

TIME SAVING TIPS USING E-MAIL

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Do you suffer from inbox overflow?

If you are like me, then we have sadly allowed e-mail to take over our working day. It's eating up most of our day and spreading the incorrect message that our jobs and careers consist of e-mailing clients all day. We are getting to the critical point that we are starting to think there is no other work if we have read or responded to all our e-mails. E-mails take too long to respond to, resulting in continuous inbox overflow for those who receive large quantities. Remember that e-mail is a communication tool, which has its place in business.

To deal with this problem, treat all e-mail responses like SMS text messages, using a set number of letters (words) per response. Since it's too hard to count letters, simply count a few sentences instead. Consider adopting a personal policy that all e-mail responses, regardless of recipient or subject will be five sentences or less. It's that simple. Another time saving tip is to type the subject line to be the exact message you are sending (i.e. answers the question or makes your point in the subject column).

Do not use an old e-mail sent to you some time ago on a different topic, hitting reply to save you the hassle of finding the e-mail address. This becomes confusing to the recipient, as the subject column information is from a different e-mail.

Try to send only one message per e-mail as this enables people to file the message once dealt with. More than one request per e-mail forces them to keep the e-mail open or mark it as unread again, as they try to complete the requests throughout the day.

To top this all off, e-mail has a cc button that involves many people reading the same message, which causes confusion regarding responsibility of the tasks in the e-mail. What often happens is that everybody reads the e-mail, but nobody takes responsibility and does the task/s.

A solution to some of the pitfalls of e-mail is the introduction of blogs. Blogs allow many people to read information and have a short response opinion. These short responses typically have a short lifespan. Blogs have filled the necessary gap between e-mail communication and one-on-one communication for all parties to read, and then to have a contributing opinion on what they have read. This seems to have become the next progressive step we have all been waiting for.

So, the cc button on e-mail is upgraded to people reading a blog and commenting on only what they wish to read. What a fantastic time saving tool as it eliminates receiving and reading unnecessary e-mails.

So, if blogs offer topical, question and answer, same day communication, imagine what value they could add to your business. Examples of this could be a de-brief after a meeting, an after sales service to ensure customer satisfaction, a blog opened for a limited time offering a service on how to benefit from the product you sell, or help with working through an instruction manual. Blog based communication could be included as a unique selling proposition of your business as you save valuable time for both parties.

I just love the power of technology!