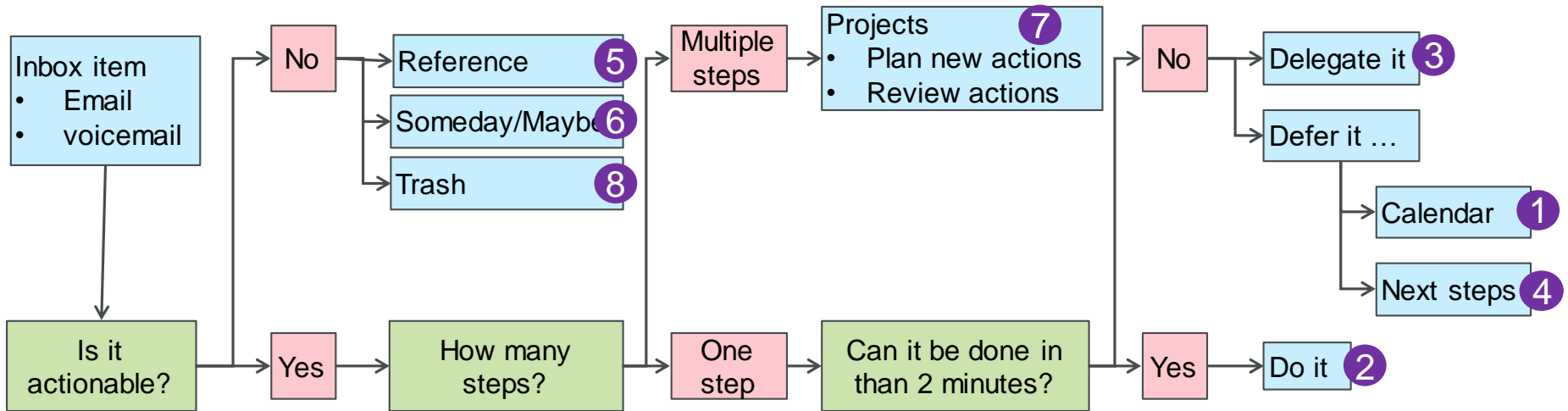
- **Getting Things Done (GTD)** is a time management and productivity system for individuals.
- GTD's process manages daily inputs, and their disposition, to avoid mental clutter and stress.
- GTD has general guidelines, but can be tailored as needed.

GTD created the **2 minute rule**:  
If an activity will take less than two minutes, do it right away.



- 1. Capture everything:** Capture anything that you are involved with, large or small. Put these things in your inboxes. Update daily.
- 2. Clarify:** Convert every item in your inboxes into clear and concrete action steps. Determine the next step for each item; remove from inbox and ...
- 3. Organize:** Disposition each item into one of the lists:
  1. Calendar – holds appointments
  2. Complete action – in less than 2 minutes
  3. Delegate – when appropriate
  4. Next actions – tasks which are not project specific
  5. Reference – file away as needed
  6. Someday/Maybe list – low priority tasks
  7. Project task list – for items with more than 1 step, an item is given a defined action and a next step
  8. Trash – items no longer of importance
- 4. Review:** Frequently review, update, and revise your lists.
- 5. Engage:** Select activity to do next based on: context (e.g., home, office), energy level, priority, & time available

# GTD – Example – Maintaining the 6in6 concept



## Managing daily inputs (Note: most emails and texts are acknowledged)

1. Email (from local Quality meeting): Here's the date for your next 6in6 presentation [Put on calendar]
2. Voice mail (from colleague): Have Amazon print up 6in6 PDF file as a book, and send to me. [Do it]
3. Text (from colleague): There is a typo in a 6in6 presentation. [Delegate; send to 6in6 staff to fix]
4. Email (from 6in6 staff): Create template for 6in6 presentations. [Next steps. Put single action on list]
5. Email (from Google): Here is data on the number of 6in6 site visits. [Store for later]
6. Call (from 6 sigma friend): Can you create YouTube videos for each 6in6 topic? [Someday/Maybe]
7. Email (from 6in6 fans): Please create a 6in6 presentation on topic XXX [Project "new presentations": do background research within 2 weeks, follow-up with next production steps]
8. Email (from spammer): Special! Buy 3 tires and get 4<sup>th</sup> one free. [Trash]

## Daily activities

- A. Disposition input information (as shown above)
- B. Assess current state (e.g., energy level)
- C. Select next most important task based on current state and execute.
- D. Repeat.

## Weekly activities

- A. Review all lists
- B. Move items between lists and change priorities, as needed.

# Getting Things Done – Notes

## Slide 1

1. David Allen developed GTD and wrote the book “Getting Things Done” in 2001.
2. The GTD approach is based on this: the more information you keep in your head, the harder it is to focus on specific tasks.
3. **GTD Strengths**
  - **Encompassing:** GTD is a single system for all contexts (e.g., work and home)
  - **Gets things done:** GTD breaks a big task into smaller tasks, making it easier to get started and to incrementally finish an effort.
  - **Memory:** GTD ensures that no tasks get lost.
  - **Reliability:** GTD ensures tasks get done.
  - **Structured:** GTD’s lists keep you focused on what needs to be done.
  - **Unstructured:** GTD does not force specific efforts, but enables you to use time effectively.
4. **GTD Weaknesses**
  - **No prioritization:** GTD does not help with prioritization.
  - **Unstructured:** GTD does not directly help with planning a day’s activities.
  - **Takes time to learn:** While GTD is easy to understand, it takes time to make it a habit.

## Slide 2

1. This example is about activities related to maintaining the 6in6 concept.
2. Daily inputs come in many forms: emails, telephone calls, texts, voice mails, etc.
3. In addition to the projects created by the daily input of information, there are also long-term projects with actions to be addressed.