

FENESTRATION REVIEW ON

CANADA'S WINDOW AND DOOR MAGAZINE

Spring 2016

fenestrationreview.com

TAKE THE BIG VIEW

Experimenting with
aluminum to meet new trends
and energy codes.

Before you hit Send



by Rich Porayko

Research shows that the average employee spends 28 per cent of their time sending, receiving and sorting email. Two and a half hours a day spent on email adds up to 81 days a year. With mobile devices and employees checking their emails outside work hours, reports say the typical working day is now 12 hours so it is more important than ever to communicate clearly and concisely the first time. Yet so many people I communicate with in this business send one-word emails. Would you enter an order and only provide production one attribute at a time? A bottleneck would occur and operations would slow to a crawl. There would be delays, opportunity costs and defects. If someone asks a series of questions, answer them. All of them. Don't just cherry pick. Even if you can't give a definitive answer, let the requester know so they can re-schedule, work around and move forward. It sounds simple but partial or unanswered questions waste time for internal customers downstream. Failing to respond in a timely manner or not providing enough feedback can make a challenge that could have been solved in 20 minutes in one or two emails take days and a long chain of disruptive emails. It's easy to write a brief yet crystal-clear reply by cutting and pasting the sender's questions or editing the original thread with responses in a different-colour font.

The volume of inter-office email is insane. Think twice before sending an email to the person sitting next to you. Not only is it a time-waster, it affects culture and morale. With email, texting, social media and even online dating (so I'm told), people are cut off from one another. Emotions are misinterpreted. They will write things that they would never say to someone face-to-face. There are certain documentation benefits to an email thread, but it can also be counterproductive and even escalate tensions and deteriorate relationships.

Pick up the phone. It's amazing how productive calling someone can be. Mom isn't the best emailer but she can chat your ear off on the phone. I have colleagues that I've never met in person or spoken with on the phone yet we work effectively through email so we've never

needed to speak. But there are others that need to be phoned in order to get the job done. It is amazing (and disappointing) how an email can be disregarded and how a phone call can get the action you are looking for.

Because it's 2016, use a professional email address. If you are emailing for work, you should be using a company email address. It's \$15 a year to set up a domain and few bucks more to set up email.

There are certain advantages in having a free gmail account that you can use for filling out online forms and registrations in order to cut down on junk mail, but these should be exceptions to the rule. You should never use addresses that are not work appropriate, such as "bieber_lover16@..." no matter how much you love the Biebs.

Hitting Reply All is a judgement call. Use it wisely. Triple check your recipient list when typing in the email's "To" line. This is particularly easy to fail at with autocomplete and a large list of recipients. Sending a strategic message, pricing or otherwise sensitive or confidential email to the wrong person is no bueno. If you receive an email that wasn't intended for you, it is common courtesy to let the sender know (not by Replying All) so they can correct their mistake.

Me fail english? That's impossible! You may have not noticed your typo, punctuation or grammar error(s) but your recipient probably did. Proof each word line by line a few times, preferably reading aloud and not relying on the precious spellchecker.

As a final safety check, get in the habit of adding the email addresses last and make sure attachments are added and the message is ready to be sent. If it is a touchy subject or heated discussion, wait at least 10 minutes or even better, the next day, before sending. The longer you wait, the less likely you are to lose your cool and say something you might regret. It is usually easy to configure your email client so messages are delayed before sending, which is always helpful for adding missed attachments, additional proofing and the inevitable brilliant idea that only came to light after hitting send.