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05/11/2021

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“TOUCH IT ONCE” : **STAYING PRODUCTIVE & SANE**

CHLOE CAMPBELL
GRANTS ACCOUNTANT III
CONTRACTS & GRANTS

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LET'S CALL HER CHLOE...

Chloe manages a sizeable portfolio in her role as an administrator at a large research university. Her inbox is hovering around ~120 unread emails and the time she would have to handle projects is monopolized by a calendar full of meetings. Chloe spends copious time tweaking her planner to map out how she is going to get the growing pile of assignments done. But by the time she looks up it's already 2PM on Friday and not even half of what she planned to get done this week has been looked at.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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LET'S DO THIS!

1. Recall the basic tenets of the “Touch It Once” method
2. Rank and organize competing work priorities
3. Compare inbox organization methods
4. Develop strategies to manage daily tasks and long-term projects



INTRODUCING THE “TOUCH IT ONCE” METHOD

WHAT IS “TOUCH IT ONCE”?

1. When something hits your desk, address it **IMMEDIATELY**
2. Handle **ALL** details, don't plan to come back to it later



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TOUCH IT ONCE

Have more time tomorrow than you do today

I'll work on that tonight/this weekend

As soon as this big project is over, things will slow down

Once we're fully staffed I can dig into that again

I'll just be more focused tomorrow



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WHY DO WE PROCRASTINATE?

SITUATIONAL PROCRASTINATOR	CHRONIC PROCRASTINATOR
Delay based on the task itself	Perpetual problem finishing tasks
Contributing outside factors	"Perform best under pressure"
Organized / Low Impulsivity	Spontaneous / High Impulsivity
Everyone	~20% Population (Ferrari)

ANOTHER FALLACY
DEBUNKED!

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KEEP THIS IN MIND

Everything requires some form of
action – what can you do right now?



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BRING IT HOME: PRIORITIZING TASKS

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#1: EAT THE FROG



1. Identify your hardest pending task
2. Do that task **first**
3. Don't quit – work on it the whole morning/day if needed
4. Celebrate! Take stock in how incredibly awesome you feel
5. REPEAT tomorrow

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LET'S EVALUATE WHERE WE ARE AT

Poll #1: How many emails are currently “unread” in your inbox?

- a) 0-25
- b) 25-50
- c) 50-100
- d) 100+

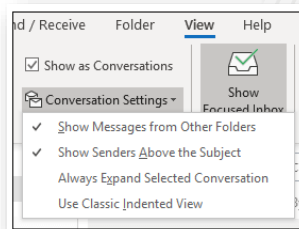
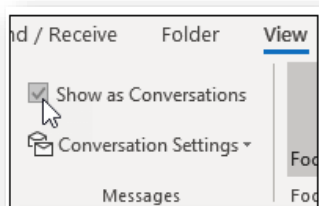


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DO THIS!

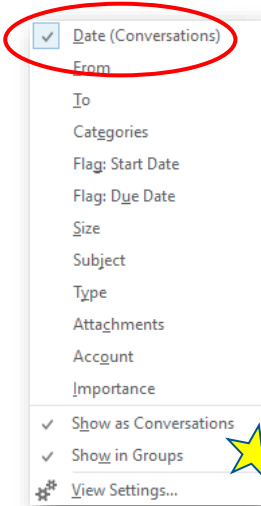
✓ View Email Messages by Conversation



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DO THIS!



✓ Sort email conversations
Newest to Oldest



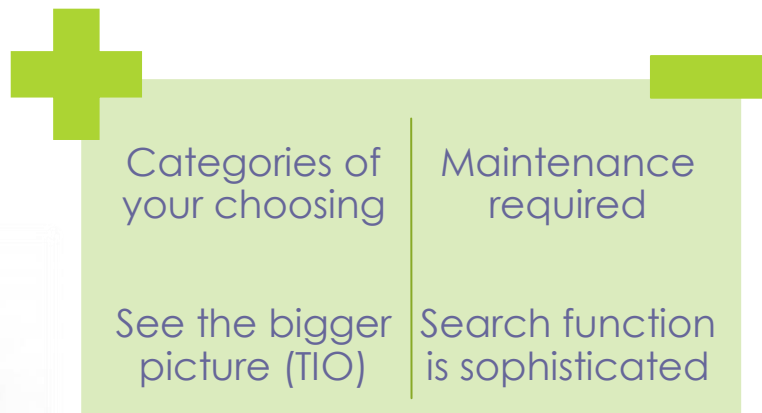
✓ Now when reviewing an email, you are poised to touch it once



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TO FOLDER OR NOT TO FOLDER...



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OUT OF CURIOSITY...

Poll #2: When is an email in your inbox marked “read”?

- a) Automatically – When it is opened
- b) Manually – After read
- c) Manually – After task completed

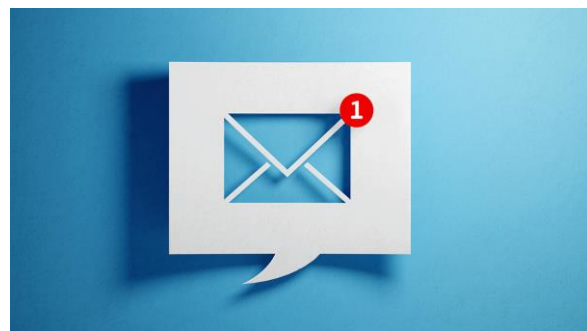


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#2: HOUSEKEEPING

1. Determine your “unread” upper tolerance level
2. When your inbox exceeds this number, inbox organization becomes your **frog**
3. Remember – “Touch it Once!”



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BRING IT HOME: INBOX ORGANIZATION

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BE IN THE PRESENT



- Don't devote time cleaning up old work, organizing old emails
- Begin integrating your inbox organization as items come in
- Handle things as a whole... ***Touch It Once***

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#3: CHOPPING WOOD

Email Type	Where	Status
Referential	Folder	Read
You Need to Respond	Inbox	Unread
You Have Responded	Folder	Read
You Are Awaiting Response	Inbox	Read
Response Received	Folder	Read



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“COMPETING” PRIORITIES



- One thing at a time
- Glass and rubber balls
- 5 lb bag
- Leaving breadcrumbs

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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

DEADLINES

- Be aware of deadlines but don't let them rule you
- *HEAR ME OUT...* Consider working your deadlines backwards

PROJECTS

- This will likely be a **frog**
- Force accountability



How are we doing?

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#4: GO WITH THE FLOW

- Practice mindfulness
- Trick yourself into an artificial flow state
- What to do when you're stuck



Let's reflect on the last time you entered a sense of flow.

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IT'S ALL COMING TOGETHER

- *"Where are the markers?"*
- Able to complete work more holistically – greater value add
- Opportunities to recognize process improvements – contribute to policy decisions



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A grayscale background image showing a network of high-voltage power lines and transmission towers stretching across the landscape.

**BRING IT HOME:
MAKING A GAME PLAN**

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Poll: Rate this session.

- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral
- Needs Improvement

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THANK YOU

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UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

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RESOURCES

Skyrocket your productivity with the 'touch it once' rule
(CNBC, 2018)

- <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/06/21/touch-it-once-method-for-tasks-can-boost-productivity.html>

The real reasons you procrastinate– and how to stop
(Washington Post, 2016)

- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/04/27/why-you-cant-help-read-this-article-about-procrastination-instead-of-doing-your-job/>

Why wait? The science behind procrastination
(Association for Psychological Science, 2013)

- <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/why-wait-the-science-behind-procrastination>

Eat the frog (Kane)

- <https://todoist.com/productivity-methods/eat-the-frog>

This can be
you next
week!



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