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I hope you enjoy reading this e-book and if you have any questions, please email me - jani@emailsmart.com.au.

9 Indicators of Email Chaos

Introduction

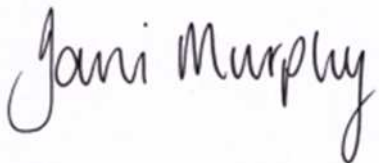
Email – can't live with it and can't live without it. True for you?

Most of us have a love hate relationship with email. On the one hand, it's a critical business tool; but on the other hand, we spend too much time dealing with our email instead of getting on with our 'real' job.



How can you tell if your email is out of control? (If you don't already know!) Let me share with you the 9 Indicators of Email Chaos.

Regards



9 Indicators of Email Chaos

1

You check your email constantly throughout the day.

Why not?

Email is not your work, it's the way your work comes to you.

If you're constantly checking your email, you're not getting on with your real job. Try limiting your email checks and focusing on the work that you want to get done.

Your Inbox is not a habitat – don't live there!

Check your email at regular intervals during the day.

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2

You check each new email as soon as it is delivered to your Inbox.

Why not?

If you're in the habit of checking your Inbox every time you're notified about a new email, you're not controlling your email – your email is controlling you!

Studies have shown that this habit means 64 seconds of lost time every time you check your email. This is known as the “interruption factor”. Multiply the numbers of emails you receive each day by 64 you get the picture.

Turn off your email notifications.

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3

You have accumulated a large (perhaps massive) number of emails in your Inbox.

Why not?

Having an accumulation of emails in your Inbox is a complete distraction.

Every time you need to find an email you have to scroll through a lot of emails you *don't want* in order to find the one email you *do want*. As you scroll through your emails, existing emails can distract you from the current task you are working on.

Keep your Inbox as clean as you can (preferably empty).

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4

You read an email many times before you decide what you need to do about it.

Why not?

If you don't make a decision as to what needs to be done when you read an email for the first time, guess what – that email is controlling you. You will have to keep coming back to that email until you do make a decision.

Touch an email once and make a decision as to what needs to be done it.

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5

It takes you a considerable amount of time to check your email.

Why not?

You receive a lot of email so it takes you a long time to check your email – right? Wrong. Don't fall into the trap of “doing” during your email checks.

When you check your email, if an email requires action, make a note of that action on your to-do list and file or delete the email. Don't *do* the action then and there - unless it will only take a couple of minutes. Emails that don't require any action at all should be should be filed in a folder as soon as you have read them.

Email checks are for processing not doing.

9 Indicators of Email Chaos

6

The first thing you do at work in the morning is check your email.

Why not?

Email is a great procrastination tool. Checking your email first thing in the morning can result in you spending a lot of time doing things that might not be that important.

Instead, try tackling the most important task you need to do that day. The energy you'll feel from starting and/or completing it will give you a boost and get you off to a productive start.

Then check your email.

Make the first hour of your day an email-free zone.

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7

You have a complex hierarchical folder structure in which you file your email.

Why not?

Your folder structure should make filing and finding emails easy. Massive folder structures make filing and finding emails harder. Too many choices.

Use broader categories for your folders in a simple, single level folder structure. As a guideline, try to keep the number of folders to less than a screen load long. This will make it easy to file emails – less choice - and, using the search function, easy to find emails.

When it comes to folder structures, less is more.

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8

You use email as your primary (almost only) communication tool.

Why not?

There are some types of communication for which email is not appropriate – e.g. urgent communications (email is not an immediate response tool); matters of a highly sensitive nature; or for achieving consensus.

Remember, the more email you send, the more email you receive. If you want to reduce the volume of email you receive, try sending less email.

Consider the outcome you want and use the best communication tool to achieve it.

9 Indicators of Email Chaos

9

You respond to emails as you receive them.

Why not?

This is one habit that will keep you constantly in your Inbox instead of getting on with the work that needs to be done.

Constantly responding to emails as soon as you receive them is not a sign of efficiency; it's a sign of poor workload management. You are allowing others to dictate what you do and when you do it. Email is not an immediate response tool.

Check your emails at regular intervals during the day and respond.

9 Indicators of Email Chaos

Conclusion

Email is used for over 60% of all communication in organizations and email volume is predicted to increase at around 40% per annum.

These two factors alone mean that it's essential that you become more skilled at managing your email. The more skilled you are; the more productive and in control you will be of what is the fastest growing communication tool in usage.

Want to know more?

If you would like to find out more information about how to stay on top and in control of your email, visit www.emailsmart.com.au and have a look at our programs and products; or email jani@emailsmart.com.au .