



A Better Way To Work

Priority Management Systems Inc.
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AVOIDING THE VOICEMAIL MINEFIELD

Save up to 90 Minutes a Day by Managing Voice-Mail Effectively

If you feel like you are buried under voice-mail messages some days, you aren't alone. Most business people receive dozens of phone calls and voice-mail messages each day and for many, this is wasted time, according to productivity expert Dan Stamp, Chairman of Priority Management Systems Inc.

The average worker receives 52 phone calls and 22 voice-mail messages a day. If they don't have the skills to manage voice-mail effectively, they could be wasting as much as an hour and a half each day just because of phone calls, says Dan Stamp.

"Managing voice mail effectively means knowing how to leave messages that will result in action and how to deal with messages you receive," says Stamp. "There's no reason to play long rounds of 'telephone tag' or to have a dozen messages saved on your voice mail. Effective voice-mail management is an essential management skill today that's just as important as managing priorities, communications or planning."

Stamp offers these tips for effectively managing voice mail:

1. Send a clear message. When you leave a voice mail message, speak slowly and leave your phone number twice so the recipient doesn't have to replay your message. Be concise but don't just leave your name and number. Outline what action is needed and you may get the job done without waiting to speak to the person.
2. Don't be a slave to your voice-mail. Be disciplined about checking your messages. Don't pick up messages more than four times during the day. Otherwise your voice mail becomes a productivity bandit that distracts you from your high priority tasks.
3. Empty your mailbox. Try to delete messages as soon as you listen to them. Make a note and determine when you will take the required action. Otherwise you risk wasting time listening to saved messages.
4. Provide options. Let callers know if there are options available, such as pressing 0 to talk to someone else. This could save you from receiving unnecessary messages.
5. Be quick. When leaving a message, try to limit it to 60 seconds or you may lose your audience.
6. Use a headline. Some companies actually have a policy that directs employees to start voice-mails with headlines such as "This is FYI..." or "Action is required". This helps the recipient decide which calls are top priority.

If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with a Priority expert, please call our head office at:
International: (604)-214 7772, US/Canada: 1-800 437 1032 or e-mail us at: media@prioritymanagement.com.



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AVOIDING THE VOICEMAIL MINEFIELD (cont.)

7. Leave a helpful message. You can make better use of your time if your message tells people when you will be back in the office or when you will be able to respond to their call. Try to update your voice mail message daily. If you have to leave a long message, tell the caller how to skip it in the future.

Stamp recommends that companies define voice mail policies such as required response time (usually 24 or 48 hours), how frequently outgoing messages are updated and how frequently voice mail is picked up.

Priority Management is a worldwide training company with 75 offices in 15 countries. They have successfully trained more than one million graduates in Priority programs. These programs help companies and people be more effective in and out of the office by providing tools, processes and discipline. Clients range from small business entrepreneurs to Fortune 500 companies.

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