

E) FILING:

Too much paper is filed. This takes time, in both filing and later in searching for information in overcrowded files.

- * Before deciding to file anything, ask: "If I needed this, where could I get it?" The most likely place would be in the BICO (Bureau Information Control Office) or records unit. All originals and file copies should be sent there to be analyzed, indexed, inputted into the information storage and retrieval system and put away on the appropriate subject file when action has been completed. Each document originating in the department should have the originator's unique number (e.g. MGI-123) and every original document should be marked "file" and be initialed by the user (officer). Correspondence sent to the BICO or records office, ensures quick retrieval of the information for all who have a need to know.

The classification system in External Affairs is subject-oriented. Therefore, when new subject areas develop, the BICO analyst in consultation with the user, will open new files in order to accommodate any correspondence generated.

The BICO officer is an information specialist. Rely on this specialist for all information needs.

COMMON CONCERNS FOR SECRETARY/OFFICER TEAMS AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM

A) COMMUNICATION

In most teams, there is rarely sufficient communication, usually because of time pressures. Officers are often inaccessible because they are in meetings or away from the office.

- * Let secretaries know where you are going and for how long. It is important for them to be able to handle enquiries in an intelligent manner. It creates a professional image.
- * Give advance warning of rush jobs.
- * Ensure sufficient information when giving instructions. Check that you understand and that you are understood. Ask for feedback.
- * Remember, it makes a good impression to answer your own phone, and place your own calls. This can save the secretary's time and reduce interruptions.