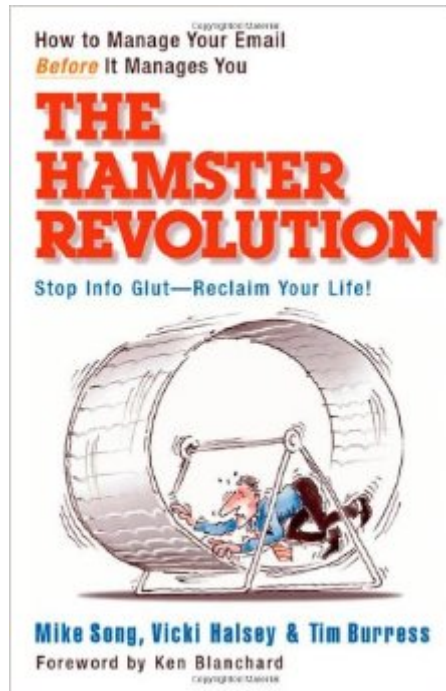


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The Hamster Revolution: How To Manage Your Email Before It Manages You (Bk Business)



Synopsis

Is email taking over your life? Meet Harold, an HR director so overwhelmed by email he feels like a hamster on a wheel. Just in time, Harold meets a coach who shifts his focus from time management to a simple yet surprising new way to manage email. The coach helps Harold conquer email overload, write incredibly effective messages, and get organized forever. Suddenly, Harold can find every file in a flash! Harold saves 15 days a year, reclaims his life, and propels his career to new heights. The Hamster Revolution is packed with surprising strategies and powerful tech tips. It includes a landmark case study that shows how 2,000 Capital One associates each saved over two weeks a year. Now in its tenth printing, this best-seller is a must read for every busy professional.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The aim of this book is to reduce email volume, improve email quality, encourage sending email that is more actionable and organize folders using COTA (Clients, Output, Teams, Admin) approach. Although, some ideas of the book are arguable, the book makes you think once again about your way of emailing. Some readers may find COTA useful, but for me it is too complicated and counterproductive. You can do more in less time with a simpler scheme. I prefer the method advocated by David Allen in his book "Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity": where the messages are divided by four categories: "next actions", "projects", "waiting for" and "someday/maybe". I also disagree with the authors' advice to use instant messaging (IM) in addition

to email. The authors did not get the major point of e-mail: you write your emails in the most convenient time for you, and the recipient reads them in the most convenient time for her. What the authors do not understand is that you cannot disturb somebody by sending an email in an inappropriate time. For example, the authors wrote that an email may be "...unnecessary interruption in a workday already filled with interruptions. You are working on an important project that requires a lot of concentration.... your masterpiece... and ding, an email comes in". The authors do not understand that is not the arrival that made you interrupt, but the counterproductive configuration of the email software that notifies you about the incoming messages. If you will disable the notifications, an incoming email will never break off your concentration again. You will read all the incoming messages in a proper time. The authors also forget about spam - a potential source for interruptions.

Taking cue from *The One Minute Manager*, *Zapp!*, *Fish!* and *Who Moved My Cheese?*, *The Hamster Revolution* uses a parable to show how to better manage and organize e-mail and information. The hamster represents people endlessly running on the wheel of e-mail. Right away, I start using concepts from the 90-minute book. Considering I'm an organized person, that says something. In the story, Harold the Hamster receives a visit from an information coach to help him with e-mail and information management. Harold is a person who turned into a hamster because e-mail and information trapped him on a figurative hamster wheel. Harold and his coach think aloud as they explore his e-mail habits and inbox to find the problem areas. The banter between the two gives the reader insight into why something doesn't work and how to fix it. Their comments mirror what many of us think when we're drowning in messages. Though cheesy at times, the story quickly explains the how, what, and why without confusing readers with dry writing. I was eager to discover the secret of COTA, the concept for creating folders named Clients, Output, Teams and Administration. COTA also represents the order of priority. The Clients folder receives top honors on the hierarchy than Output. Administration gets thrown to the bottom of the pile where it belongs. But this concept isn't as foolproof as the authors make it sound. They state that you won't run into a situation when an email or document belongs in two folders. However, if that should happen -- then the document belongs in the one higher up on the COTA ladder. Furthermore, the system serves departments and teams best.

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