

EPISODE 153: EMAIL FAILS

1. KEEP IT BRIEF

- The average worker sends and receives 105 emails each day
- That takes up about 28% of the average person's work week—about 11 hours
- Dan Ariely, Behavioral Economist at Duke, author of *Predictably Irrational*
- He posted a survey on his blog asking respondents to review the last 40 emails they'd received, asking for each email how long they could've waited to read it
- Only 12% needed to be read immediately, 35% didn't need to be read at all!
- If yours is going to get read, it needs to be brief and to the point
- Remember: Almost 50% of emails are now read on a mobile device

2. DON'T BURY THE LEAD

- Ask yourself, "What's the BIG IDEA of this email?"
- What do I want? What's the action point? What needs to happen?
- State the big idea up front, then expand as you need to
- Take a lesson from newspapers: Keep important content "above the fold"

3. MAKE IT PERSONAL—BUT NOT TOO PERSONAL

- Smart Compose uses the power of AI to analyze your style and guess how you might want to complete a sentence
- The concern is that entire communications are being computer-generated
- Take the extra moment to write something that says, "This is from a human being"
- BUT: Remember, an email is a permanent record
- Be VERY careful about revealing personal information, slamming your company or co-worker, admitting to questionable activities...
- The rule of thumb for business: "If you don't want to see it on the front page of the New York Times, don't put it in an email."

4. SPACE IT OUT

- A solid block of text looks formidable
- Email marketers: A paragraph never contains more than two sentences, often one
- It's spaced out into visually bite-sized chunks
- Give your email some white space

5. MAKE THE SUBJECT LINE COUNT

- Email marketers estimate that 50% of their subscribers decide whether or not to open an email based on the subject line alone.

- Avoid the vague: “A couple of reminders” “Thought you should see this” Quick note”
- Make the subject line concrete, immediate, and action-oriented
- Not “Need to meet with you,” but, “Can you meet at 11 tomorrow?”

Are there other communication-related topics you'd like to hear the Communication Guys address? Let us know on our [Facebook page](#).