



Bogged Down in Email?

Email seems to be dominating work communication, still. Even with social sites, smart phones and texting getting a lot of attention email continues to be the preferred method of communication in the work place. Some estimates are as high as 6 hours a day we spend working on emails. It's no wonder then that inboxes are expanding. Here are some ideas that can keep the hub of your work world manageable.

Respond Quickly

Some emails are packed with action items and can take time to respond to. You may need to research a given subject or review an attached (and lengthy) document before being able to respond intelligently. Take your time on those emails.

Many times though emails are simple questions or 'just double checking'. To these emails, respond and delete. Get them outta there!

Take the Combustible Stuff Offline

Important subtext that is a large part of communication is non-existent in email. Tone, body language, posture, hand-gestures, eye-rolling all are interpreted by both parties in a face-to-face conversation. How many times have i tried to express my sarcasm and sense of humor with just the right words in an email only to have it misinterpreted?

Make the walk or pick up the phone, but don't go heavy towards the keyboard. Especially, in situations that can be sensitive leave it off email.

Organize by Subject

We all get busy and keeping email threads clean is tedious work. Try organizing by subject when you know the email you're reading is part of a thread.

Organize by subject and delete the overlap. Many email services offer a one button clean up for threads with several emails in it. Push that button.

How often do you scroll to the bottom of a thread you've been included in since the first communique? Clean it up!

Alerts

A soothing chime, a message box or a flash in your toolbar. Whatever the case, each of these are a distraction from whatever you were doing (probably responding to another email). Try turning off your alerts.

Set Aside Time for Email

Schedule a time in your day to respond to emails. Some like to check their email while still in their pajamas and others while waiting in line for coffee. Setting aside times during the day gives you a chance to choose what you need to be doing instead of reacting to the irresistible ding of a new email.

Find a system that's comfortable for you. Hopefully, it includes time *away* from email too.

Fun Apps* to help stay on top of emails

*All computing/email environments are unique and new software should be carefully implemented. Ask an Agility Consultant about testing applications for compatibility in your unique environment.

Hubspot Sales

Ever wanted to know who opens your emails and when, how many times, from where, what links were clicked?

IFTTT (If This Then That)

- Get a text message when a specific person emails you.
- Send email attachments to Dropbox.
- Save starred emails to Evernote.
- Schedule reminders tomorrow for the emails you star in your inbox today.

Sanebox

If you're looking to automate prioritizing each email as it comes in, you may want to give SaneBox a try. There's nothing to install here: Basically, it works with any email client to create new folders.

The Email Game

If you're overwhelmed by the amount of email in your inbox but dread the thought of clearing it out, and you're a competitive person, The Email Game might be right up your alley. This free tool for Gmail and Google apps gamifies the act of clearing out your inbox.

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