



Assistant Principal *Ex*celeration

Managing Email

Soapbox: Email can be a useful communication tool, but many people use email in a way that is unhealthy and counterproductive. As leaders, we have a responsibility to model and teach productive and healthy email habits.

1. Know district email policy for timely response as well as expectations of your principal
2. Email is not a duty unto itself, it is part of any number of duties
3. Inbox is not a to-do list
4. Turn off alerts; email is not an instant communication tool
5. Teach and condition others regarding reasonable response times
6. Set aside specific chunks of time to communicate via email
7. Set a time limit
8. Limit replies to 5 lines or less
9. Teach others to do the same
10. Be formal, simple, and straight to the point (less is more)
11. Create templates for common responses
12. Delete, forward, reply, move to folder in that order
13. Use only five folders:
 - a. Urgent and important: needs to be done that day but can't do it right now. You cannot go to sleep until it is done.
 - b. Important but not urgent: Things that will take more than a minute or two to do. Tackle these when you have a good chunk of time and can close your door.
 - c. Urgent but not important: Things that others want done but aren't critical to safety or learning
 - d. Optional: Things to respond to, read, look at, or process that are not essential and for which there are no repercussions for ignoring them.
 - e. Archive: Everything else (that isn't deleted) goes into a single folder. I actually maintain many folders, but whenever I search for an old email, I use the search function of my email program. I never do through the individual folders, so all of the time I spend filing emails is wasted. Old habits die hard.
14. For those important not urgent emails that will require time, consider creating a calendar event in order to budget the time to complete the task. This will prevent you from missing a deadline and provide you with some peace of mind.

These hints and tips were acquired from others over the years. Please feel free to share them and email me if there are any good email practices that should be added.

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