



Office Management

Drowning In E-Mail? Here's A Lifeline

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(NAPSA)—Eighty percent of corporate leaders said they see e-mail as a more valuable means of communications than the telephone, and 74 percent said they would have more difficulty if they lost e-mail access for five days than if they lost phone access, according to a recent META Group



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survey.

Given these new findings, it's important that we learn to utilize e-mail effectively, calling a halt to unnecessary and misdirected e-mail. In fact, I often get asked for best practices in handling large volumes of e-mail. So here are my 10 steps to help you get the most out of your e-mail.

1. Don't use e-mail when other communication tools are more appropriate. Although valuable, there are many instances when e-mail doesn't replace face-to-face communication, phone calls or instant messaging.

2. Don't use your inbox as a catch-all folder. Delete or categorize e-mail in folders. Categorizing messages by group or sender is an easy way to organize your e-mail.

3. Know your audience. Send e-mail only to people who need to

see it. Use copying, blind copying and group e-mail addresses appropriately.

4. Use graphics and attachments sparingly. This reduces the amount of disk space on the recipient's server, and relieves the network of heavy e-mail traffic.

5. Use team workspaces, forums and document libraries to reduce long e-mail threads and optimize storage.

6. Change your e-mail default so that not every piece of e-mail is saved and using valuable space.

7. Handle important e-mail first. Use e-mail rules to place important messages in "Hot List" folders and use modern inbox settings like custom colors to flag e-mail from important senders.

8. Get rid of spam using a server or client-side anti-spam solution to reduce undesirable e-mail.

9. Only keep the last 90 days of e-mail. Delete the rest automatically or use e-mail archiving to store it offline.

10. If you're a traveling user, learn how to use your e-mail program's replication or synchronization settings to limit download time and storage.

We are at the beginning of a new era in personal and workplace collaboration, and the future will depend on how wisely we use all the technology tools that are becoming available to us.