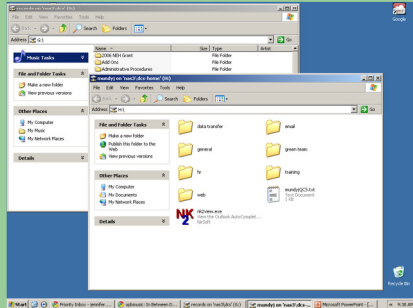# Electronic Records Management

Jennifer M Mundy
Max Johnson

Record Management Program
Multnomah County

NOTE TO SELF:

Open in background:

: Make folder on desktop w/Word Doc, PDF, and photo "metadata-demonstration"

: Gmail (labels)

: GoogleDocs spreadsheet of reorg

: Our website

: Commons

Focus = electronic

Transferability to paper world

Rules: Please feel free to ask questions at any time.
We'll stop for a couple of breaks during today's training.

Group introductions

Agenda

- Introductions
- Why?
- Definitions
- Retention
- Classification
- Managing Electronic Records

Goals for Today

1. Indentify reasons and a common language for working together on organization
2. Determine what to keep/delete
3. Master "Classification 101"
4. Learn tips for managing electronic records

---

1. Especially true in the electronic world (volume)
2. Including how to identify what is a record and who is responsible for keeping records
3. Easier to locate records
4. Both in Windows and in other systems like Google Apps

Records Management Program

- Records Center and Archives
- Retention schedules
- Consulting and training
- Image conversion services

36K boxes

Contact us

Why do you need skills in good records keeping?

The responsibility is in your hands to use these technologies in a manner that protects the public interest.

Modern technology puts the responsibility in your hands to actively manage the records and information you create and control.

You are responsible to use these technologies in a manner that protects the public interest.

Old model = central records rooms

New model = your computer desktop, shared drives

Even newer model: cloud, distributed services and storage

-Helps us do a better job/collaborate.

-Creates more professional image with the public.

-Greater equity in how we respond to public records requests.

-Greater efficiency: public records laws being proposed with response timelines.

> - State of Washington's timeline.
>
> -Butler Group found that 10% of a company's salary costs and a quarter of its staff time can be "frittered away by employees looking for information." ECM Connection, June 1, 2011.
>
> --Harvard Archives information/quotes on records management
>
> --California Public Records Act allows for 10 days to respond with documents: http://www.thefirstamendment.org/publicrecordsact.pdf

Reduces Costs

- Ensures records are available for audit and legal purposes
- Reduces costs of maintaining too many records

(click)

GRANTS - If financial records cannot be produced during an audit of a federal grant, the funds may have to be returned.

LITIGATION - Does everyone know what "discovery" means in relation to records?

("pretrial phrase of a lawsuit when each party can obtain evidence from the other party" - Wikipedia summarized)

(click)

Does anyone know what the costs of maintaining too many records might be?

Has anyone ever heard that there may be no costs because "storage is cheap"?

http://barclaytblair.com/origins-of-information-governance-powerpoint/
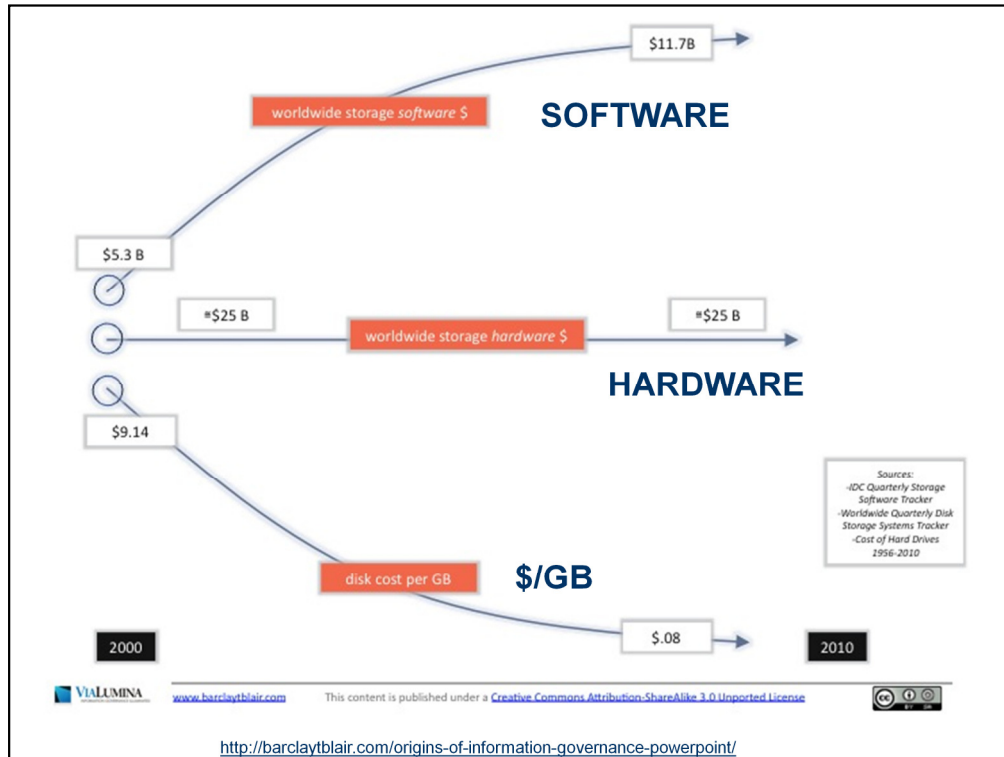
Conclusion: Volume also increases as we created bigger files and have more content. There is more to manage. Less stored content keeps costs down.

From http://barclaytblair.com/origins-of-information-governance-powerpoint/

-Bottom line: storage hard disk space now costs 100 times less than it did 10 years ago.

-Middle line: Yet the cost of storage hardware over the past 10 years has remained stable. Logically, this should drop the same amount as the hard disk space, or the "raw material" of the hardware.

-Top line: The reason for this? Storage software – the software that manages what is being stored – has more than doubled over the same period. (This does not include the cost of "content" management – labor and software). According to a Gartner Survey conducted in 2010, 47% of enterprises consider data growth to be among their top three challenges.*

-Conclusion – even though storage is cheap, the amount of content we are creating and managing continues to increase exponentially, driving up the overall cost of our systems. Future considerations: energy costs driving up electronic storage. Overall considerations: Storage is never JUST storage in records management. There will always be costs associated with access, maintenance, preservation and risk management.

-Cited in "Rolling the Dice with Predictive Code: Leveraging Analytics Technology for Information Governance", Leigh Issacs, *Information Management,* January/February 2013:

➢Enterprises will experience 650% growth in next 5 years, per David Rosenbaum, "That New Big Data Magic", cfo.com

➢"80% of this data will be unstructured and generated from a variety of sources, such as blogs, web content, and e-mail, states Adrian Bridgewater in a report on CWDN: The Computer Weekly Application Developer Network…"

*http://www.readwriteweb.com/enterprise/2011/08/who-uses-more-storage-infograp.php

Definitions and Concepts

1. **Public Records**
2. **Record Copy**
   - **Custodianship**
   - **Completeness**
   - **Context**
3. **Public Access**
4. **Retention**
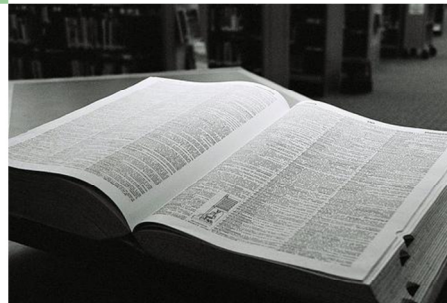
greeblie, "Dictionary," 8 March 2009 via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

Electronic systems such as email can produce a lot of stuff. The first two concepts we are going to talk about will help you decide what to keep, and what you can safely delete.

Then we will talk briefly about public access rules and appropriate use.

Finally, understanding retention and the records "life cycle" will help you with some basic concepts on how to manage the records you need to keep. We will also briefly discuss how public access and retention rules apply to the information on your desktop and in your office.

Incidentally, these concepts apply to hard copy records as well. We are highlighting them here because they are particularly useful in controlling electronic records.

1. "Public Record" means any information that:

(A) Is prepared, owned, used or retained by a state agency or political subdivision;

(B) Relates to an activity, transaction or function of a state agency or political subdivision; and

(C) Is necessary to satisfy the fiscal, legal, administrative or historical policies, requirements or needs of the state agency or political subdivision.

Oregon State Archives, ORS 192.005 (5)

Direct quote out of Oregon Revised Statute Chapter 192, commonly referred to as the Public Records Law.

• "Information" – independent of formats or technology.

• (A): Multnomah County is a political subdivision.

> • We are not responsible for maintaining the records of other political subdivisions.

> • Examples that you **receive** everyday that would not fit this: Spam.

• (B) Product of our daily work.

> • Examples that would not fit this that you may **create**: Text message to pick up kids (ask supervisor).

• (C) Also how we establish retentions.

Public Record

1. Public Records

Do **not** include:

"(d) Extra copies of a document, preserved only for convenience of reference.

(e) A stock of publications.

(f) Messages on voice mail"

Oregon State Archives, ORS 192.005 (5)

http://www.oregonlaws.org/ors/192.410

Additionally, there are several other categories of items that do not fall under the definition of public records. Those can be found here:

http://www.oregonlaws.org/ors/192.005

2. Record Copy

- County's official copy of a public record
- The opposite of *"(d) Extra copies of a document, preserved only for convenience of reference."*
- *"3 Cs": Custodianship, Completeness, and Context*

What to keep, what to delete.

2. Record Copy: *Custodianship*

- "Records custodians" are the people responsible for maintaining the record copies that document the particular activities, transactions or functions their office is responsible for.

Would a county medical clinic be responsible for maintaining tax records?
No, not the activity, transaction or function

What to keep, what to delete.

2. Record Copy: *Custodianship*

- Who that is varies depending on the business needs of a given organization
  - Program Specialists who **create** reports.
  - Office assistants who **file** records.
  - People who **manage** programs.
  - Records Center and IT staff who **maintain** enterprise records systems.
    - Where also varies: SAP, Shared Drives, EPIC, Central Files.

Here are some examples of records custodians

What to keep, what to delete.

2. Record Copy: *Custodianship*

- In large shared systems, the roles we play as records custodians are established by policy and procedure.

- In general, you are the records custodian for the records you create and maintain at your desktop.

What to keep, what to delete.

2. Record Copy: *Custodianship*

A. A weekly activity report you create, which you occasionally share with others.

B. The "Wednesday Wire" outlining upcoming county events which you receive every Wednesday.

C. An email response you sent to a citizen in answer to a question involving your services.

D. A scanned image of a document.

Quiz time. What to keep, what to delete.

A. If you create it, the one who creates is the custodian

B. Unless your job is to create and send out the WW, then you are not the custodian.

C. What about the message received? – you

•What if message was for another agency? Forward, the other agency is the record copy holder.

D. Whichever one you want to be the record copy.

2. Record Copy: *Custodianship*

- Safe rules - You are the records custodian responsible for maintaining the record when:
  - you create a record related to your job duties or business function, or
  - you receive a record related to your job duties or business function from an external source.

Safe rules for keeping/deleting.

Multiple recipients from an external source? Records Custodian is the one who takes action or responds.

2. Record Copy: *Completeness*

- The "record copy" is also the version of the record which is the most *complete*.
  - Most commonly, this occurs at the end of a workflow, such as a complete timesheet.

Adopted report, signed contract, etc.

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2. Record Copy: *Completeness*

1. Your report on contracts is incorporated as a whole into a larger departmental report.

2. You created draft A, which was merged with Suzie's draft B, and Michael's draft B.2, all of which got incorporated in Molly and Bob's draft F.5.2, which produced the final report.

1) If only part is incorporated, both are record copy.

2) Caution: Some formal processes, such as land use planning, require that formal drafts be maintained.

- If final report submitted to another county agency? You need to establish who is responsible, based on business need/function.

2. Record Copy: *Context*

- A complete record maintains its context.
- Context is what gives a record meaning.

•**Complete**: A simple way to understand context is to think of 2 emails: One asking for permission of the supervisor to do something, and the other from the supervisor giving that permission.

  •Each email on their own would be meaningless, or even could have the wrong meaning if taken out of context.

2. Record Copy: *Context*

- Sometimes the same record may serve a different purposes when placed in different contexts. *In this case, both would be considered "record copy".*

Employee of the Year File

Wanted by the Police File

- Electronic records can easily be placed into the wrong context.
    - Importance of proper identification, organization, and maintenance.

2. Record Copy: *Context*

- The quarterly reports on volunteer hours worked, from last year, are incorporated into a grant application for next year.
- Context = complete memory. *Will I need this information in the future to do my job?*

Which is the record copy? *Both* Can anyone explain why? *2 contexts: one is for internal tracking purposes, the other for grant application purposes. Each would be incomplete without the other*

(click)

One way to look at context is to think of it as memory: Do I have all of the pieces needed to provide a complete record for future reference?

2. Record Copy: *Summary*

- You need to keep the record because:
  - You are the Record **Custodian**, responsible for the activities, functions and transactions documented in the record; and/or
  - The record you are maintaining is the most **complete** version; and/or
  - The record provides important **context** to provide documentation of activities, functions and transactions, and...
  - **..keeping this record will help me do my job.**

Non-record copies can be deleted.

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3. Public Access

- Every person has a right to inspect any public record of a public body in this state, except as otherwise expressly provided by ORS 192.501 to 192.505. (ORS 192.420(1))
- Applies to both record copy and non-record copy. Applies to records in any media or technology.
- REC-2: Records Disclosure Practice

- **Exceptions** include items such as medical case files, on-going DA investigation files, and contractor pre-qualifications.
  - These are said to be "exempt from disclosure". They are still "public" records.
- **Deleting non-record copy** facilitates efficient responses to public records requests and discovery requests.
  - Between 65% to 95% of emails are non-record copy. Public access laws apply to all copies.
  - Mark Diamond, Four Elements of Defensible Deletion Strategy, 11/15/2010,
  - http://www.insidecounsel.com/2010/11/15/four-elements-of-defensible-deletion-strategy
- **Indentifying records custodian** also facilitates public access responses:
  - 2006 Multco Auditors Report: 33% of public records requests were unsuccessful, regardless of multiple attempts to request the records.
  - Requestors were bounced around – County workers seemingly did not know where records were or who was reponsible for responding to public records requests.
  - Requestors were questioned regarding their motives, which is against the spirit if not the letter of the law.
- **REC-2** is county procedure. Ask your supervisor first. County Attorney is also good resource.

Questions?

Break time

4. Retention

- Each state agency or political subdivision shall maintain a public record or accurate copy of a public record in accordance with a retention schedule authorized under ORS 192.105 or section 3 of this 2011 Act, without regard to the technology or medium used to create or communicate the record.

ORS 192.005(4)

How long a document should be kept.

• Retention requirements in public records laws ensure that records are available when needed for administrative, fiscal, legal, and historic documentation purposes, as well as public access.

•"Retention schedules" are the policies which list retention requirements. MORE IN A BIT

  •The Multnomah County Records Program is responsible for developing and maintaining these policies for all county departments.

  •It also serves as the county's liaison with the Oregon State Archives, which has the authority to establish retention rules state wide.

•Retention requirements only apply to the record copy.

  •This is why we can delete things that are non-record copy.

•Retention time frames can range from "retain until read" to permanent.

  •Most county retention requirements fall within a range of 3 to 10 years.

  •E records and maintaining access for full period.

4. Retention: Records Life Cycle

Creation

- Sending an email
- Filling out a form
- Opening a case file
- Creating a tax bill for payment

INTRO

•Records go through a "life cycle" during the time they are retained.

•Understanding that life cycle can help you better control the records that you have.

CREATION

•The records life cycle starts when records are created.

•These are some examples of how records may be created.

4. Retention: Records Life Cycle

Active

- "...records that are consulted in the performance of current administrative work."

Information and Records Management,
   Meadke, Robek and Brown

•Once created, records go through an active phase of their life cycle.

   •Here is how one text book defines that active phase.

   (simple explanation on next slide)

4. Retention: Records Life Cycle

- Examples of **active** records include:
  - Budget working documents for next year's budget.
  - An open case file.
  - A current contract.
  - An unpaid invoice.
- *Active records need to be easily available while they are active.*

4. Retention: Records Life Cycle

Examples of when records become **inactive**:

- The task is complete.
- The information is acted upon.
- The case is closed.
- The contract expires.
- Payment is received.

4. Retention: Records Life Cycle

Inactive

- The period of time between when a record ceases to be active, and its *disposition*.
- Usually the longest period of time of the life cycle
- *Inactive records can be in a less accessible place*

• Inactive records do not need to be currently accessible because you do not need to access from for your current administrative work.

• Inactive records can be in a less accessible place

•Talk about and/or demonstrate example of how active/inactive accessibility can be used

   •in Gmail inbox vs. "All Mail" archive

   •Google docs collections

   •Shared drives

   •Digital repository

4. Retention: Records Life Cycle

Disposition

- End of the records life cycle/retention.
- For permanent records, may be the time the records are transferred to an archives.
- For non-permanent records (most), this is the time when the records can be destroyed or deleted.

-Long term records may serve different purposes than what they were originally created for:

-Voter registration cards being used for genealogical or naturalization purposes.

-Photographs originally intended to analyze traffic patterns in the 1930's being used to visualize our distant past.
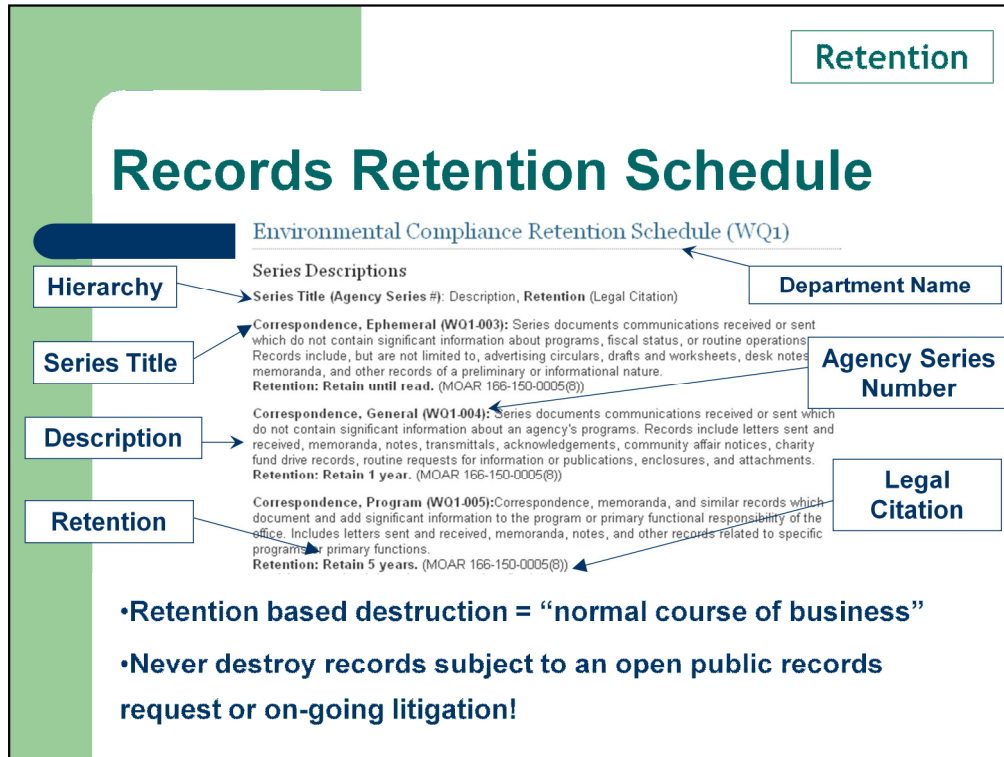
Point out correspondence categories and how they apply to email.

Show how to navigate to them on our website.
http://web.multco.us/records/retention-schedules

Show page on Commons
https://commons.multco.us/records/retention-records-commons

Read notes at bottom

Re-Cap

- Why is record keeping important?
- Public Records Law and The 3 "Cs" of Record Copy
  - Custodianship, Completeness, and Context
- Public Access and Appropriate Use
- Retention and the Records Life Cycle
  - Creation, Active, Inactive, Disposition
- Records Retention Schedules

Organizing Electronic Files

Easier to find

Easier to share

Takashi, "Files" 12 June 2005 via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution.

As we noted before, the amount of information stored electronically is growing.

One result of this is that the more data we create, the less effective search tools become. We get more inaccurate or unhelpful search results mixed in with what we actually want to find.

Additionally, the more information we have to search, the more complicated the search needs to be in order to find the information you want. Constructing an effective search term or terms requires you to remember dates, the people involved in the creation of the information for which you are looking, and the right lingo.

Even searching text can be unsuccessful if the terms you are thinking of don't appear in the text.

And, consider version control, or managing different drafts in a collaborative environment. Without some method of identification, relying on each of our own memories may result in the wrong drafts being updated or changed.

So what do we do? Consider two shopping markets…..**(click)**

First Market

- The shelves are cluttered and not very organized.
- It depends…..

Canned goods are mixed in with the meat and the produce, soup is mixed in with nuts. How long would it take to find something?

(click)

If its small, not long at all, with knowledgeable staff.

Speed and efficiency may not be main value – you may want to browse.

What if you were in a hurry and in a large supermarket organized like this?

It would be very difficult to find anything effectively. (**click)**

Second Market

- Organized by types of products: meat, produce, frozen food, dairy
- Classification System

You would want a super market to be organized like this. Note that the individual sections are even subdivided – the frozen food section may be divided, for example, into entrees, desserts, and frozen vegetables.

Why would you want to organize a supermarket this way?

- Size

-Need for efficiency – saves you time, saves money (frozen foods, for example, are more efficiently kept together due to the equipment needed)

When ever you shop in a supermarket, you encounter what we call in records management a (**click)**

Classification Systems

- Libraries
- Biology
- Commerce
- Systems that group like items together for purposes of identification and efficiency.
- Classification makes it easier to find things.

Classification Systems

- There is no right way or wrong way to tag, name or classify items.
- What's important is that it has meaning to you, and, if necessary, your workgroup.

Good Classifications are:

1. Logical
2. Consistent
3. Mutually Exclusive
4. Understandable
5. Functional
6. Simple
7. Retention Conscious
8. Flexible

(click through)

For example, our retention schedules reflect the county's organization structure. If you are reasonably familiar with that structure, you can understand the system's logic.

2. Consistent

	Given >	Electronic Records Management
Training		
	Received >	New Employee Orientation

•**Go from the major to the minor**
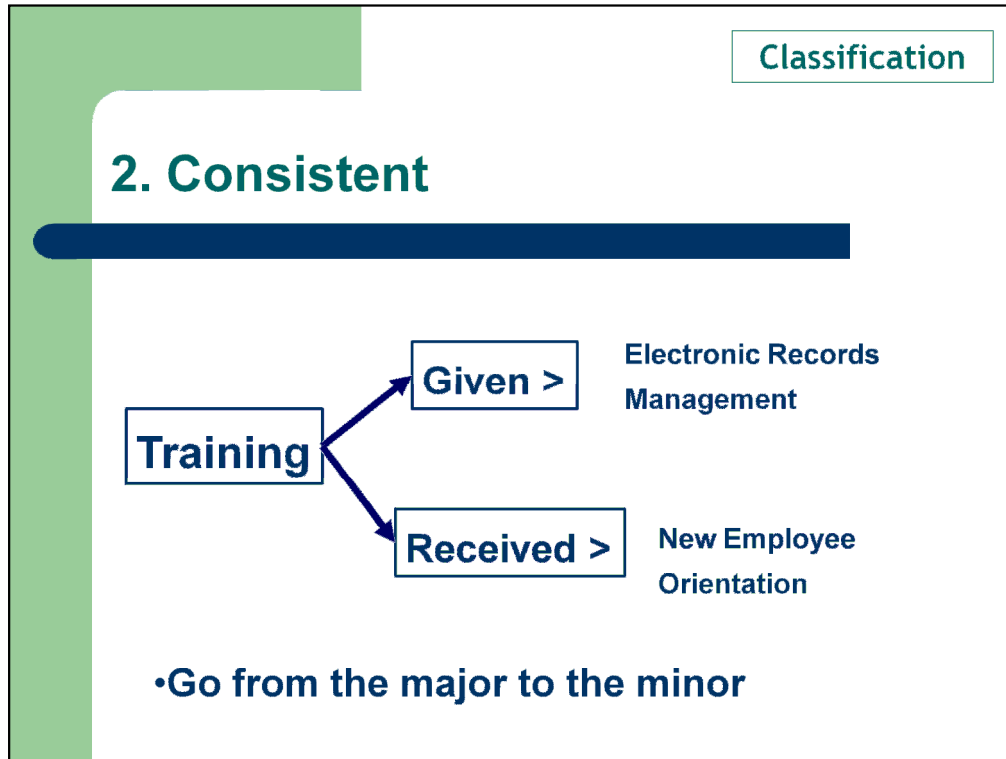
If I did other types of training, I would also tag those records with the word training.

What about training I might receive, for example, New Employee Orientation Training? **(click)**

In a relatively small system, training alone may work. In a larger, or shared system, a multi-tiered approach may work better. **(click)**

One source of consistency is to go from the major to the minor. The major category here is training, the minor categories are training given and training received. Organization charts are arranged this way, going from department to division to program.

 Another source of consistency is to use the same terms consistently, so that items relating to training are always named or categorized with the term "training". One way to look at this is to ensure the terms you use are **(click)**

3. Mutually Exclusive

- "Training" or "Education"
- "Building" or "Facility"
- No right or wrong way to do this.
  - For personal system, use the terms you feel you will most consistently use.
  - For shared systems, negotiate the terms as a group. Reflecting organizational language helps.
    - "Facilities Management", not "Building Management"
    - "Departments", not "Bureaus"

Read

(click)

In the previous example we just used, either training or education might work.

(click)

Similarly, these terms might work for files relating to your building or facility. Note that I'm saying "or", not "and". You want to consistently use one of these terms, but not both, as they are not clearly mutually exclusive. The problem with terms that are not mutually exclusive is that people will either copy everything into both, unnecessarily increasing the amount of records being maintained, or either one term or the other will be inconsistently applied, for example, as a tag, resulting in incomplete search results.

(click)

Read

3. Mutually Exclusive
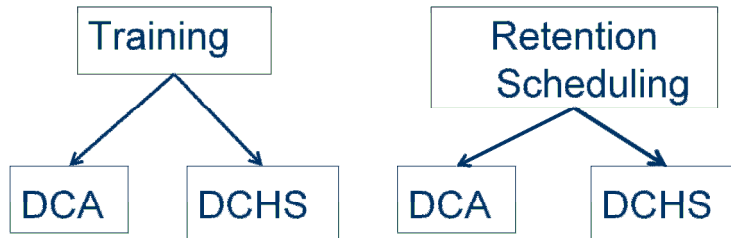
A clarification: This classification scheme would reflect the fact that I do training and retention scheduling for both DCA and DCHS. "Mutually exclusive" does not mean terms can't be repeated under those two classifications. As we pointed out before, classification terms often get their meaning from their relationship to each other, and it's the relationship between terms that make these classifications mutually exclusive.

3. Mutually Exclusive

Training → DCA, DCHS

Retention Scheduling → CAD, CHSD
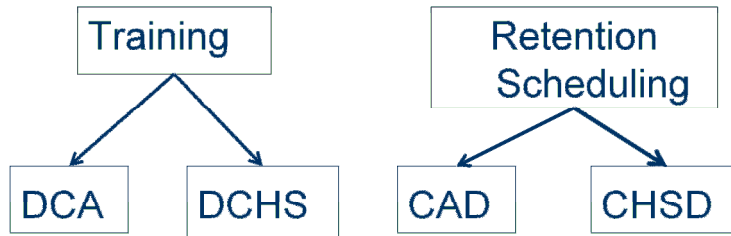
• SOM, School of Medicine, etc

However, this would be a violation of the "mutually exclusive" rule. The department acronyms have been changed, with the "D" appearing last instead of first. These terms are not mutually exclusive, and could cause confusion and mis-filing. This could be particularly confusing in a tagging environment such as gmail, where the relationships are not fixed into a hierarchy as in a filing or classification system.

(click)

(**click)**

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4. Understandable

- SAP

  Prd 1
  - MIGO

  Prd 2
  – CATS
    - CATS_APPR_LITE
- "Timekeeping" or "Payroll"

Lets say that one of the staff are asked a question about time keeping that requires them to retrieve a document, and they are told to search in the SAP folder.

(click)

In a way, this makes sense, doesn't it. After all, we utilize SAP for time keeping. So they open the SAP folder, and here is what they find….

(click)

Unless they had the technical expertise in SAP, how quickly do you think they would find a timekeeping document within this classification scheme?

What would be a better category for records about timekeeping?

(click)

Particularly with shared systems, utilize non-technical terms that can be easily remembered and understood. Only use technical terms when necessary, and make sure everyone understands them: SOM, School of Medicine

Did it make sense to put time keeping records under SAP? *No*

How about records regarding how to use SAP, or interactions you are having with the SAP team? Would it make sense to put those records under SAP? *Yes*

This is because a good classification system is (click)

5. Functional

Analyze Records Management Program, including Records Center operations, Archives, retention scheduling, image conversion and Records Management consulting. Develop, monitor and implement related budget, purchasing and contracting. Monitor facilities usage.

SAP is a system, not a function.

One good way to illustrate function is to look at a typical job description. This is a paragraph taken out of my job description. As with most job description, it lists the functions I perform, and these often can form a good basis for tagging, naming, and classification schemes.

For example, what might be a good classification for quarterly statistics on Records Center usage, used primarily for trend analysis?

(click)

5. Functional

Analyze Records Management Program, including **Records Center** operations, Archives, retention scheduling, image conversion and Records Management consulting. Develop, monitor and implement related budget, purchasing and contracting. Monitor facilities usage.

Records Center would be a good classification title, since that is one of the principle functions I do.

What if I used those statistics to build a separate spreadsheet that reflected our cost allocation plan for next year's budget? What would be a good classification for that?

(click)

5. Functional

Analyze Records Management Program, including Records Center operations, Archives, retention scheduling, image conversion and Records Management consulting. Develop, monitor and implement related **budget**, purchasing and contracting. Monitor facilities usage.

Budget – the function being performed is a budget function, and even though the statistics reflect Records Center activity rates, their purpose or function is actually tied to our annual budget. This is why placing both those documents under a "statistics" category would not be as effective, because the category does not reflect as accurately a function or purpose. – Work on this one on Monday.

As part of my duties, I maintain a contract for image conversion services. This is really the only major contract I maintain – what would be a good category for it? **(click)**

5. Functional

Analyze Records Management Program, including Records Center operations, Archives, retention scheduling, **image conversion** and Records Management consulting. Develop, monitor and implement related budget, purchasing and contracting. Monitor facilities usage.

Image conversion good because only contract. Remember point 2, that good classification systems are consitent, where we talked about going from the major to the minor? In this case, image conversion would be the major category.

If I maintained multiple contracts, ie if contracting was one of my major functions, it may make more sense to use contracts as a category, with image conversion a sub-category of that. Then contracting would be the major category and image conversion would be one of the minor categories.

(click)

Setting up building files, and you want to make sure that you capture all of the location classifications correctly.

6. Simple

- Don't create classifications beyond 4 levels. (Optimum is 2-3)
- Start with only the major functions or topics you need now, then expand as demand warrants.

Talk about drive reorganization.

Jenny : File path problem (256 characters)

7. Retention Conscious

From the Budget Office retention schedule:
- Budget Preparation Records: 10 years
- Budget Evaluation Records: 10 years
- Adopted Budgets: Permanent
- Could be handled by different tags, classification categories, even naming conventions (including "Adopted" in the file name).

Don't mix records with long retentions with records with short retention records.

Facilitates weeding and disposition.

More important with shared enterprise systems than most individual systems.

8. Flexible

Training	Retention Scheduling
DCA DCHS	DCA DCHS
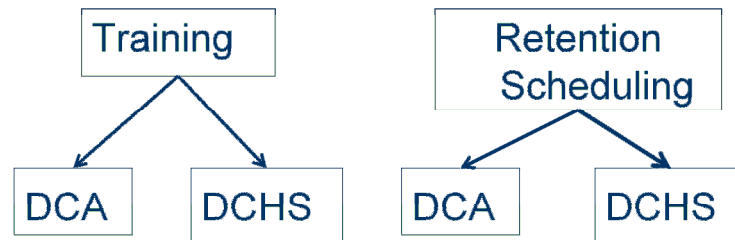
Major to Minor relationship is function to department.

8. Flexible

DCA → Training   Etc…

Retention Scheduling → DCA, DCHS
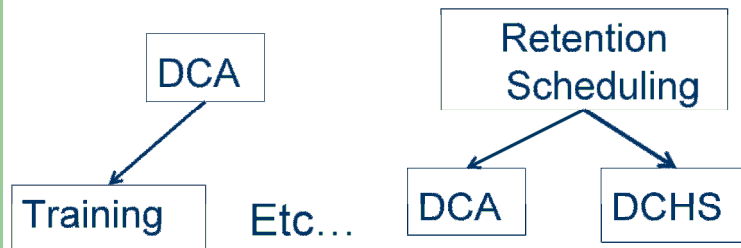
•**Be flexible enough to do what makes sense for your particular needs, and to allow for easy expansion if necessary.**

This might actually be a more accurate reflection of the real major minor relationship, particularly if the training I do is relatively small, and only for one department.

Questions about Classification?

1. Logical
2. Consistent
3. Mutually Exclusive
4. Understandable

5. Functional
6. Simple
7. Retention Conscious
8. Flexible

Break time?

How might you organize these files?

Managing Electronic Files

Now that we've discussed why good record keeping is important, familiarized ourselves with records management terminology, and established the basics of classification, let's talk more about how to implement good electronic records keeping.

Standards

Getting your ducks in a row

Ducklover Bonnie, "Three ducks in a row," 2 August 2010 via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribute

standards and best practices. Consistency
Work with your coworkers

Document if needed

Where to Save

Your networked drive	= Working drafts
	= Position specific records
Department drive	= Shared program records
C: drive	= NOT backed up
DVD/CD/Flash	= transfer: yes, storage: no

Enterprise system

PII and PHI

Windows Folders

- Easy to browse when organized

- Easy to share files with coworkers

- Records in Context = Full picture

Organizing Your Folders

- Classification by office function

- Keeps related content together

- How will you look for it later?

Review and deduplicate.

Look at paper systems.

Primary functions of your office or your job.

Using years for retention

Organizing your folders in this way will make your browsing more logical.

Using Metadata

- Descriptive Titles

- Adding to File>Properties

- Using Windows Search

Email : Gmail

- Gmail labels

- Faceted classification

- Inbox as a "to do" list

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Labels demo

Email : Record Copy

- Postini

- Delete if no longer needed

- Appropriate use policy

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DEMONSTRATION :

2) Navigate to Postini; export an email

Email : Saving offline

- Print-to-PDF

- For context or to share w/coworkers

- No need to download PST files

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Context and reference.

DEMONSTRATION :
3) Print to PDF

Why Organize if You Can Search?

- Not all search engines are created equal.
- May have too many results to look through.
- Browsing is often quicker.
- Content grouped logically and visually. Files are in context.
- Email To-Do list

Naming Conventions

Use descriptive file names

Example:
Your office's annual report to the division director from 2006.

Examples: AR06.doc ------------------------> Not understandable

Report06.doc   --------------------> Still too vague

AnnualReport2006.doc ---------> Better

This also will help you and your coworkers identify a file if it is seen out of the context of the folder it is saved in. This can happen if you email a file, or if the file is copied in response a public records request.

Naming Conventions

Use unique file names

Example:
Your office's budget spreadsheet for fiscal year 2009/2010.

Examples: Budget.xls ----------------------------->Too little information

Budget_FY0910.xls ----------------> Better

Budget_template.xls ---------------> Also useful

Also helps prevent someone saving over the budget from a previous year. Records must be stable and unchanging. If you have a file you use as a template for other files, name it as such.

Naming Conventions

Use dates or version numbering

Example:
Updated project files for Project 17432

Examples: Project17432_new.pdf   ------------> Which new is "new"?

Project17432_20110214.pdf -----> Better

Project17432_ver2.pdf   -----------> Better

Project17432_final.pdf ------------> What do you think?

Keep it consistent

Naming Conventions

Avoid spaces and periods;
Use underscores and hyphens

Examples: Invoice 2006 6863L.pdf ----------------------> Spaces used

Invoice.2006.6863L.pdf ----------------------> Period used

Invoice_2006-6863L.pdf --------------------> Better

Posting to the Internet:

Employee Contact List 2006.pdf = Employee%20Contact%20List%202006.pdf

Spaces are generally not a problem if the files are only used on computers running Windows, but it is something to be aware of if you frequently share files with external customers.

Periods are a problem for backwards compatibility, and long term storage. Once software is gone that reads that file type, the system can have difficulty interpreting it.

Planning for Organization

Cornell University Library. "Two views of unusual type of filing cases used by textiles and clothing department. ..." 25 August 2009 via Flickr Commons.

What starts our as simple can quickly become messy.

It's never to early or too late to plan for organization.

Before Reorganization
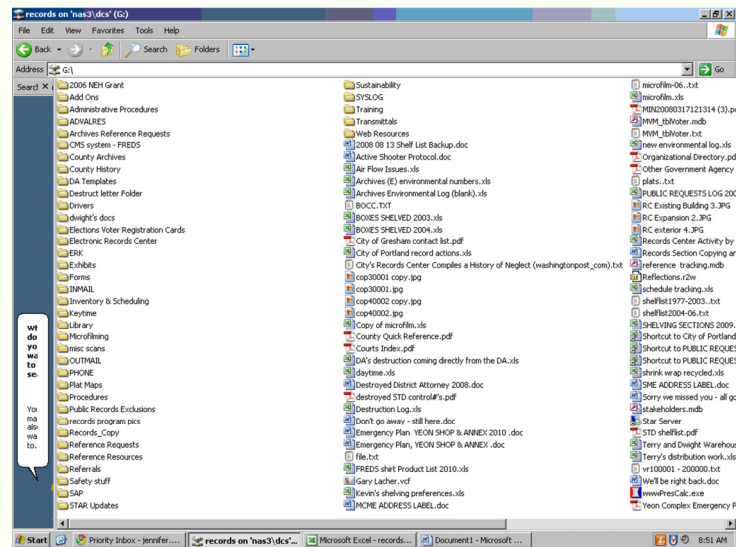
Organizing into a spreadsheet

Inform and work with your coworkers.

Tool to generate file listing to copy and paste into spreadsheet
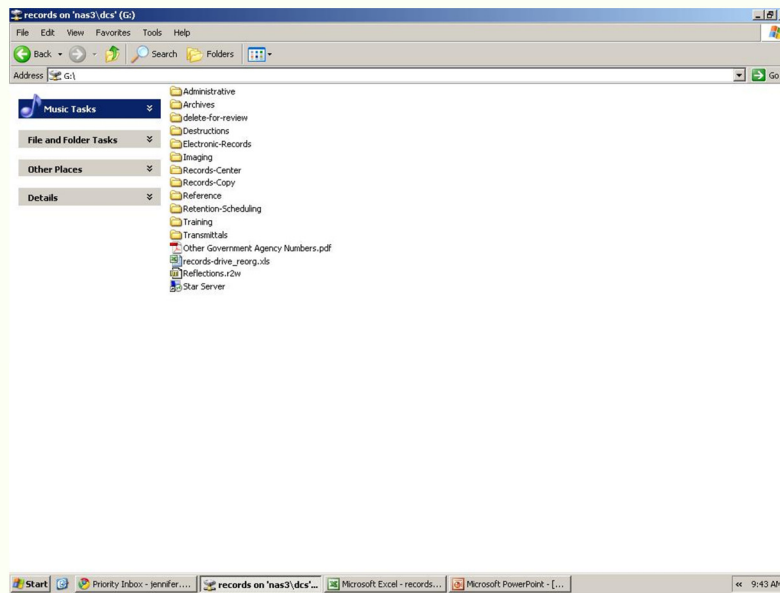
At the request of my coworkers, I also moved a few high-use folders and files that we wanted quick access to on the top level of the shared drive.

Goals for Today

1. Indentify reasons and a common language for working together on organization
2. Determine what to keep/delete
3. Master "Classification 101"
4. Learn tips for managing electronic records

1. Especially true in the electronic world (volume)
2. Including how to identify what is a record and who is responsible for keeping records
3. Easier to locate records
4. Both in Windows and in other systems like Google Apps

Contact us with your questions.
We're here to help!

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x83741

A. Please contact the Records Center when you:

1. Want to transfer out physical records to be accessioned into the Records Center as you have done in the past

2. Want to transfer electronic records to be accessioned into the Electronic Record Center that are taking up valuable server space or that are to be kept permanently

3. When you need help interpreting retention schedules

4. Would like additional assistance with any of the topics we've discussed today, including classification, organization, and best practices.

4. Any questions

5. Reminder to contact us with future questions/pass out business cards