

Remote Work Nearly Killed Email Etiquette. Let's Bring It Back

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[ProQuest document link](#)

FULL TEXT

Aug. 15 - The phrase "The only two certainties in life are death and taxes" came from a 1789 letter from Benjamin Franklin to Jean-Baptiste Leroy, a prominent French scientist.

But in the 21st century, emails have become (almost) another certainty in life.

No doubt, emails are often well-intentioned, but they have become a pencil-biting problem - even as they are required for business communications and more. The world has also learned that many people who offer unsolicited email deals, ideas, suggestions, jobs or other "can't miss opportunities" don't really care about the recipient at all - and may in fact plan to cause harm.

I know people who sign up for a new email address every few years, just to get a new beginning, but this practice is not feasible for most businesses.

The death of emails has been predicted for decades, but check out these recent stats from statista.com: "In 2020, the number of global email users amounted to four billion and is set to grow to 4.6 billion users in 2025. In 2020, approximately 306 billion emails were sent and received every day worldwide. This figure is projected to increase to over 376 billion daily emails in 2025."

It's clear - emails are not going away anytime soon.

And of course, there are literally billions of pages of tips online covering how to write a better email - from home and work to sales pitches, building relationships, to tempting the click and much, much more. All of these ideas (and emails) can be used for good or evil, and a large percentage of these emails never even reach our inboxes. Rather, they get labeled as "spam" or "malicious" or something else.

But before I get to my main point regarding the emails that do get through to inboxes, I want to be clear that this blog is not intended to be email security training or phishing training for end users or offer machine learning to stop insider threats in your inbox or stop misdirected or inappropriate data sharing.

So why write this blog right now?

Because millions of people are tired of these trends that result in the clogging-up of inboxes - even after spam and malicious links are removed. The volume of these unwanted emails seems to be increasing, even as professionals are targeted with increasingly complex strategies to break through crowded tech and cyber messaging campaigns. Emails with subject lines like:

* "Looking forward to our call Thursday at 2 on that interesting topic" (My thoughts: Who are you? What meeting? What topic?)

* "Checking In" (My thoughts: Again, who are you? Checking in for what? Go away!)

* "Thank you! We appreciate you." (My thought, while I hit delete: I don't know what you're talking about.)

* "Sorry - I made a mistake. But my mistake is your opportunity for 70% off!" (My thoughts: This is the 17th time I've received this email from you over the past two years. This was not a mistake, but another marketing ploy.)

* Perhaps worst of all ... An appointment shows up in my Outlook calendar from someone I don't know, from a company I never heard of and on a topic I don't care about. The notes say: "As discussed." (My thoughts: Really? When?)

* And my list goes on and on. But, most of my other items are covered by my LinkedIn connections as described

below. So enjoy!

COMMENTS ON LINKEDIN

The following comments come from a recent LinkedIn post on the same topic. For more details on those leaving comments, or to leave your own comment, please visit the LinkedIn post.

* Mike Russo: I hate the friendly ones from companies that would like to sell you something. Like they are my long-lost buddy. Turns me off right away. Also dislike "saw your profile on LinkedIn and would like to offer you a \$100 gift card for a one hour video teleconference on various issues." Really!! I hate emails that you don't want to receive but can't find the unsubscribe because it's buried in the privacy policy link. I have more, but I'm too worked up to continue.

* Bill Hunkapillar: I probably get 50 sales emails a day. I always delete and block the sender. If they call, I just give them Mike Russo's private cell phone number.

* Maria Thompson: In my past role, if it was from a vendor and you could clearly see that your name was edited in (tell tale signs being font differences etc.), it's like, can you at least make this one effort to personalize? The other issue I have with emails are those demanding an unrealistic response to their needs, i.e. an emergency on their part, now becomes one on your part (bosses excluded as that is expected at time to time). The idea that you are sitting idle, with nothing else to do, can be insulting and frustrating.

* Scott M: Agreed. My name is "Scott M." on LinkedIn largely so I can tell who is using automation and who is actually writing.

* Alexandre Blanc: Repeated unsolicited email claiming to solve problems I don't have, actual problem being these emails!

* Mike Moran: emails, not related to what I'm doing CCed to 1,000 people all of whom are going (to), in some way, acknowledge receipt by CCing all 1,000 people on the address list.

I had one this morning ... an invite to a political rally to address getting rid of our current Dem, who bailed on his duties to go party in DC. Email addressed to 200 people and so far 160 have replied all with stupid remarks.

* WF Slater: blocking emails and IP ranges is fully scripted. Twice a day I get a pop-up showing the list of emails and IP ranges that have been blocked. Each line has a selection button. If I select an item, the action will be automatically reversed when I close the pop-up.

Dealing with the pop-ups takes at most 90 seconds. So I spend 21 minutes a week, and just over 18 hours a year. Why? Because I've had 4 email addresses for over a decade, I have 8 more email addresses for the various businesses I run and another 5 to sort solicitations into (online stores that require an email address to view, news outlets, Universities, societies, certifications and medical/legal). That's 17 email addresses generating 65,000 pieces of email a day to the top level (Google, MS, Proton) which filters down to an avg of 40,000 pieces that my personal mail server filters down to around 2,250 of which I touch about 600 a day. Fortunately, I have an unmetered internet connection. I'm a techie through and through ... If I can automate something, I do.

* Gabriel Silva: All the job opportunity spam emails for a person seeking work. It undermines trust in a real opportunity. "Hey, click this link if you are interested." No, thank you. It's smart to have a "job search" email because you know it will be spammed like crazy. Also, frequency of emails. I wouldn't mind a marketing email every so often from a company I support; however, I would unsubscribe to any that are far too frequent ... basically every company.

* Eric Rossborough: I hate the stalkers that send out a zillion emails, then look on Hubspot or some other crm to see who opened their first email and then send a "I wanted to follow up to see if you had any questions?" email. AAAGGGGHH If I have questions, I'll reach out to you. Stop sending me a ton of emails.

* Beau Boden: I greatly dislike the unsolicited emails that imply that I owe them a response, or some allocation of my day or explanation of our technologies.

* Anushree M Bag: Top 10

1. Where my name has been misspelled. Autocorrect most likely. But indicates lack of attention to detail
2. "Reply all" to everyone and their grandfather without a specific action item

3. Meeting invites without agendas
4. Unnecessary use of color or big bold letters - shows lack of maturity
5. Attachments of large file size which take forever to load
6. Embedded links that do not work - links need to be tested before sending out
7. Excessively long message. So long, that by the time one gets to the end, one forgets the beginning
8. Overtly grandiose message. An email is not a dissertation
9. Forwarding a very long email chain (which I wasn't a part of previously), saying "see below for reference", without a summary at the top

10. Emotional outbursts and/or rude tone

* Ron McGraw: The sheer volume of it. I have over 100 email addresses dating back to pre-public Internet days, and average around 6,000 emails a day. It's a nightmare.

* Dan Watson: I am particularly offended by late arriving emails demanding a time-based response. Most of these are the senders fault (I admit I am human as well and may be tardy for a variety of reasons) for not sending earlier data needed, for example.

As well, get to the point. I don't need readers digest, just the facts.

* WF Slater: The worst e-mails are the unsolicited e-mails I get from offshore.

1) Spam e-mails offering me web design and/or technical services I don't want.

I get about 20 e-mails from these people every day!!!

#Internet #BadNeighborhoods

By #GiovaneMoura

From the #UniversityOfTwente

<https://research.utwente.nl/en/publications/internet-bad-neighborhoods>

<https://madrascourier.com/opinion/why-india-is-the-worlds-largest-spammer/>

2) The Scammer e-mails that want me to contact them so they can help me get a Refund for money fraudulently charged to my account. It's actually a cooperative hack where they want to use a remote access tool like AnyDesk for remotely hacking your computer and bank account. Beware.

Examples: Confessions of a Call Centre Scammer

<https://bbc.com/news/stories-51753362>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBNG0osIBAprVcZZ3ic84vw>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm22FAXZMw1BaWeFszZxUKw>

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=indian+scammers

* Derek Andrews: I despise two things:

1. The reply all thank you when there are 27 people on the To: line
2. People who attach an email, to an email, and it's 7 months of banter with far too many people not adding value and they blanketly ask "thoughts"

FINAL THOUGHTS

As a bit of background, I see the inbox from different vantage points - as a former state government technology and security leader in Michigan (for over 17 years) to a private-sector CISO and chief strategist who tries to guide positive responses during marketing campaigns.

What many of the senders miss is how many people they are turning off with their email practices. People want to work with reputable companies and people they can trust.

Further, even if you do get one of these people on the line, what will you say that will keep the conversation going in a positive direction?

Please, for your own sake and for the benefit of others, let's try to do better with our emails! And feel free to join the LinkedIn conversation on this topic, as list

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