

I am constantly amazed by the number of clients I work with who make things harder than they need to be. There's often several reasons why:

- They were shown to do something that way so they've always done it that way.
- They don't have the time to try something different so they figure, "at least I know this way works".
- They don't think "big picture", they think about putting a band aid on something rather than diagnosing the problem and working out a solution.

Here are a couple of simple things you can do that will save lots of time and frustration on repetitive tasks.

### Repetitive Emails

Instead of searching for an old email and editing it, try the following:

- Type an email leaving various areas blank for you to fill in (think monthly report or email to parents).
- Don't send the message,
- Press the ESC key on the keyboard and save it to Drafts.
- Next time you need an email with that content, go to Drafts and open the email
- Edit it and press send.

Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.

*NOTE: If you want to duplicate this email draft (so you can use it again), click on the email and press Ctrl + C to copy it, and then Ctrl + V to paste it.*

Warren Buffet

### Email to Contacts

Got an email from someone you don't have in your address book? Rather than open a contact card in Outlook and fill out their details which can be really time consuming, try the following:

- Click on the message from the contact you want to add to your address book.
- Hold down the left mouse key and drag the message to the contact icon (usually at the bottom left of the Outlook Inbox view).
- Release your mouse key
- A new contact card will be created.
- Simply highlight and drag and drop text to the various fields such as mobile or street address.

### Email to Calendar

If you receive an email that you need to action – for example you need to locate an attachment then send a response, you may need to set a time to do this.

When items are in your calendar they are more likely to get done.

- To turn the email into a calendar item, simply drag and drop the message to the calendar icon.
- A calendar appointment will appear.
- Complete the details – typing them in and dragging and dropping.
- Don't forget to allocate a realistic time to complete the task.

Remember, what gets scheduled gets done!!

## Key points

Instead of always doing things the same way you always have, look for time savers.

Identify repetitive tasks that could be simplified with a small investment of time.

A small investment of time once can save a lot of time later.

Share what you learn with colleagues so we all learn.

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Donna is a former administrator, Parents and Friends President and School Council Member. Donna gets how hard it can be to find time to learn how to increase productivity with programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel & Outlook. She delivers in-house PD sessions and offers on-line resources to meet your school needs and budget. For more information on how Donna can assist visit her website.