

Taming the E-mail Beast:
10 Key Strategies for Managing the Mess
of E-mail Overload



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A Leading Time Management/E-mail Overload Speaking/Training Firm

The Harsh REALITY



___ HOURS

What's your number?

●50?	●500?
●100?	●1000?
●250?	●2500?



Key Strategy #1: Multiple E-mail Accounts

- Multiple accounts
 - 1-2 “Professional” accounts
 - Your personal e-mail account
 - Your Internet e-mail account
- Rationale:
 - Focus your “work time” on WORK
 - Limit exposure to SPAM

Key Strategy #2: THE CLUTTER BUSTER!!! The Three-Minute, One-Touch Rule

- Every piece of information (*paper, fax, e-mail, v-mail, etc.*) you get you should touch one time.
- If you can take care of this task (accomplish, reply, file, read, forward, delete, toss, etc.) *in three minutes or less*, DO IT RIGHT NOW!!!
- If not, print or “task” for prioritization
- Then, file appropriately to be accomplished in order of priority or urgency (you decide)

A Great Outlook Tip for “Tasking” Your E-mails

- Use “Drag and Drop” to create a new task
- Works also for:
 - New Calendar Entries
 - Creating a New Contact
 - Creating a New Memo/Note
- Can also drag and drop from these other functions to e-mail and each other

Key Strategy #3: Don't Be a "Blinger"



- Resist temptation to constantly monitor
 - Turn off sound
 - Turn off "ghost"
- Instead, check at set points throughout day
 - To balance productivity with responsiveness
- Are you being forced to "bling"?
 - Ask for a "habit change"

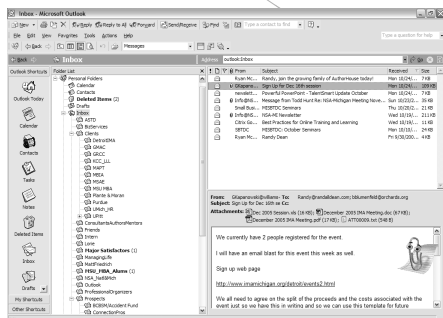
Key Strategy #4: Only Check at Set Points During Day

- For most professionals – four times per day:
 - First thing in morning
 - About an hour before lunch
 - Right after lunch
 - About an hour before you leave
- Can also check after project completions and after meetings

What if you are "customer / client service"?

- May need to check more often
- Realize project management and client management often compete
- Make sure management understands your true situation
 - Beware "Boss Ignorance"
 - Is this the best way to use your talents/skills?

Key Strategy #5: Build a Sensible File Structure



Key Strategy #6: Only “Active” E-mails in Your Inbox

- Goal is to get your inbox empty every day
 - Not easy, but still a goal
 - Take the action: reply, forward, tickle, file, delete
- Any items remaining require an action
 - Consider an E-mail “Priority” File?
- Three minute rule really helps!
- Everything else appropriately archived

File vs. Delete?

- I personally like LOTS of e-mail storage
 - Why not keep for future reference?
 - Folders are EASY to create; take up no space
 - May consider deleting attachments
- But, e-mail is “litigious”
- May want to consider organizational / departmental e-mail retention rules

Key Strategy #7: Manage CC's, Forwards, Replies

- When forwarding, point out specific info/actions
 - Consider deleting old text
 - Change subject line when subject changes
- Be considerate of others – don't overuse CC
 - "CC as a CYA"
 - Handling the "E-mail Firebomb"
- Don't forget the old standby – a conversation!
- Train others to use same system

Key Strategy #8: Be Ruthless with Possible Junk/Spam

- Be ruthless – poorly titled, just delete?
- Use caution with "generic greetings"
- Watch for sender's name "mismatch" with E-mail address
- Never open suspicious attachments
- Shift-Delete! Double Delete!
- Train others to use same system



Let's Talk SPAM

Common SPAM Identifiers:

- Generic greetings
- Fake sender/sender's address
- False urgency
- Fake URL links
- Emails with "web page" graphics and fields to enter data
- Deceptive URLs
- Misspellings and poor grammar
- Unsafe, unsecured sites
- Pop-up Boxes
- Dangerous Attachments

Source: PayPal.com

**Key Strategy #9:
Learn How to Search/Sort/
Use Rules**



- Learn How Your Search Function Works
- Use “Sent Folder” for Search/Sort?
- “Right Click” for Options
- Use “Rules” for Autofiling
- Try Other Options



**Getting to Sanity
from a Mess**

- First, how big is the mess?
- Consider date-based deletion
- Consider “from”-based sorting
 - To keep
 - To delete
- Drastic times call for drastic measures: a new account?

**Key Strategy #10:
Once Under Control,
DON'T LOSE CONTROL!**

- Why go through all the effort if just let it loose again?
- Personal rule: 20 messages MAX
- Softer with my personal account
- Don't care about my “Internet” account
- KEEP YOUR DISCIPLINE!

Final Thoughts:



Your next few days will be challenging!! Enjoy them!

- Set up your new personal/Internet e-mail accounts (if needed)
- Block some time on your calendar to clean out and reorganize your e-mail inbox and overall e-mail account(s), including new folders
- Identify some dedicated time in the next few days for setting up your other organization systems as rigorously as you deem necessary (3-Minute Rule your whole office?)
- Do a weekly “gut check” review of your e-mail account and your file organization system to make sure it is “running smoothly”
- Revisit these training materials occasionally

More Final Thoughts:

- Become an advocate and champion for proper time management/personal organization techniques and technology usage. Spread the word and infect others – it will only help you be more in front of your work.

Where to Get More Info:

- Randy Dean's new book: *Taming the E-mail Beast: 45 Key Strategies for Better Managing Your E-mail Overload* – learn more at: <http://www.emailsanityexpert.com>
- 90+ minute Audio CD version – learn more at <http://www.randalldean.com/offers.html>
- David Allen's *Getting Things Done*

Other Books from Randy Dean:

Randy Dean's *Major Satisfactors* = *Major Success*

Other *Randall Dean* Programs:

- Three Hour Version of this Program (with more content) – *Taming the E-mail and Information Overload Beast*
- Keynote/Breakout Session: *(RE)Awakening the Passion and Energy in Your Work (and Life)*
- “*Finding An Extra Hour Every Day*”
- Time Management & Organization Strategies for Busy Managers & Leaders (*1/2 to full day*)
- *The PDA Power Program*: Advanced Time Management Principles for PDA Users
- Managing & Leading Great Staff & Team Meetings (*1-2 Hours*)

“Be the change you wish to
see in the world.”

– Gandhi

We’re Done!!!



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