

# Top 10 Email Best Practices



## 1. Keep emails short

People tend to skim longer emails, or stop reading them all together. Checkout the website <http://five.sentenc.es/>. It suggests that you keep your email to five sentences or less. At five sentences, a person is more likely to read your email fully. Think about what you are trying to convey and keep it brief.

## 2. Do not use email for urgent communications

If you need a response in two hours or less, pick up the phone instead of using email. If your company email culture allows urgent emails, workers will feel compelled to check their messages constantly to avoid missing something important. This constant checking kills productivity.

## 3. Send clear requests

Be clear about what you are requesting from the person. If the recipient is unclear about what you want, they will often do nothing. Highlight, bold or underline important information. Put your request in the first line of the email, not at the end. If the email is addressed to more than one person, define who you want to perform the task.

## 4. Use 'CC' and 'Reply All' wisely

Some of us feel compelled to copy everyone in an effort to cover our own ass. . .ets. Just think about the junk that you are cc'd on that does not pertain to you. Are you thankful that you received it? No! You are probably annoyed that it wasted your time. Choose who to copy on an email wisely and encourage others to do the same.

## 5. Turn off your email notification pop-up

Every time you are distracted it takes an average of four minutes to refocus on what you were working on. It doesn't sound like much, but all of that distracted time adds up. If you are distracted by your email pop-up every 15 minutes, that equates to 2 HOURS of wasted time! Turn off your email's pop-up reminder to eliminate an unnecessary distraction.

## 6. Move it to your to-do list

Instead of flagging an email or marking it as unread, make a task for it. Clearly define what you need to do and assign a date. This small extra step makes task completion more likely.

## 7. Put it in your calendar

If an email contains information about an event or appointment, immediately move that information to your calendar then delete the email.

## 8. Process your email

Many of us take a passive approach to email by putting it off until later. This will only lead to an overwhelming inbox and unfinished emails. Discipline yourself to process each message from beginning to end.

## 9. Move emails out of your inbox

Your inbox should only contain messages that have not been read and processed yet. Once a message is processed, file or delete it. Wading through hundreds of old emails in your inbox will zap your time and energy.

## 10. Utilize your sent folder

There is no need to file every email into a folder. Your sent folder is a great resource to find any email that you responded to. You can feel confident deleting an email knowing that there is a log of your response in your sent folder.

