

HOMEWORK

New Occupations for Office Supplies

by Steven James

Have you checked your 401k lately? While white collars rob the company coffers, trading in golden handcuffs for steel ones, an occasional dip into the supply closet registers little guilt. Who among us hasn't left a job with a few extra pencils and paper clips? Whatever motive drives the office thief, not doing something fun and un-work-like with your bounty is, if not a crime, at least a missed opportunity.

So, next time you find yourself breaking the Seventh Commandment on the company's dime, keep in mind the following alternative uses for cubicle contraband.



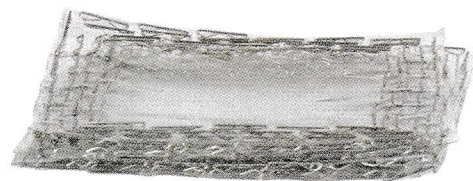
Full Metal Minibar

Once a fixture in the American workplace, the sturdy metal file cabinet has been pushed into early retirement by FileMaker Pro. Professionally sandblasted and powder-coated, or stripped and varnished at home, your salvaged relic will cater to another American labor-force tradition—the after-hours cocktail.



Tableware File

The incline sorter is the perfect way to display plates and napkins for an informal, sit-anywhere dinner party.



Stapled Coasters

Standard staples take on the look of fancy-pants embroidery when aligned in a repeating pattern. Here they join forces with a vinyl sheet or transparency to make stain-proof coasters. (For maximum effect, pair with the Full Metal Minibar.)