



Without going over, tell me, on average how many emails the average professional sends every day.

You ready?

121.

Now keep in mind this is on average, which means for some people it's way more than that.

Next, how many times per hour do people toggle back and forth to check their email?

40 times per hour.

Next, what percent of people's day do they spend managing their email?

28.

Finally, what percent of these emails are considered actually important?

Just 38.

So while a minority of these emails are actually important, getting a handle on your email is so important to managing your time and managing your work and managing your sanity.

So today we're going to talk about some easy and practical ways to finally get ahold of your emails to manage your time and workload better.

Let's take a look at five of the biggest culprits when it comes to managing your email and how it gets so out of control.

- 1) The first is incomplete information- sending out emails without sending all the necessary information.
- 2) Closely related to that is when somebody sends you an email and you don't give them all the information that they need from you.
- 3) Lack of follow up is so huge, and this starts to snowball really quickly. If somebody doesn't get a response that they need from you, then they follow up with another email asking where the response is. A lot of this is related to unspoken expectations because for some people they think they should get a response from you in an hour, two hours, three hours, one day. But your expectation of when you should respond to them is one day, two days by the end of the week. Having shared expectations is a really important component of this to understand when people should expect to hear from one another.



- 4) We joke a lot about meetings that should have been an email, but there are a lot of emails that should be meetings. If they are too complex, if there's too much back and forth, it can save yourself a lot of those emails by picking up the phone or setting up a meeting.
- 5) Finally, scheduling- the absolute bane of my existence- takes up a lot of email.

We'll talk about some ways to make scheduling a lot easier, but one of the easiest best ways to get ahold of your email is to set aside dedicated time to focus on answering your emails. Remember that toggling back and forth 40 times per hour. So often we respond to emails too quickly without giving them dedicated time and focus and energy. And we're not really completely responding. We're not giving people the answers they're looking for, which further causes additional emails because they have to follow up because we didn't really answer what they were asking.

One of the best, easiest ways that you can start to get a handle on your email is shut off the popups. Shut off the notifications. Stop toggling 40 times per hour and instead set aside dedicated time where you're just a hundred percent focusing on your emails so that you can answer them in the way they should be answered. It really reduces the number of follow-up emails that need to come in because you're actually answering the questions that are being asked.

It's a delicate balance to provide what's needed in detail and clarity without providing too much information. Like any form of communication, you want to customize based on who you're responding to because some people like a little bit more, some people like a little bit less. This is true of any form of communication.

Let's look at some examples.

This is a perfect example of not providing enough information. If you send this email out to somebody, there are almost certainly going to have a lot of follow-up questions.

*Where are we meeting? How long is the meeting? What is it about? Who else is going to be there?*

You're almost guaranteeing you're going to get follow-up email with all of these questions. To try to get ahead of it, give as much information as possible so that people know what to expect.

*Good morning, I'd like to meet with you in my office.*

*When? At one o'clock.*

*Why? To talk about the new project.*

*How long is it going to be? The meeting should last no more than 30 minutes.*



What's the expectation for you? *Please bring the X, Y, Z report.*

Who will be there? *We will be the only two people meeting. See you then.*

Certainly the person could still have a follow-up email, but you've really hedged your bets so to speak, by giving them all the important information.

Next is anticipate what information is needed. Don't always put it on the other person to ask the question. If you know what the common questions are, just provide that information upfront. For example, if you get a question like, *should I bring anything to the meeting today?*

And you respond, *yes*, technically you've answered the question, but you're not being deposited, you're not on the witness stand. Anticipate what they're really asking here and give them the information that they need.

Next, double check that you're answering everything, especially when people are giving you a list. Take your time and go through and make sure you're answering everything because so often what happens is people give a list like this and then they only respond to the first question, forcing a back and forth.

Finally, when you're trying to get to an answer, make sure that you're reducing the number of options. Many times people are trying to be amenable and so they say they just don't care.

I understand the reasoning behind this, but it forces continued back and forth. Just help the process and make the choice. For example, *we need to meet about the grant that is due Thursday. Do you prefer to meet at 3:00 or 4:30?*

The response *either works for me*, great, you're being amenable, but what does this do? It forces further back and forth.

What you can say instead is, *either works for me, let's do three o'clock*, and then that reduces the back and forth.

What I love to do when possible is don't wait for a response if it's not necessary.

In this example, *I will be turning the report in at four o'clock on Thursday. If you have any additional edits, I will need them by two o'clock Wednesday. Otherwise I will send the draft as is.*

This won't work in all situations, but if you have the ability where you don't need something from somebody and you don't want to have to wait for them, you're letting them know.

If you don't hear back, you're going to proceed without them. I use this a lot and it's really, really helpful instead of having to wait.



Scheduling, scheduling, scheduling.

There's a lot of technology out there now for scheduling, and I highly encourage you to use what is out there instead of the constant email back and forth.

Shared calendars, scheduling apps also that have built in reminders and confirmations instead of having to email back and forth because scheduling will take up so much of your email and time if you let it.

Find a process, an app, a tool that you can use and this will eliminate so much of your email headache and your email back and forth.

So what can you do today to start to get better at email?