

Productive to the Max

Productivity

Performance

Profitability

Make Room for even More Email!

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By far, the most common obstacle to productivity is email. You complain about the amount, the time it takes and how your in box is just overflowing. You keep receiving those messages from the IT department that your inbox is full.

During my training sessions, I always ask how many emails are presently in the participant's inbox. The record so far is 10,000! Translate this into hard copy and this means there are 10, 000 pieces of paper in that in box. Imagine walking into your office and seeing 10,000 pieces of paper!

Take steps to create some white space in your inbox.

1. Create a folder in your inbox, entitled _Archived emails to (put in current date). By placing the underscore before the folder title, it will remain on top of the folder list for easy access.
2. Take all your emails to date in your inbox and drag them over. (If you have 10,000 emails it will take some time so go for a coffee and pat yourself on the back!). You now have an empty inbox,(yikes! white space!) to begin your new processes.
3. Create a structure for your email. Determine what categories you are responsible for and list alphabetically or numerically. Do you deal with **Clients, Projects, Events, Employees, HR, Financial?** Sub divide the categories into smaller subjects and list them again alphabetically. The **Client** category may look like **Client-Ames, Client-Jones, Client-Smith**. The **HR** category may look like **HR-Competencies, HR-Employees, HR-Salary Review,**
4. Decide what type of system you are going to use. You can choose between folders, filters and rules, colors, views, categories or a combination of the above. The type of system should reflect your personality and provide storage for common types of information.
5. Take a look at your new messages in you new inbox. Schedule time on your calendar three times per day to deal with them. Open in order and do, delay, delegate or dump. For anything you do, plan it in your calendar by dragging the inbox item to the calendar (the item will remain in your inbox) before you file it away. After you have finished organizing your new inbox go into the archived one in your folder and

follow the same process with at least 20 old emails per day. Soon you will have cleared that old inbox and your current one should also have very, very little in it or be very well organized.

The most important thing to remember is that you do not have to access your email every minute of the day. Turn off the beep, turn off the screen and allow yourself to be productive in other areas.