



# Reasons to Live in the Calendar and Only Visit Your Inbox Occasionally

(rather than the other way around)

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# 7 Reasons to Live in the Calendar and Only Visit Your Inbox Occasionally

## Don't you wish you had an **Empty** Inbox?

Are you sometimes astounded by the words from your own mouth and wonder “where did that come from”?

I had that experience myself last week. I was answering a question from a participant at the conclusion of the **WWW of Mastering Email** presentation and I said “we need to live in the calendar and only visit the inbox, rather than the other way round”.

I'm hoping that this phrase will be as much a 'breakthrough' for your thinking as it was for me.

As a result of that 'aha' moment, I've written this first draft on '7 ways or reasons to live in your calendar throughout each workday and only visit your inbox a few times a day'.

Happy reading!

*Stewart*



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## 1 An Overloaded Inbox Causes Stress

Make the **Calendar your default setting** so that when your software opens at the start of the day, it opens to the Calendar rather than to the inbox.

You only visit the inbox as often as needed during the day according to your role - some people are in roles where they need to respond to email once or even twice per hour, while others can check it only once or twice a day. Whatever the frequency, you can turn off all the email alerts so that these are not distracting.

**Getting control of WHEN you check email** is the #1 strategy for being able to manage information overload in general, and email overload in particular.

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### 2 Avoids **Multiple Handling** of E-mails

When visiting the inbox, right click on the 'mail' or envelope icon and select 'open in new window'. This **opens the inbox in a separate window**, in addition to the calendar.

When you finish addressing email, close the window. This is better than swapping from Calendar to Inbox - when we do it that way, we rarely go back to the calendar and so now we're living in the inbox and only occasionally visiting the calendar.

The aim is to open the inbox in a new window, make decisions about newly arrived email and then close the mailbox - you're just visiting, you're not staying!

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### 3 Things are **not** Lost or Forgotten

Move relevant emails and attachments out of the inbox into an existing appointment or task that is already in your calendar.

Simply copy (or cut) the email and paste into the bottom window of the calendar appointment. This way, everything you need is **where** you need to be for **when** you need access to it. This is much better than opening up a calendar item and then having to hunt through your mailbox to find the relevant emails and attachments that relate to it.

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### 4 The Inbox is **Not** Your To-Do List

Convert tasks and appointments from the inbox into your Calendar. Any work that turns up via email will take a period of time to action. Rather than leave the email in the inbox, **convert it to a calendar appointment**. Doing this makes you think about;

- **How long will this task take?** It's good to think about this more often - most us typically underestimate how long it takes to accomplish tasks. The more often we do this bit of thinking, the more accurate we get and the quicker we are able to make those estimates.
- **When have I got time?** Check your calendar to see what days and times are available for this task, in amongst all the other tasks, appointments and commitments that you have already made (often as a result of email that arrived yesterday or last week)!
- **Which would be the best of the available times?** Choose an appropriate day and time for the new task that integrates it with all the other appointments, tasks and commitments that are already in your schedule. This way, you'll make more a realistic assessment of when you can actually do this piece of work. If necessary, you can then reply to the sender to give them a timeframe you expect to accomplish the task and/or to let them know if there will be a delay.

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### 5 Avoids Procrastination and Indecision

Reply to the original email from within your calendar, there's no need to go back to the mailbox! Often a task that arrives via email requires you to complete some work and then reply to that email.

If you have copied the email into your calendar appointment, you can do this from within the calendar appointment (as a reply or forward) – no need to go back to the inbox and be **distracted by all the other messages**.

What's more, this eliminates the need to keep the original email in the mailbox at all - the most up to date version of the email conversation is the email you send from your calendar, which now goes into your sent items folder in the mailbox. This avoids having multiple copies of the same message as it goes back n' forth - just keep the most recent version, which has all the conversation history.

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### 6 Avoids Being **Interrupted** by New Messages

Living in the calendar allows you to **single-task rather than multi-task**.

When you're living in the inbox, there's a constant stream of incoming message which interrupt and distract you - it's hard to focus on one thing at a time. But when you're working on an email related task in the calendar, you can stay focused and 'single-minded' - you are much more likely to finish the task when working in your calendar, away from the distractions of the inbox.

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### 7 There are **More Appropriate Places** to Store Email Messages

Living in the calendar helps you to be plan or scheduled driven and proactive rather than interruption-driven and reactive in the way that you work.

Sure, we all need to keep up with our email and we should visit the inbox as often as needed each day according to our role (or the sort of day that we're having). But it should be just a short visit to check on new messages, make a decision on the next action required for each message, **using the 4D method** and then return to our scheduled work as defined in our calendar.

Not only is this a more productive basis for work, it's also more satisfying, less pressured and less stressful. What do you think?

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## Find out **More**

Why not check out ideas at [emaitiger.com.au](http://emaitiger.com.au) to get your e-mail folders organised so you can keep your inbox empty and get e-mail under control?

- Is email is central to most of your work?
- Do you feel that email is the biggest time waster & source of frustration in your day?
- Would you like to save an enormous amount of the time & effort you currently spend 'doing email'?

That's where connecting with me might help. I'd like to show you how to master your email & make a real difference to your work and personal life. In fact, more & more clients tell me that what I show them is 'life changing'!

Hi, I'm Stuart Snooks. I work with busy professionals who are struggling to get control of their inbox and master their email. After 10 years as a specialist in this area, I've learnt that email overload is not so much about volume as it is about a lack of a 'process' or a system for managing this critical aspect of everyday workload.

You see, most of us have never been taught how to master the productivity tools we use with our own hands every day. And as our technology delivers ever increasing volumes at faster & faster speeds, it's so important that we learn, right now, how to keep up.

I've found there are **3 key strategies** for mastering email;

- **WHEN** you check the inbox
- **WHAT** you do with each message
- **WHERE** to quickly file and retrieve messages



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If you like, I'd be happy to have quick chat with you about this in more detail. That way, I can get to know you, understand your biggest email challenge(s), give you some advice and discuss options to work together in the future if we are a good fit.

## Let's connect

If you're interested, the easiest way to arrange this is for us to jump on the phone for 10-15 minutes. Simply use my on-line calendar to schedule a convenient time for us to hook up.

 [Click to Schedule](#)

I look forward to speaking with you sometime soon!

All the best!



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