

Beware of the Time Killers! Managing the flood of e-mails



There is hardly a communication medium which has changed business and office work as profoundly as e-mail. Messages arrive constantly at our computer. "Have you read the e-mail I sent you 10 minutes ago yet?" This bad habit of phoning after sending an e-mail leads to the situation where we are pushed and surprised, which may tempt us to rush our response. E-mails are a real time killer if we

allow them to interrupt and disturb our own work organisation.

Discipline and a calm approach are helpful when dealing with e-mails. Time management means controlling your own work and time instead of being mastered from outside. Why should others be allowed to decide when you check your messages? For tasks demanding your full concentration, it makes more sense to go offline and not read your e-mails until the moment it is right for you. This is best done at predefined times using planned time blocks, for example every day at 9 AM, at 12 noon and 4 PM.

6 tips to prevent e-mails from becoming time killers:

- 1. Set up predefined times for e-mail – the rest of the time, go offline.**
- 2. Use spam filters!**
- 3. Decide immediately how to deal with each e-mail:**
 - Delete it immediately.
 - File it immediately.
 - Delegate it.
 - Enter it on your 'To Do' list for execution at a later time.
- 4. Prevent ping-pong e-mails – a telephone call can help.**
- 5. For decisions, reach for the telephone.**
- 6. Be a role model!**
Use e-mail sparingly, consciously and intelligently.

The value of a spam filter is self-evident. It should not only analyse the subject heading, but the full text.

Decide immediately how to handle each e-mail. Delete unimportant or inappropriate messages. Some e-mails can be filed immediately. Everything that can be delegated should be forwarded at once if possible. E-mails you must deal with personally should be put on your 'To Do' list indicating the priority.

Do not take part in ping-pong correspondence. Some e-mails lead to a never-ending trail. In such cases you should solve the problem directly via the phone. The telephone is also preferable if a decision has to be made because it can be done more efficiently and quickly.

Be a role model when it comes to dealing with e-mail. Only respond if necessary. Choose the distribution list

wisely. Keep your response short and precise. Determine if the label 'high importance' is really justified. Do not phone immediately after sending an e-mail, but give the recipient time to consider his/her answer.

You can find more information about improving your skills in the areas of time management and effective organisation in our '**Priorities Organisation Planning**' **BEITRAINING**[®] programme.

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Quote of the month:

"There is one kind of robber whom the law does not regulate and who steals what is most precious to men: time."

Napoleon Bonaparte

BEITRAINING[®] grants master franchise for Bavaria

Oke Ketelsen has acquired the **BEITRAINING**[®] master franchise licence for Bavaria. The fifty-two-year-old will establish and look after the network of 'people skills' training in Bavaria. Besides the existing training centre in Nuremberg, it is planned to open eight additional training centres throughout Bavaria. "It is my goal to supply these fast-growing companies with a European-wide platform to actively bring about change to the service society," Ketelsen says.



After his commercial education at Hoechst AG, Oke Ketelsen had a long career in marketing and distribution in the international chemical engineering market and, until mid-2003, he led the Interorgana Chemical Engineering Trading Corporation in Cologne as a CEO. The establishment of the European sales organisation and personnel development were the focus of his role. Later, as a founder and acting partner of an investment company, he specialised in the management of private assets.



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