The PARA Method

General Ideas

- A System to organize needs to be simple to free up attention
- A system to organize needs to free up time
- You need to organize for actionability. So for when you will use the information and where

PARA Method

- All information is categorised in

5 Categories of PARA

Projects	Areas	Resources	Archives
= Short term efforts you are working on. Something with a definite end to be completed • First create a project list • Connect them to your long-term goals. You projects need to bring you towards your goals • Break them into smaller projects as needed • Define clear goals with a measurable end	= Long-term efforts you want to manage • A responsibility or standard to be maintained • E.g. management, customer service, financial analysis, strategy, coaching, direct reports, or advising. • Private things you collect for yourself	= Topics or interests you might someday want to use • Like Areas, but for things you are merely interested in and not responsible for • E.g. Holidays or skying • Public things to share	= Items you don't need anymore

3 Step Setup Guide

Step 1:
- Archive everything
- Put all notes you made in an archive folder with the date of archiving them
- Don't delete, just put it out of sight

Step 2:
- Create project folders
- Create a folder for each project

Step 3:
- Create additional folders as needed
- NEVER create an empty folder

- Setup PARA on multiple platforms like your notes app and your Cloud Storage
- The folders do not need to be the same across all of them
- Use multiple platforms (Calendar, to-do list app, notetaking app, cloud storage drive and a local computer file system)
- If you get overwhelmed, just archive everything and start over again

Tipps to Organize

1. Create an Inbox:	• Create a fifth folder to collect all items • Keep them there and organize them into the PARA System in a different step • You might have multiple inboxes for items in your notetaking app or cloud storage
2. Number the folders:	• Number every folder 0 or 1 till X • 0 Inbox, 1 Projects, 2 Areas, 3 Resources and 4 Archives
3. Use a Naming Convention:	• Use clear and short descriptions on what files are • Use different types of names for the categories in PARA • Use emojis, capital or uncapitalized letters to differentiate the types of folders
4. Activate Offline Mode:	• Download the projects to your local device
5. Make Backups:	• Make regular backups to save your progress

Maintain the PARA System

1. Review the items in your inbox and rename them
2. Organize them into the PARA folders
3. Update your project folders to fit new incentives

- Keep Information Flowing between the categories
- Avoid Duplication of folders
- Mova Items, tag them or link them together

Using PARA as a Team

- The purpose of **Knowledge Management (KM)** is for people to effectively share their knowledge with each other
- Simply setting up a Wiki and telling people to put their knowledge in, does not solve the problem (= Top-Down Approach to KM)
  - It takes a lot of time to articulate ones knowledge for others to understand it
  - People are mostly not rewarded for sharing knowledge
  - People fear that by sharing knowledge they become replaceable
- KM has to be designed primarily to enhance the personal productivity of the peolpe

Four recommendations for KM in teams:

Set up PARA:	• Define Projects, Areas and Resources for the team • Define a project kick off and completion checklist • Set up official platforms to use PARA on • Define rules, guidelines and norms for documentation • Name a PARA Champion to manage the execution
Train people:	• Do workshops and coach people to use PARA
Share only shared projects:	• Let only people who work on a project access it
Encourage writing:	• The quality of communication is measured by how well it is recieved by the recipient • Be a good example for writing • Reward open communication in writing • Make communication simple, clear and solve a problem • Set a standard for how to write notes to be communicated

Deep Dives

Create a Project List

Step 1:	• List all your projects (5min) • Everything you want to achieve, learn develop
Step 2:	• Add a goal to each project • Define a clear outcome for when the project is finished E.g. Project: loosing weight, Goal: loose 10kg
Step 3:	• Add deadlines and timeframes E.g. loose 10kg by end of next year
Step 4:	• Prioritize the list • Always prioritize only for the next week. What is most important to act on next week
Step 5:	• Reevaluate the list • Get clear on what you want to pursue and what not

3 Habits for Organizing

Organize for Coutcomes:	• Sort everything for when/where it will be needed • Ask yourself how you are going to use the information • Only save things when they are useful for your goals
Organize Just in Time:	• Organize as little as possible, as late as possible • Don't organize for "just in case you need it" • Wait until your needs become clear and then organize your notes for what you are working on at the moment

Keep it informal:	• For PARA you only need to be precise about defining projects. Everything else should be somewhat messy
	
	 • DO
	   • Create simple folder structures without nesting to many
	   • Keep unstandardized format for notes and documents
	   • Keep Databases away from personal information
	   • Only create a folder when you actually put something in

Using PARA in Teams

- Knowledge Management should center around the productivity of the individual

1. Get clear on your organization's flavor of PARA
   - Define what a project and area is
   - Define standards, rules and guidelines for how to work with the system
   - Define what happens when projects start and are finished
   - Determine a PARA Champion to manage an coach the team

2. Train people in how to use PARA
   - Give the team the PARA Documentation

- Make workshops to teach them

3. Keep only shared projects on shared platforms
   - Let people ony access things they need for their work
   - Only projects with shared effort should be shared

4. Encourage a culture of writing
   - The quality of a note determines how well it is understood later on
   - Be a good example to the quality of your shared notes an writing
   - Praise good documentation
   - Set standards for how to take notes and standardize documentation