

Six Tips for Decluttering Your Inbox (and other people's)

1. Send less email

While this may seem obvious, email begets email. Sometimes it is better and easier to call or not to respond at all. While working remotely, you can use MS Teams to make calls. The recipient can see missed calls, and they can return the call when available.

2. Keep it short

Try and get to the point of your email in the first few lines and avoid lengthy cut and paste texts. If extensive further information needs to be provided, direct your recipient to where it can be located. When you send short emails, focused on the topic you need a response to or action on, people tend to respond in kind.

3. Set up rules

You can use rules to organize your email. Rules allow you to move, flag, and respond to email messages automatically. You can also use rules to play sounds, move messages to folders, or display new item alerts. There are plenty of instructions about how to do this online.

4. The dreaded CC

Copy only the people who need to read the message. Ask yourself when deciding who should be included, if you are looking for a response from these people or if they need to be informed? Perhaps with a potentially long email thread, you only need to CC certain people in a final summation email.

The most common cause of GDPR breaches in UL is due to emails, copying in the wrong people or bringing new people into a long email chains.

5. Think before you reply

Not every email requires a reply, only reply if one is needed. Similarly when replying to an email, only use the Reply All button if everyone needs to be included in your response.

6. When to send

Avoid sending emails on Fridays or in and around public holidays if you want engagement and try to send your emails during office hours. A link to a guide to scheduling your emails in Outlook is available in the Online Communications FAQ or in the Remote Working folder on the COVID-19 SharePoint site.