

THE FIRST 30 DAYS · NEW SECRETARY TOOLKIT

FREE SAMPLE

When Your Mind Goes Blank

5 free response cards for new admins: what to say, and what to do next.

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Three sentences for almost any situation

From **Confident From Day 1** · bosmama.com

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Your mind goes blank. That's normal.

Under pressure, most people lose their words for a moment. You don't need a perfect answer. You need a next step. These cards give you one.

The 10-second reset

- 1 **Breathe out slowly.** A long breath out gives you a second to think.
- 2 **Repeat it back.** "So you need the March report?" It buys time and checks you understood.
- 3 **Choose one:** answer it, check it ("Let me check and come back to you by 3"), or ask ("Which should I do first?").

How to use the cards

- ☐ Read these 5 once this week, in a quiet moment, so the words are familiar before you need them.
- ☐ Star the five you are most likely to need in your job.
- ☐ Take a photo of those pages for your phone, or print them, cut along the dashed lines and keep them in your notebook.
- ☐ When it happens, don't search for words. Read the card, say it in your own way, then do the "Then".

WHY IT WORKS

Having the words ready ahead of time means you don't have to find them under pressure. It's the same reason pilots and hospital teams use checklists for stressful moments: nobody has to rely on memory at the worst time.

When you don't know the answer

Nobody expects you to know everything in your first month. They do expect you to find out.

1 Someone asks for "the usual"

SAY

"I'm still learning the routines here. Can you show me what the usual looks like, so I get it right?"

THEN

Write the answer in your desk manual, so you only ask once.

2 You don't know the answer

SAY

"Good question. Let me check, and I'll come back to you by [time]."

THEN

Write the question and the time down now. Come back before that time, even if it's only to say you're still checking.

3 You don't understand the instruction

SAY

"Just to make sure I get this right: you'd like me to [repeat it back]. By when?"

THEN

Send a two-line email that confirms what you agreed.

4 A name, file or system you've never heard of

SAY

"I haven't come across that yet. Where can I find it, or who should I ask?"

THEN

Add it to your Who's Who Map or your desk manual.

5 Only your boss can answer

SAY

"I'll need to check with [boss's name] on that. Can I come back to you this afternoon?"

THEN

Add it to your list for your boss, with the person's name and their deadline.

REMEMBER

Three words that buy you time: "Let me check." Then always come back.

Three sentences for almost any situation

"Which should I do first?"

THERE'S MORE

Want all 30 cards?

These 5 cards come from **Confident From Day 1**, a practical first-30-days system for new admins.

The full kit walks you through your first month

- ☐ **Get through Day 1 without guessing:** the 30-Day Plan, the First Impression Kit and your introduction scripts.
- ☐ **Figure out how the office works:** the Boss Profile and the Who's Who Map.
- ☐ **Learn to run the desk:** your desk manual, calendar and daily brief, phone scripts and the Meeting Kit.
- ☐ **Know what to say when things get awkward:** 29 conversations, all 30 response cards and Confidence at Work.
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From one admin to another.