



Email Policy – Zero Inbox

Introduction

Inbox zero is a popular email management method aiming to help you keep your inbox organized and free of clutter by responding to or deleting emails as quickly as possible. The goal is to help you manage your email more efficiently, and reduce the stress and anxiety associated with having a cluttered inbox by always keeping your inbox empty or almost empty.

Benefits of Achieving Inbox Zero

While achieving inbox zero can prove challenging, it can also be extremely rewarding. There are many benefits to achieving inbox zero, including:

- **Improved focus and less stress** - For starters, achieving inbox zero can help you stay organized and on top of your emails. By responding to or deleting emails quickly, you can keep your inbox clean and organized. This can help you stay on top of important emails and make it easier to find emails when you need them.
- **Increased productivity** - Achieving inbox zero can also help you be more productive. By responding to emails quickly and efficiently, you can free up your time to focus on important tasks and projects. This can help you get more done in less time, which can lead to increased productivity.
- **Better organization** - Finally, achieving inbox zero can help you reduce stress. By responding to emails quickly and efficiently, you can avoid feeling overwhelmed by your inbox and reduce the stress caused by email overload.

Steps to Achieve Inbox zero

Emails should be processed as soon as they're opened and not used as a to-do list. The goal is to handle an email in your inbox only once, if possible. To this end, it is recommended to use one of the following five actions for each message:

1. **Unsubscribe from any email lists or newsletters that you no longer need or want** - The first step to achieving inbox zero is to unsubscribe from any newsletters or email lists that you no longer want to receive. This can help reduce the number of emails you receive, making it easier to keep your inbox organized. You can use unsubscribe tools, do it manually via the link in each email, or use an email client, like Missive, with an unsubscribe button to easily send remove your address from the list.
2. **Create folders or labels to organize your remaining emails** - The next step is to create folders or labels to organize different types of emails. This can help you quickly find emails



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when you need them and keep your inbox organized.

3. **Creating rules or filters to automatically sort incoming emails** - The third step is to create email filters or rules to automatically sort incoming emails. This can help you quickly sort emails into their respective folders or labels, so you don't have to manually sort them every time.
4. **Process each email in your inbox** - According to the technique developed by Merlin Mann, each time you receive an email you should:
 - **Delete (or archive).** After you read the message, determine whether it requires any action or if it contains information you'll need to reference. If not, delete it or archive it.
 - **Delegate.** You might find that the issues raised in the email would be better handled by someone else, in which case, you should forward the email to that individual and then delete or archive it.
 - **Respond.** If you can answer the email in just a few lines, without spending more than a couple of minutes, respond immediately and then delete or archive the message.
 - **Defer.** If a response requires more than a few minutes or will take a little work, defer your response until a more appropriate time. You might want to create a special folder to hold deferred emails until you can get to them.
 - **Do.** If the email requires a task that can be completed right away, do it now and be done with it. Then archive or delete the message.

Strategies for Staying at Inbox Zero

Achieved inbox zero is great, but staying with an empty inbox is another challenge. To make sure you're staying on top of your emails and that your inbox doesn't fill up again here are some strategies you can use to stay at inbox zero.

1. **Use the two-minute rule** - This rule states that if an email can be dealt with in two minutes or less, do it. This can help you respond to emails quickly, so they don't pile up in your inbox.
2. **Use the "touch it once" rule** - This rule states that if you open an email, you should respond to it, delete it or archive it, defer it, or delegate it. This can help you quickly deal with emails and keep your inbox organized.
3. **Use the "no cc" rule** - This rule states that if you're not the primary recipient of an email, you should not respond to it. This can help you avoid unnecessary emails in your inbox and keep your inbox organized.



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4. **Limit the amount of time you check your inbox every day** - Checking your emails once every hour or more for a few minutes is enough.

Conclusion

Achieving inbox zero can seem like an impossible task, but it doesn't have to be. With a few simple steps and strategies, you can easily achieve and maintain inbox zero.

By unsubscribing from newsletters, creating folders or labels, creating filters or rules, responding to emails quickly, deleting emails, and archiving emails, you can keep your inbox clean and organized. In addition, you can use email management tips and tools, and services to help you achieve and stay at inbox zero.