

Are you an Emailaholic?

"I don't believe in email. I'm an old-fashioned girl. I prefer calling and hanging up." (Sarah Jessica Parker)

Ask yourself the following questions:-

1. Do you start to open and check your emails within 10 minutes of logging on in the morning?
2. Do you have mail notification messages set (you know – that little message that appears at the bottom right of your screen)?
3. Do you find it difficult to resist opening or checking messages as they arrive?
4. Do you have business emails 24/7 on your Smartphone?
5. Do you check business emails when not working, weekends and whilst on vacation?
6. Do you sleep with your Smartphone beside the bed?
7. Do you check your emails before your first coffee in the morning?
8. Is your email program running constantly in the background?
9. Do you check your inbox more than **once** an hour?
10. Do you feel "stressed" by the volume of emails you receive?



If you answered **YES** to 6 or more of the above you may be **ADDICTED TO EMAIL**

EMAIL ADDICTION SERIOUSLY IMPACTS PRODUCTIVITY

Research at the University of Glasgow in Scotland found that office staff were checking their inboxes up to 40 times an hour seriously impacting productivity levels as well as increasing pressure on staff.

University of Glasgow's Computing Science department's Dr Karen Renaud, said staff surveyed reported tiredness, frustration and unproductive spells through trying to keep up with the volume of messages in their inboxes.

"E-mail is the thing that now causes us the most problems in our working lives," she claimed. "It's an amazing tool, but it's got out of hand."

"Email harries you. You want to know what's in there, especially if it's from a family member or friends, or your boss, so you break off what you are doing to read the email."

"The problem is that when you go back to what you were doing, you've lost your chain of thought and, of course, you are less productive," Dr Renaud said.

"People's brains get tired from breaking off from something every few minutes to check emails. The more distracted you are by distractions, including email, then you are going to be more tired and less productive."

A Mesmo Consultancy study has claimed that over half of email users were "self-inflicted emailaholics". More than 50% of the 415 respondents to their survey said they checked emails when out of the office, while a similar proportion did so when they were on holiday or on sick leave.

A massive 83% of respondents would never give colleagues permission to deal with emails in their absence. Over 80% read every email in their inbox.

Dr. Monica Seeley, of Mesmo Consultancy, said: "The role that email plays in office politics, the fear of missing something and being blamed for it, together with the amount of personal emails received at work addresses are surely accountable for the lack of delegation and obsessive inbox scanning behaviour, contributing directly to the addiction.

"Moreover, as the survey showed, the majority of users are expecting to receive a reply to a business email in less than 24 hours. And if a reply is sent immediately, that sets the expectation for the next round of communications, fostering a very reactive and rather unproductive way of working."

SOME BASIC TIPS TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

1. Take Control

- Switch off all email notifications (sound or visible)
- You decide when you Check your inbox. Every 2 hours is sufficient
- Ignore your email for the first hour at work

2. Take Action

- Golden Rule: if email can be answered in 2 minutes Answer it. If Not File it for Action
- Create pertinent Folders (whatever you are comfortable with) eg. For Action
- Add email to Tasks



3. Reduce Volume

- Unsubscribe from irrelevant groups etc
- Do not use business email for personal use
- Minimise use of REPLY ALL
- Don't respond quickly – strange but true. Responding quickly generates increased traffic as people know that you will respond

Take control of your email addiction and you will see huge leaps in productivity, your Boss will definitely notice and you will start achieving things faster. But BE AWARE – Email is an addiction and it isn't easy coming off.



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