

13 November 2025 – George Knight, Training Consultant

CLOSE YOUR EMAILS AND OPEN YOUR TASK LIST

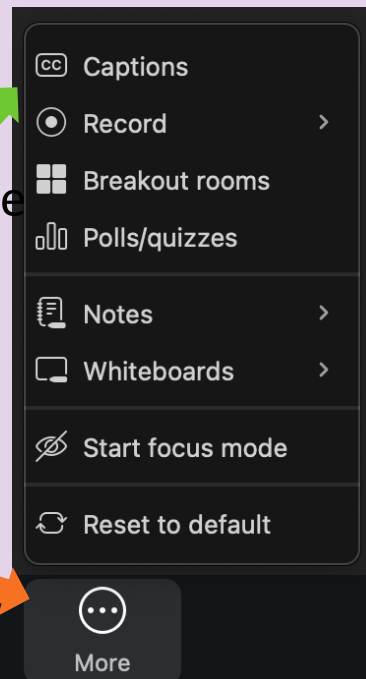
You are being

 **recorded**

Working together, with tech!

Some things because we're virtual

- Where possible, please keep your video on
- When we break, switch the camera off (good for the planet)
- Take a screen rest during breaks
- Turn on captions (if you want to)



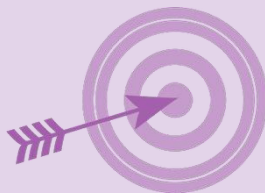
With the end in mind...



Prepare



Train



Targets



Implement



Teach

Key takeaways

- Effectively managing communication
- Focusing on what is important
- Writing and managing tasks

Push the Red Button

How many emails do you get a day?

100+

Per day

*“Your mind is for having ideas,
not holding them.”*

David Allen

Our inboxes do not need to be a
dumping ground.

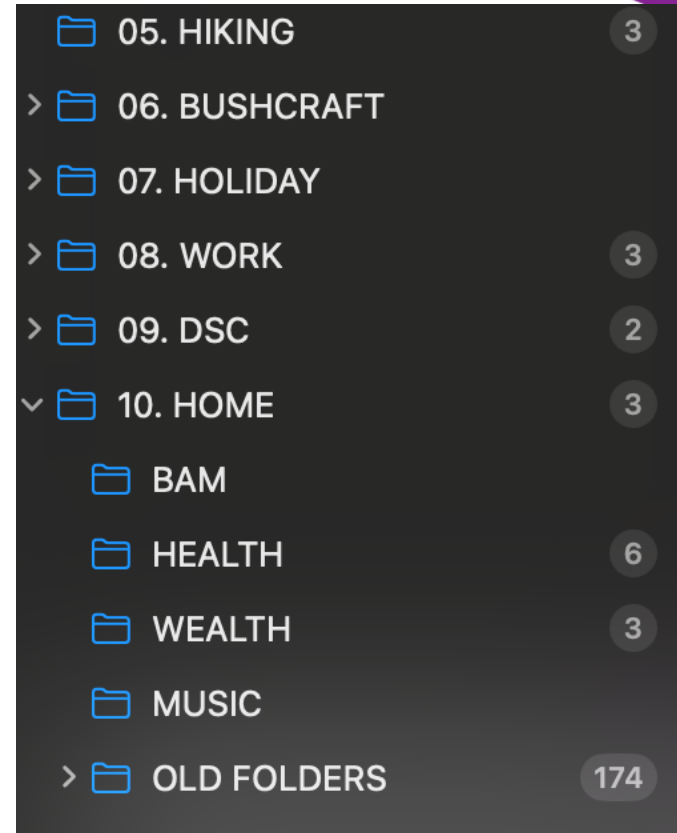
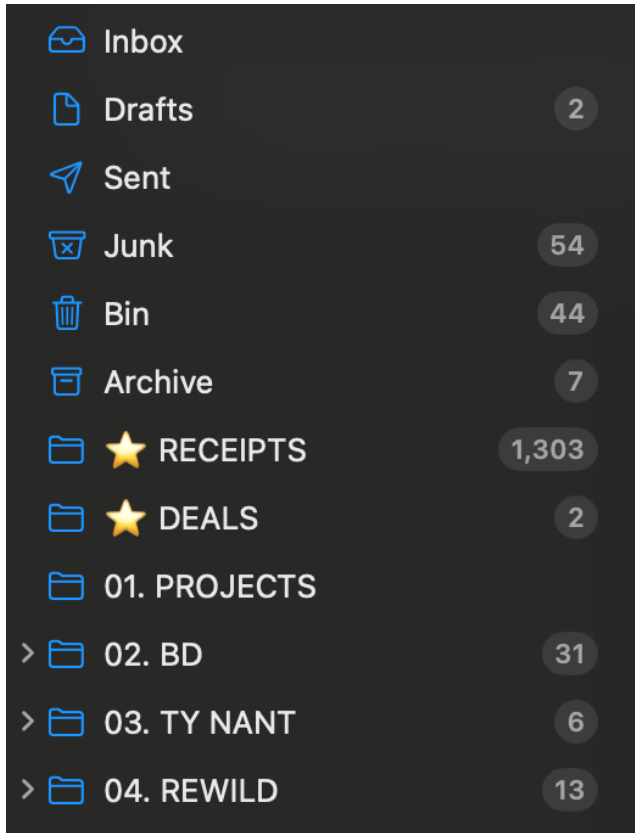


Nothing left to read, well played!

Enjoy your empty inbox.

▼	📁 Inbox	5
▼	1. LIVE	
	📁 🐼 ToDo	2
	📁 🐼 Upcoming training	4
	📁 🐼 Waiting For	1
	📁 👁 Agile/Scrum	3
	📁 👁 Bitesize Sessions	21
	📁 👁 Charity Questions	9
	📁 👁 Grants Unlocked '25	27
	📁 👁 Fundraising Now '26	3
▼	2. CONT HIST	
	> 📁 🐼 KA	
	> 📁 🐼 2023/24	
	> 📁 🐼 Archive	
▼	3. REFERENCE	
	📁 ★ Briefings	3
▼	📁 ★ Conferences	28
	📁 Wellbeing Conf '25	1
	📁 👁 FRN '25	9
	📁 ★ Content	
	> 📁 ★ Feedback	4
	📁 ★ Personal	13
	> 📁 ★ Sales	9
	📁 ★ Training	47
	📁 ★ Useful	6

	📁 👁 AI	4
	📁 👁 Data	
	📁 👁 Debra/Peter Pod	4
	📁 👁 Funds Online	4
	📁 👁 Fundraising	6
	📁 👁 Inspire	3
	📁 👁 Marketing	
	📁 👁 Newsletter	213
	📁 👁 Salesforce	4
	📁 👁 Staff Forum	11
	📁 👁 Wellbeing	18
	📁 ✂ Expenses	1
	📁 AIA Leave	2
▼	4. PRODUCT INFO	
	📁 ✅ Books	2
	📁 ✅ In-house	3
	📁 ✅ Partnerships	1
	📁 ✅ Research	2
	📁 ✅ Subs	2
	> 📁 ✅ Training & events	15
>	📁 OLD FOLDERS	



**Use sub-folders and numbers to
allow for easier categorising**

TASK: Folders

- Open your inbox
 - Have a go at creating folders and storing emails in them



Steps to take

- Every email in our inbox needs one of the following:
 - Actioning
 - Storing for reference
 - Archiving/deleting

TASK: Push the red button

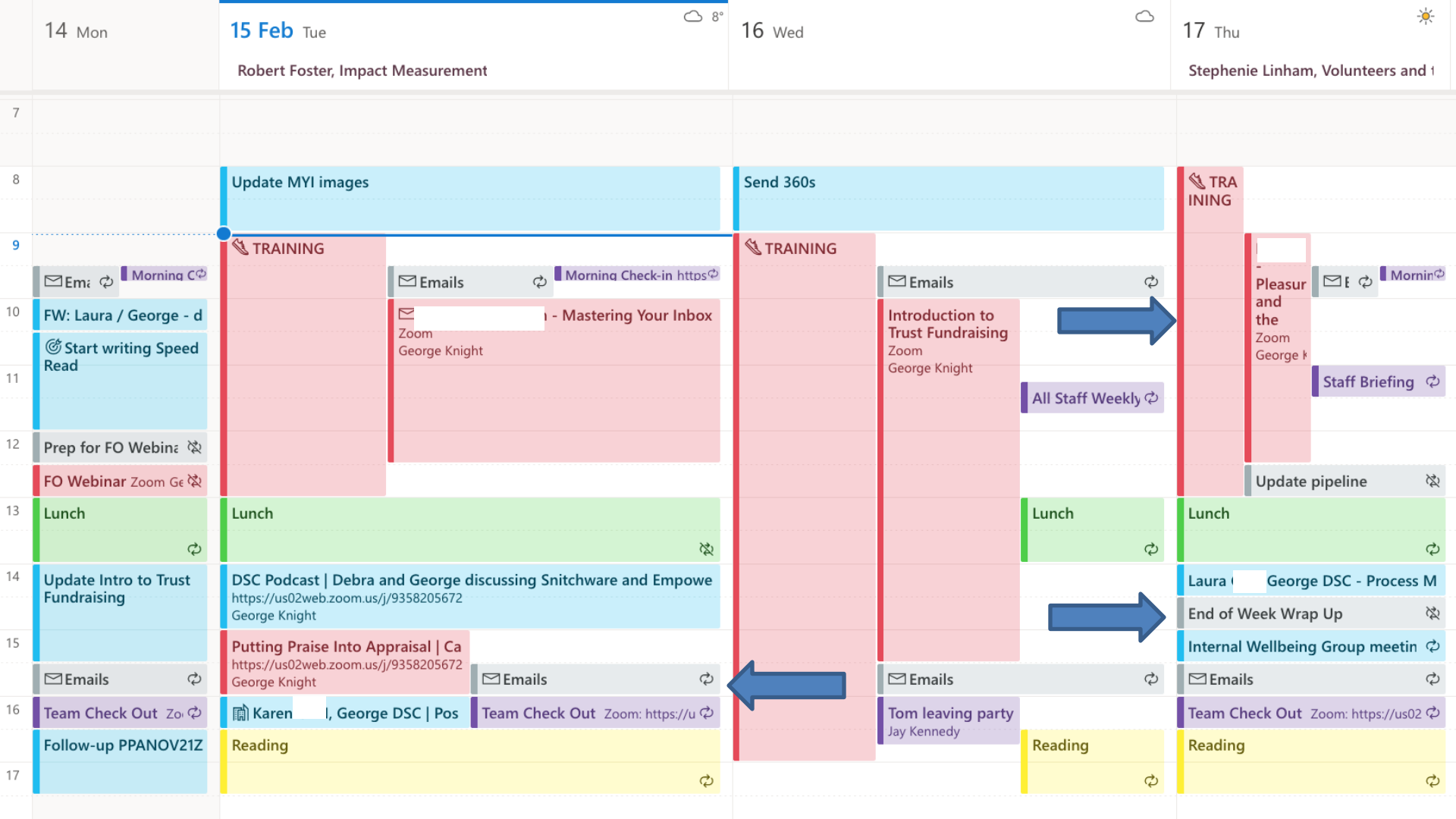
- Open your inbox
 - Archive all messages that need no action or do not need to be stored for reference



Set the intention going forward to
keep this up.

Make it a calendar event

- I check email between
 - 09.30-10.00
 - 15.30-16.00
- You have more email, you schedule more time
- Honour your calendar



Calendar tip

- I check my calendar the work-day before and set alarms for all my meetings
- Calendar is open to be viewed by all colleagues
- Always tackle my biggest objective before emails
- Open online calendar so you can close emails

Opening emails

What is the first thing you do when you open emails?

Started at the bottom

- Anything that takes under 2 minutes, complete!
- Anything that is allocated to a later task, mark!
- Anything urgent, complete!
- Still got time? Keep going!
- No time? Schedule additional calendar event for remaining emails.

If you have URGENT emails?

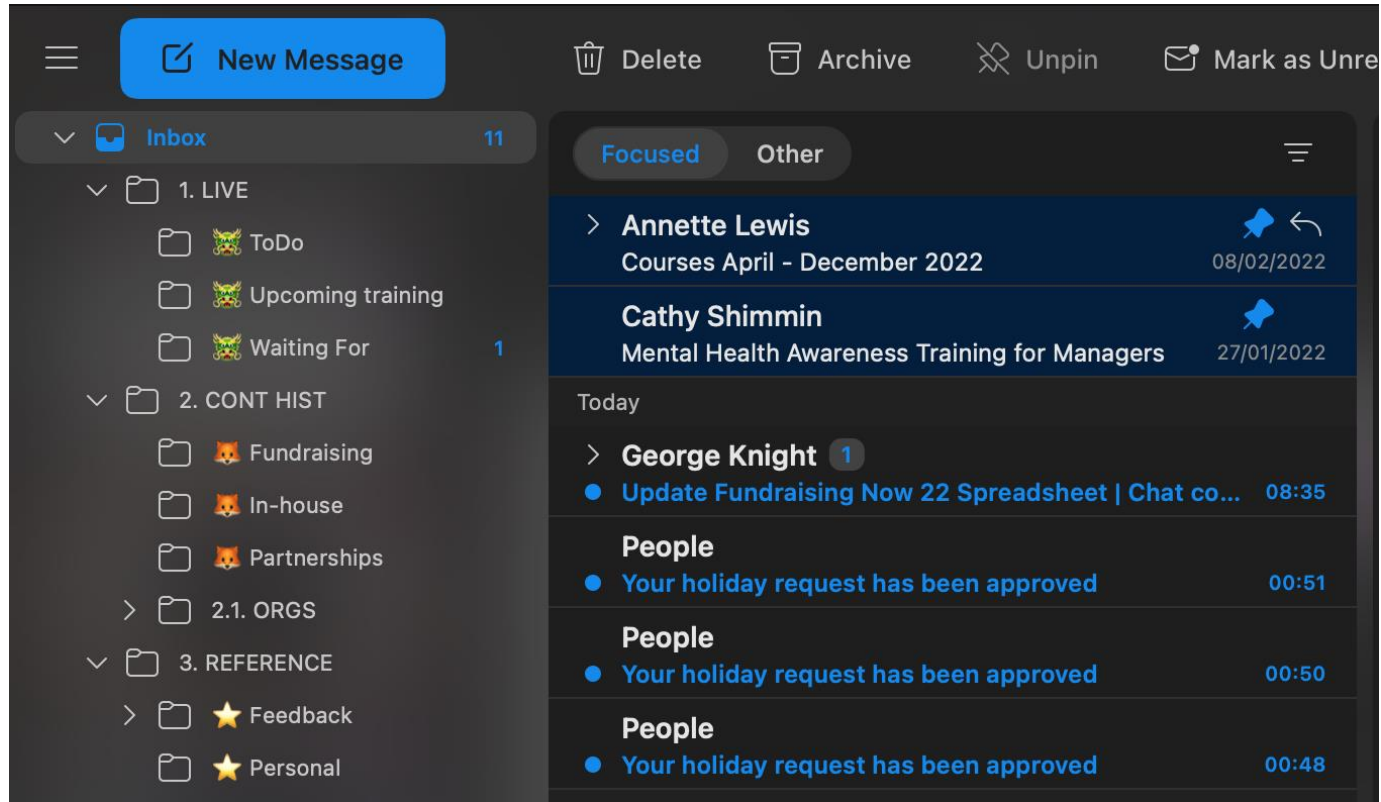
Set a calendar event first thing

If you have **IMPORTANT** emails?

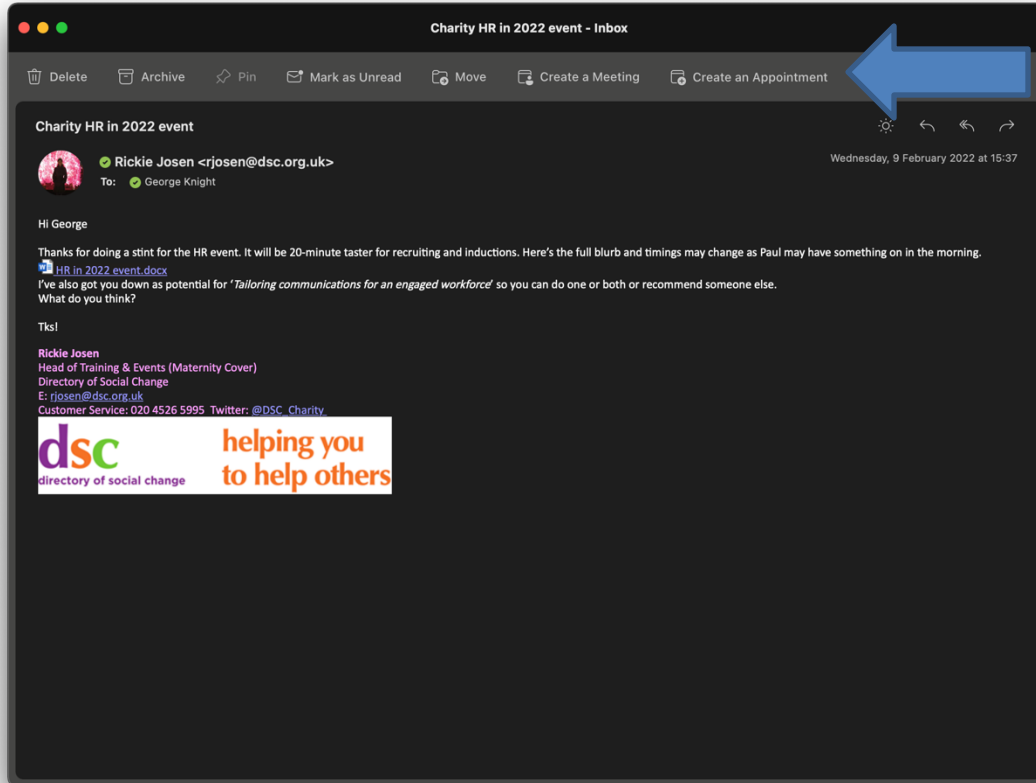
Set a calendar event for when
practical

How many times should you
'touch' an email?

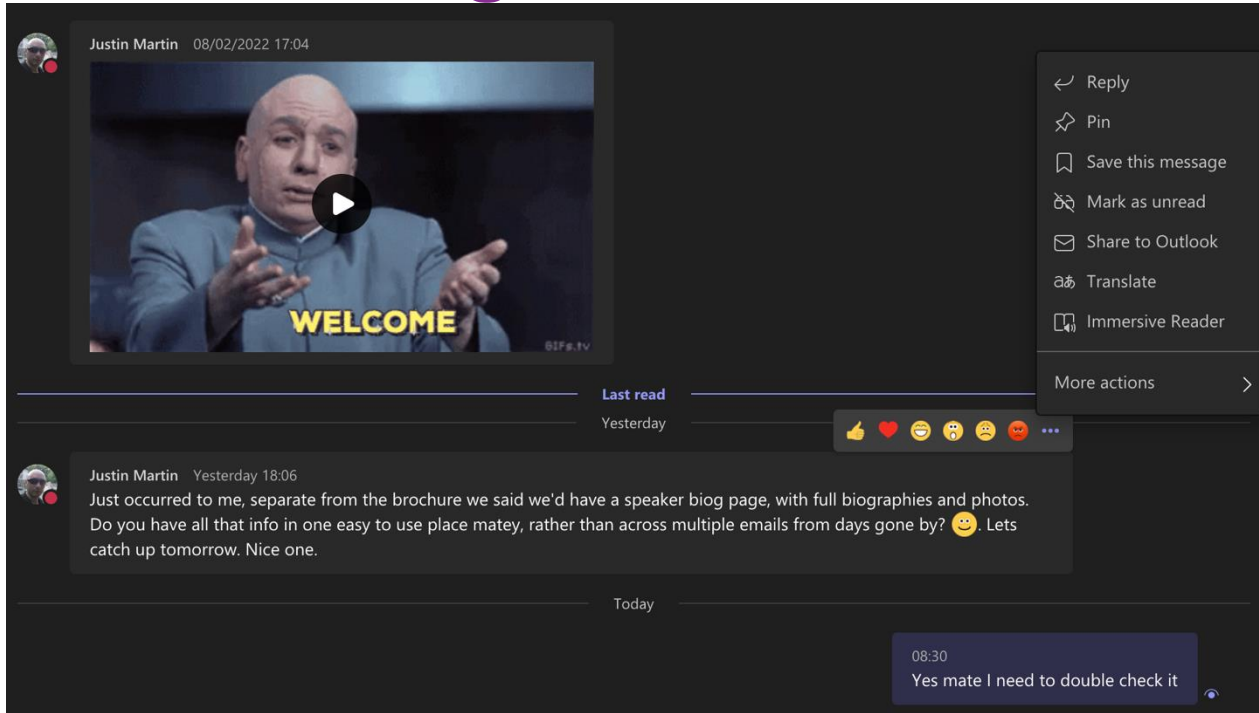
'Pin' emails touched once



Sending tasks to calendar

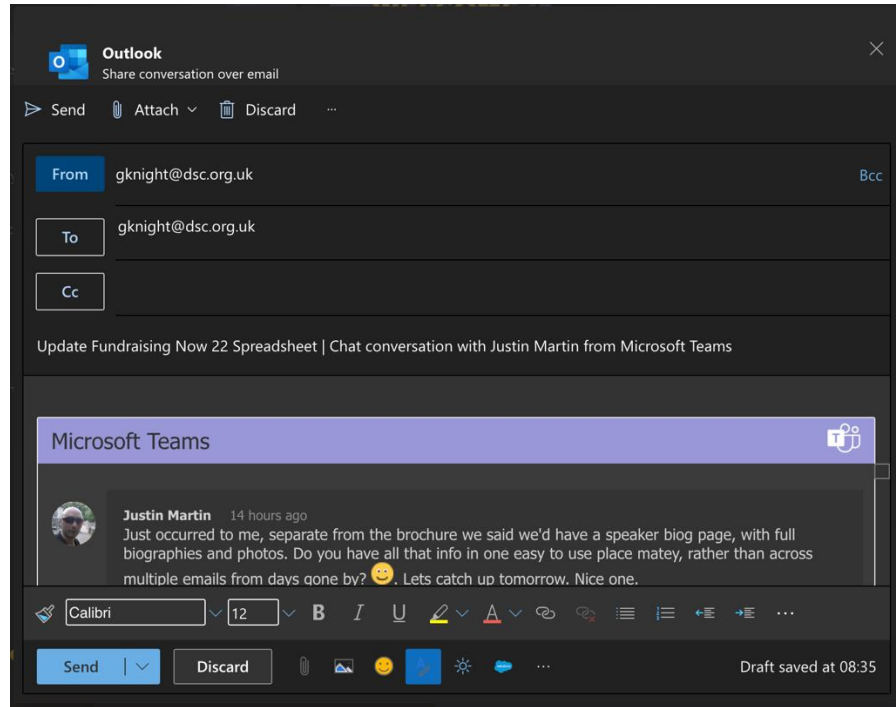


Sending chat to emails



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Teams chat window. At the top, a message from Justin Martin, dated 08/02/2022 17:04, is displayed. It contains a video player showing a man in a blue suit with his hands outstretched and the word "WELCOME" in yellow text. A play button is centered over the video. To the right of the video, a context menu is open, listing several actions: Reply, Pin, Save this message, Mark as unread, Share to Outlook, Translate, Immersive Reader, and More actions. A large blue arrow points from the right towards the context menu. Below the video message, a "Last read" indicator shows "Yesterday". Further down, another message from Justin Martin, dated "Yesterday 18:06", is visible. It is a text message that says: "Just occurred to me, separate from the brochure we said we'd have a speaker biog page, with full biographies and photos. Do you have all that info in one easy to use place matey, rather than across multiple emails from days gone by? 😊. Lets catch up tomorrow. Nice one." Below this message, a "Today" separator is shown. At the bottom right, a message bubble shows the time "08:30" and the text "Yes mate I need to double check it".

Sending chat to emails



Talk to your colleagues

- If you need me urgently call me
- If you want to mention something to me text or message me
- If you think I will need to keep a reference of that info email me

Getting it right

- Internally
 - I now only receive emails that are about something I will need to reference or action
- Externally
 - Still use like normal for most clients
 - Slowly moving clients to more natural channels
 - Texts / Phone calls

Key tips

- New folders should take less than 1 minute to add an organise
- The power of *unsubscribe*
- Please try not to touch emails more than once or twice

Turn off notifications

- Can you make that final brave step?
- Not just email
 - Social media
 - Shopping
 - Anything fighting for attention
- What notifications do you want?



Final step

Close the window / app

Building Task Lists

“You can do anything, but not everything.”

David Allen

Seven Ways to Organise

1. Next actions list
2. Reference material
3. Calendar actions
4. Projects list
5. Project support material
6. Waiting for list
7. Someday maybe

Common language

- Tasks
 - An individual task that makes up a milestone
- Milestones
 - Conclusion of a range of tasks
- Project
 - Conclusion of a range of milestones

Milestones

- *Finish* agenda
- *Sort* a new filing system
- *Buy* a water cooler

Milestones and tasks

- *Finish* agenda
 - *Draft* thoughts for the budget meeting agenda
- *Sort* a new filing system
 - *Talk* to Greg about the filing system we need
- *Buy* a water cooler
 - *Research* the internet for a new water cooler

Milestones and tasks in practice


☐ Amend Support and Supervision slides ▼

☐ Add new Values slide

☐ Remove PAC and replace with slide about disengagement

☐ Consolidates all my pensions to one spot ▼

☐ Contact Government Pension Tracing Service on [0845 6002 537](tel:08456002537)

 www.gov.uk

☐ Find a place where we can move our pensions to i
Look up PensionBee

Creating a Task List

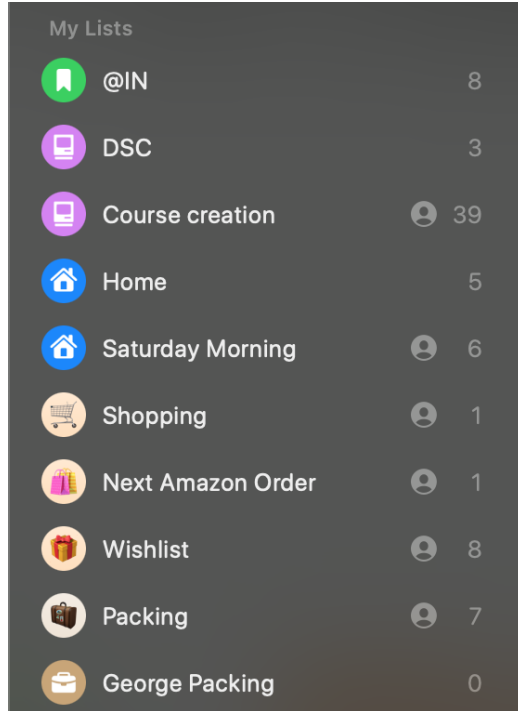
- Physical task-list?
- Digital task-list?
 - Apple Reminders
 - Microsoft Tasks
 - Trello
 - Other?



Add to a task list?

- Anything longer than two-minutes
 - Email update to family
 - Order replacement screwdriver
- Can also go straight into our calendar

Creating an in-tray



A screenshot of a mobile application interface titled "My Lists". It displays a list of items, each with a circular icon, a text label, and a numerical count. The items are: @IN (8), DSC (3), Course creation (39), Home (5), Saturday Morning (6), Shopping (1), Next Amazon Order (1), Wishlist (8), Packing (7), and George Packing (0). The icons represent various categories like social media, education, home, shopping, and packing.

Icon	Item Name	Count
@IN	@IN	8
DSC	DSC	3
Course creation	Course creation	39
Home	Home	5
Saturday Morning	Saturday Morning	6
Shopping	Shopping	1
Next Amazon Order	Next Amazon Order	1
Wishlist	Wishlist	8
Packing	Packing	7
George Packing	George Packing	0

- Include a way to capture uncategorised actions (@IN)

Lists for specific types of action

- DSC desk
- Out on site
- Commuting
- Food shopping
- Packing



Project lists

- Similar to the next action lists
- Directly related to specific projects
- Do you need some?



“Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler.”

Albert Einstein

TASK: Make A Task List

- Using either software or a notepad, write down:
 - A list of different in-trays
 - A list of all your current projects
 - These are your next action and project lists



Review task lists **regularly**

Firm language

- Use clear verbs
 - *Design* a poster
 - *Support* the task group
 - *Secure* funding
- Concise verbs rich in meaning

What to capture?

- Physical or digital tasks
 - Every open loop must be in the capture system
 - Have as few capturing buckets as possible
 - Check them regularly

TASK: Write down open loops/tasks

- Pick one of your task lists
- Write down:
 - All open loops/tasks



Organising tasks coming in

- Is it actionable?
 - NO: trash/someday maybe/reference.
 - YES: Takes under two minutes? Do it now. If not, delegate/defer/plan.

Your Calendar is a Task List

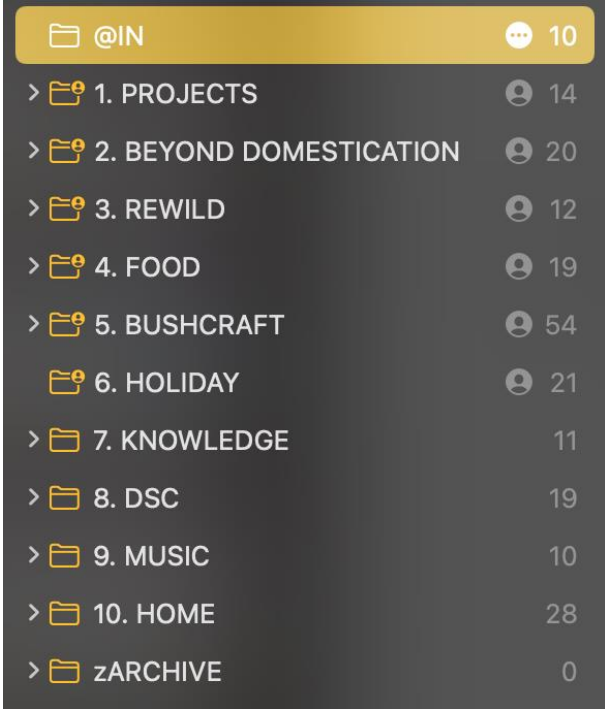
- Plan time/day specific actions
- Mark out key future events
- Free up space in your next action and project lists

Reference and project support material

- Fancy way of describing where we store information:
 - Email folders
 - Notes app
 - Bookmarks
 - Physical folder

References

- Standard @IN at the top for uncategorised references
- Projects folder to catch new projects
- Established projects have their own place

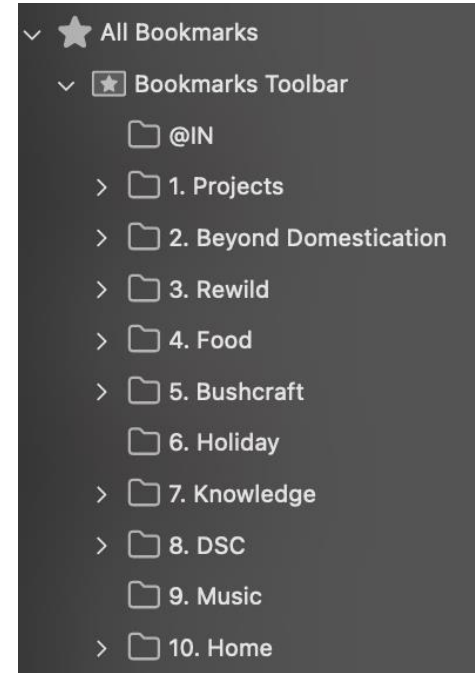


A screenshot of a directory interface with a dark grey background. At the top is a yellow header bar with a folder icon, the text '@IN', a speech bubble icon, and the number '10'. Below this is a list of folders, each preceded by a yellow folder icon and a greater-than sign. The folders are numbered 1 through 10, followed by 'zARCHIVE'. To the right of each folder name is a person icon and a number representing a count. The folders are: 1. PROJECTS (14), 2. BEYOND DOMESTICATION (20), 3. REWILD (12), 4. FOOD (19), 5. BUSHCRAFT (54), 6. HOLIDAY (21), 7. KNOWLEDGE (11), 8. DSC (19), 9. MUSIC (10), 10. HOME (28), and zARCHIVE (0).

Folder	Count
@IN	10
> 1. PROJECTS	14
> 2. BEYOND DOMESTICATION	20
> 3. REWILD	12
> 4. FOOD	19
> 5. BUSHCRAFT	54
> 6. HOLIDAY	21
> 7. KNOWLEDGE	11
> 8. DSC	19
> 9. MUSIC	10
> 10. HOME	28
> zARCHIVE	0

Different reference locations

- References and project support materials are stored alongside each other
- Not just notes:
 - Email folders
 - Bookmarks
 - Other?





This is where creativity starts

Someday maybe

- Offload all those exciting ideas
 - Build a pond
 - Take a woodworking class
 - Swim in the Blue Lagoon
 - Eat a salad made only from wild food

THE ART OF WAW BOOK

Primary interventions

Strategic HR support

Collecting the data in the first stage

- Exit interview
- Probation
- Onboarding survey
- Satisfaction survey
- Turnover %
- Sickness absence
- Recruitment

Analyse the data

Consult with the teams

Plan strategy

Deliver

Review continuously

Reverse causation. Improved engagement doesn't cause increased profit, the other way around. It could then be argued it is cyclical rather than reversed.

Manager and leader training

The 20% manager. 80% human, 20% objectively doing management techniques

Vision mission obs, values

Policies and procedures

Secondary interventions

Mental health first aiders

Staff development

Natural training

Employee perks

TASK: Someday maybe

- What would you like to accomplish or try one day?



TASK: Someday maybe

- Go on a Nordic sauna trip
- Do a job outside
- Fly a plane
- Do all the parkruns in Sweden
- Have a garden I can live off
- Develop passive income

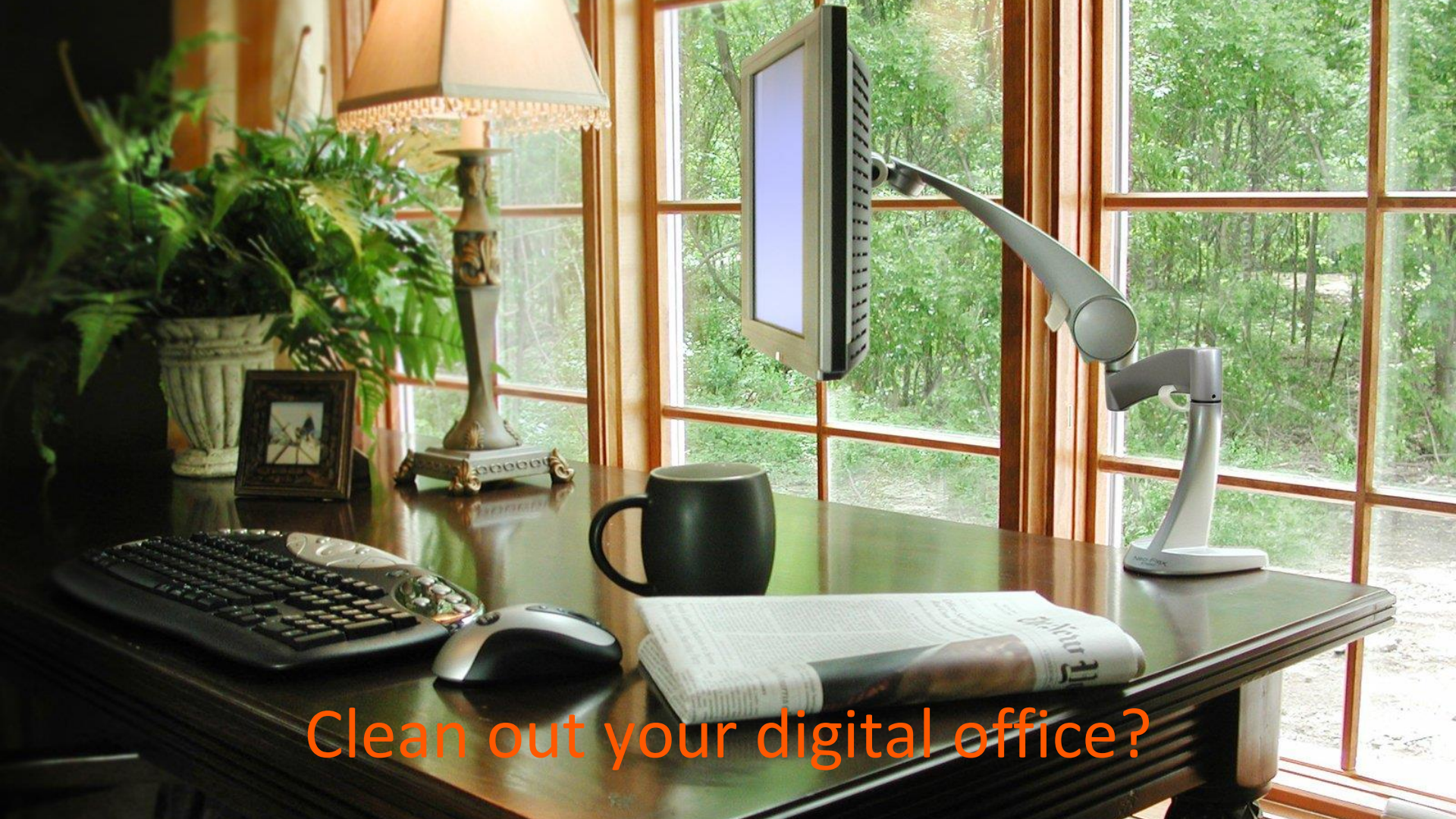
*“When you check your email, will
define your productivity.”*

George Knight

Do not touch emails more than
once or twice.

Combine home and work?

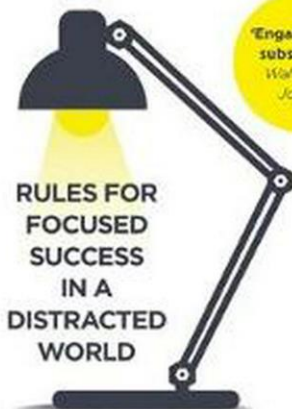




Clean out your digital office?

DEEP WORK

'Cal Newport is a clear voice in a sea of noise,
bringing science and passion in equal measure'
Seth Godin, author of *Linchpin*



'Engaging and
substantive'
*Wall Street
Journal*

RULES FOR
FOCUSED
SUCCESS
IN A
DISTRACTED
WORLD

Cal Newport

Author of *So Good They Can't Ignore You*

Getting Things Done the art of stress-free productivity

from the New York Times bestselling author

David Allen

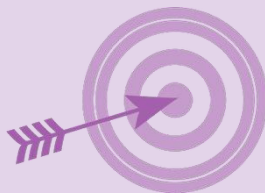




Prepare



Train



Targets



Implement



Teach

Key takeaways

- Effectively managing communication
- Focusing on what is important
- Writing and managing tasks

START

STOP

CONTINUE

START

STOP

CONTINUE

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