



*Ending the Cycle of Email
Anxiety*

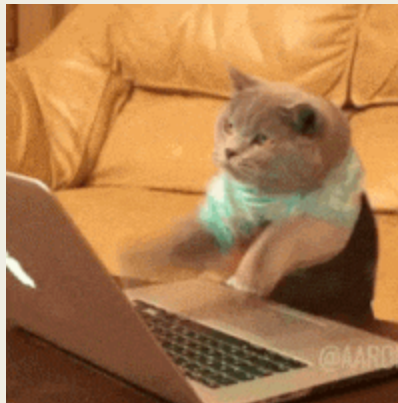
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Objectives

- Learn the science behind email anxiety
- Top 7 Things to do to Reduce Email Anxiety
 - *Start with your goals in mind*
 - *Create an email schedule*
 - *Stop general email alerts*
 - *Prioritize your emails*
 - *Create a VIP list*
 - *Learn how to use rules to de-clutter your inbox*
 - *Email tips for when you're out of the office*

Email Anxiety...



Email Anxiety...

Discussion:

- Do you have an additional parent email address to answer?
- What email platform do you use for work
 - *Outlook*
 - *Gmail*
 - *Proprietary*
 - *Others?*
- What makes you anxious about emails?
- How much time do you think you spend on emails each day?

Email Anxiety...

- What if someone told you that you only needed to check your email **THREE TIMES A DAY?**

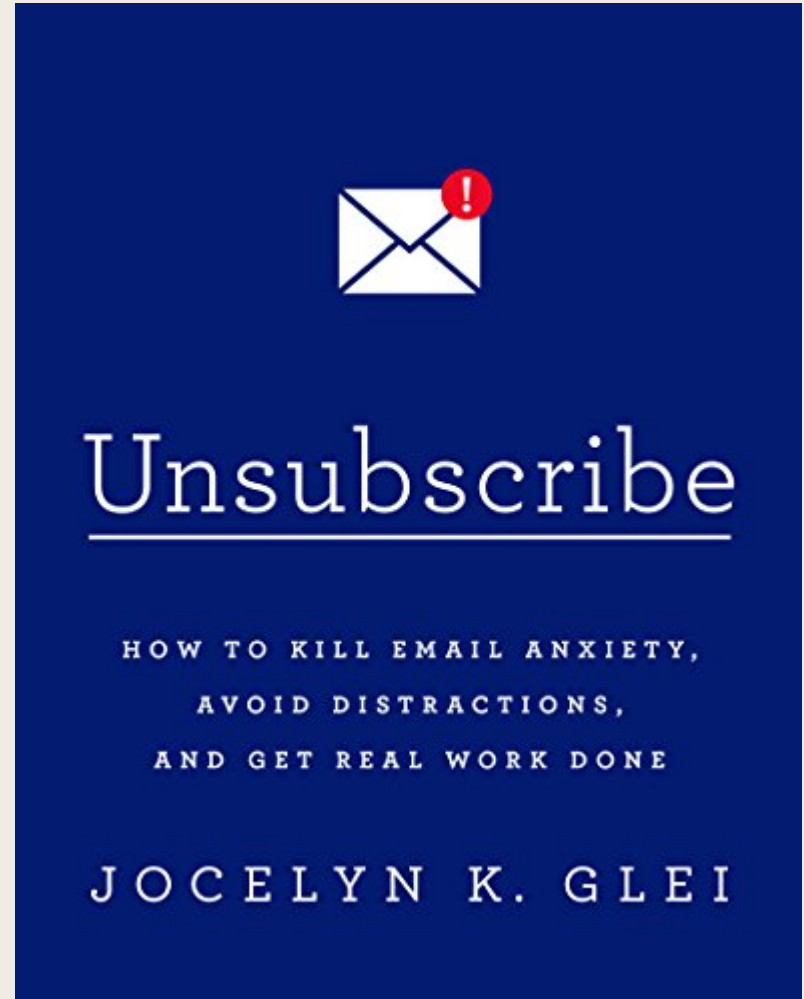
Email Anxiety...



Book

*Unsubscribe: How to Kill
Email Anxiety, Avoid
Distractions, and Get Real
Work Done*

Jocelyn Gleib, 2016



The Science behind Email Anxiety

- Studies show office workers check email 74 times per day (Glei, 2016)
- Average time spent reading/answering emails: 28 percent of workday (Glei, 2016)
- Clear link between time spent answering emails and stress (Kushlev & Dunn, 2014)

The Science behind Email Anxiety

- Expectations that emails you send will be answered right away leads to disappointment
- Negativity bias – social cues and reactive feedback is missing from emails
 - *Goleman (2013) found if sender thought an email was positive, the receiver found it neutral; if sender thought an email neutral, receiver found it negative*
 - *Use emojis and exclamation points to replace facial expressions/tone*

The Science behind Email Anxiety

Askers

- Asking for what you want is fine
- People can always decline requests
- No big deal

Guessers

- Only ask if they think it very likely to get a “yes”
- Include a lot of thought and detail when making requests

Problem: When Askers email Guessers, the guessers find requests presumptuous; need to remember Askers don't expect a “yes.”

The Science behind Email Anxiety

- Flow – checking emails as they arrive can disrupt your groove
- Switchtasking and Interruptions – stopping each time you receive an email reduces your overall productivity
 - *Mark, Gonzalez, Harns (2005) – when working on a task requiring concentration, it takes about 25 minutes to get back on task when interrupted*

The Myth of Inbox Zero

- The feeling of satisfaction of chipping away at your inbox is just that – a feeling
- “...it’s easy to see progress when we’re doing relatively meaningless short-term tasks, while it’s more difficult to see our progress when we’re engaged in the long-term, creative projects that will ultimately have the most impact on our lives.”



What do we do to increase our productivity and still stay connected?





Top 7 things
to do to
reduce email
anxiety

#1 – Start with your goals in mind

- What are your department's major goals?
- This will help you prioritize your time and your handling of emails
- Keep these handy
 - *In a photo frame on your desk*
 - *As your desktop wallpaper*
 - *On a post-it note*

Start with your goals in mind

- On your worksheet, write down 2-3 goals you want to be reminded of as you approach your workday



Start with your goals in mind

- Take time at the end of the day to reflect on what work you did to help you achieve your goals
- Break big projects into small parts you can check off

#2 - Create an Email Schedule

- Be a “batcher” not a ”reactor”
- Choose 2 – 3 times per day when you will check and respond to emails
- Consider not checking immediately when you get to the office. Give yourself some time to settle in and think about your goals for the day
 - *At the end of the day, create a to-do list for tomorrow; serves as framework for priorities before you begin checking emails*

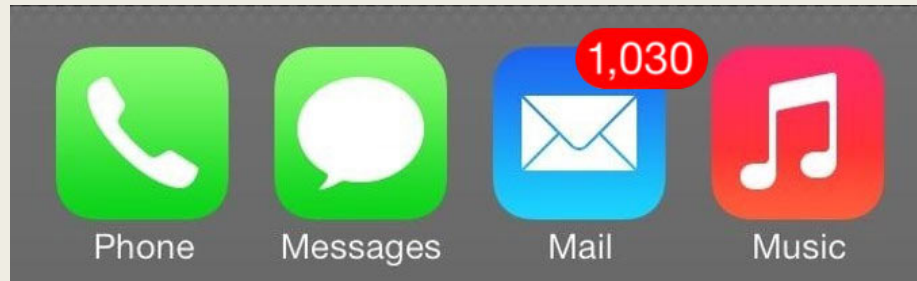
Create an Email Schedule

- Put recurring meetings with reminders in your calendar and resist the urge to check email during other times
- *Don't panic—we will find ways to address emails from VIPs*

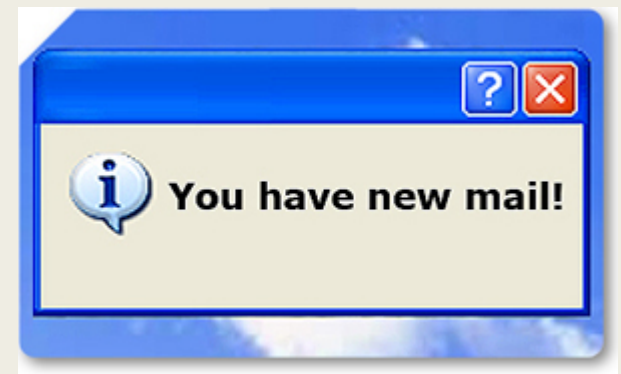
Create an Email Schedule

- On your worksheet, write down two-three times per day when you will check your email

#3 - Stop general email alerts

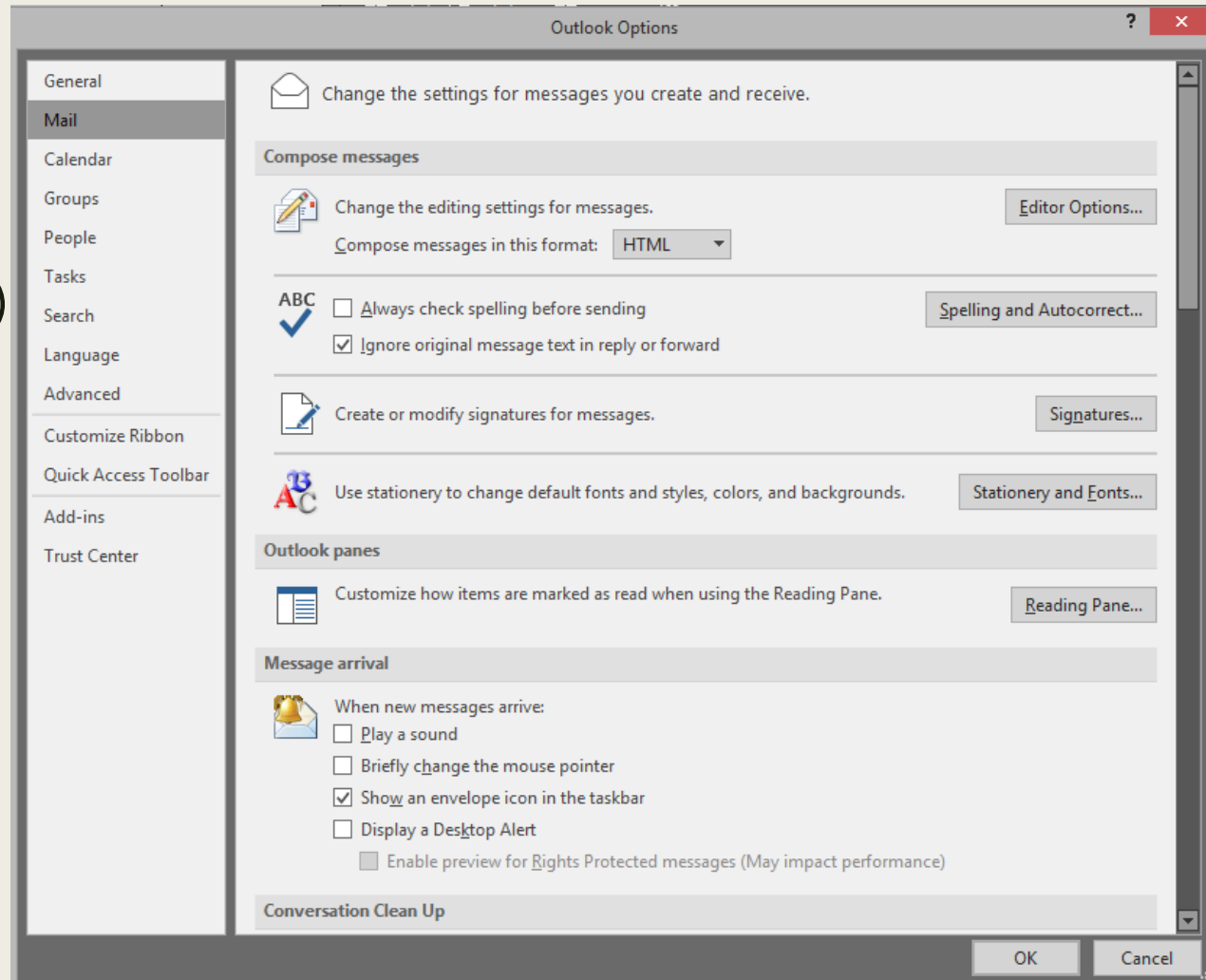


- Disable desktop reminders and sounds
- Disable phone alerts
- *Bonus Tip – you can tell Outlook to open to your Calendar instead of your Inbox*



How to stop general email alerts

- Go to Outlook “Options” (File/Options/Mail)



How to open Calendar instead of Inbox

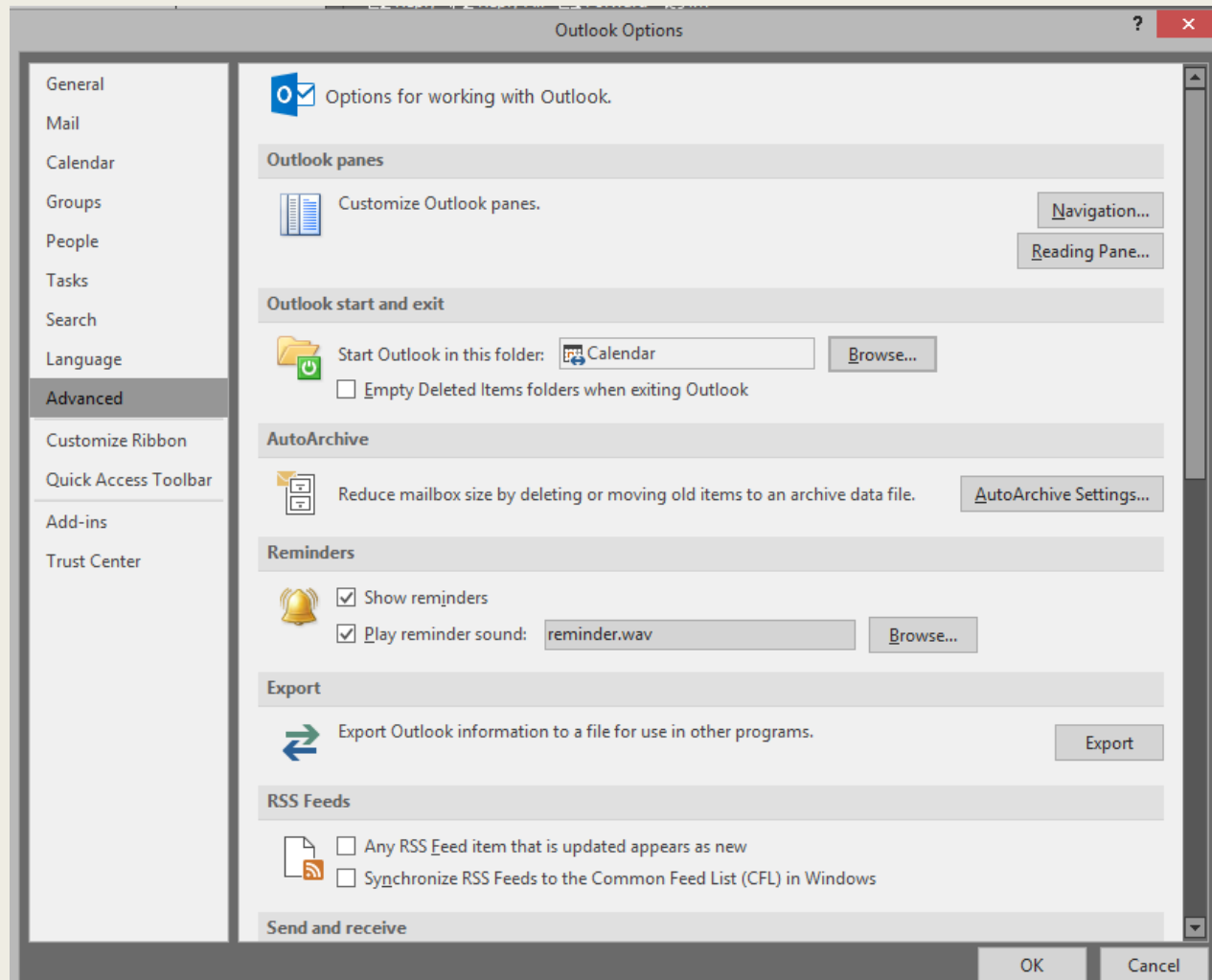
- Go to Outlook

“Options”

(File/Options/
Advanced)

- Then, browse to

Calendar



#4 - Prioritize your emails

- VIP
 - *Read right away, respond to quickly*
- Middle Tier/Collaborators
 - *Coworkers, department contacts, event-specific contacts, parent emails*
 - *Read and respond to soon, usually same day*
- Others
 - *Unsolicited emails, surveys, etc.*
 - *Read and respond to when you have time at the end of your scheduled email times*

#5 - Create your VIP List



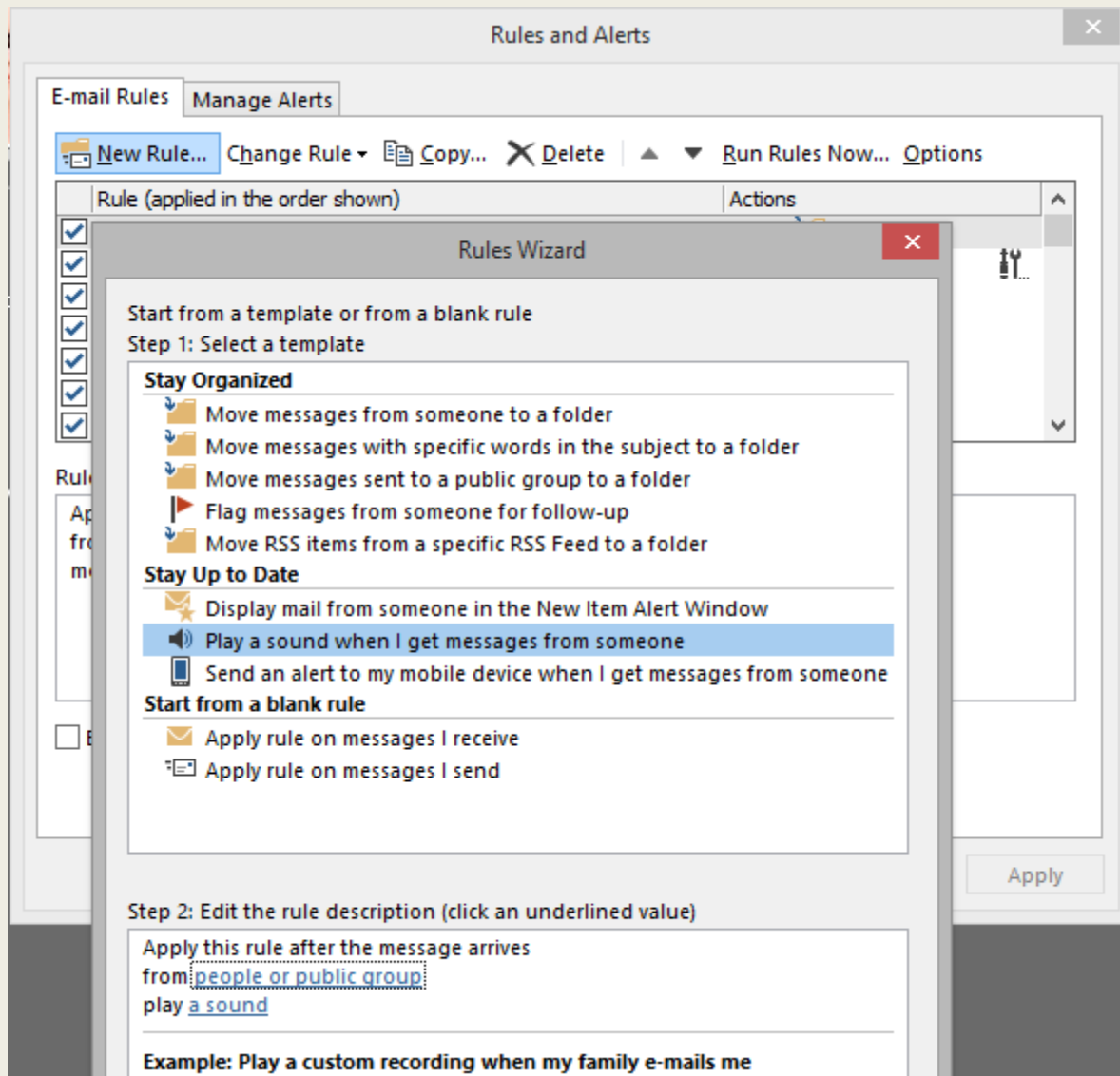
- These are emails you want to read right away and respond to quickly
 - *Your supervisor*
 - *Division leadership*
 - *Your direct reports*
 - *Others?*
- You can create rules in your email program and on your phone to allow special alerts for your VIP list
- Tip: you can always create temporary VIPs that are event-specific

Create your VIP List

- On your worksheet, list your VIPs

How to create alerts for your VIP emails

- File/Rules and Alerts/New Rule/Play a sound when I get messages from someone
 - *Then, click “people or public group” and add your VIP emails in the box that opens*
 - *Then, click “sound” and navigate to a sound file on your PC (example, Windows “chord.wav”)*



#6 - Using Rules to De-Clutter your Inbox

- Use the Rules function to organize your emails into folders:
 - *Campus wide emails*
 - *Listserv emails*
 - *Emails from organizations you belong to*
 - *Emails from specific senders*
 - *Social Media*
 - *Others?*



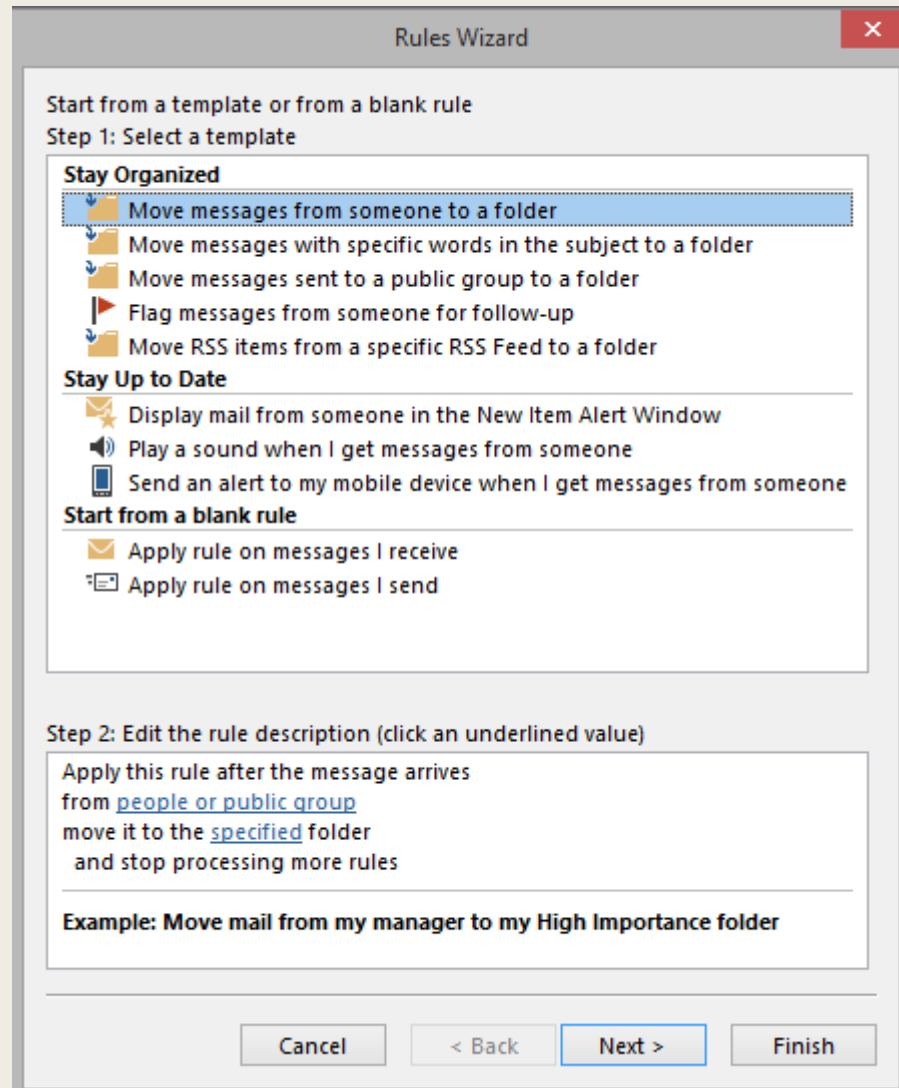
Using Rules to De-Clutter your Inbox

- On your worksheet, make a list of frequent emails you will make rules for

How to create rules

- File/Manage Rules and Alerts/New Rule/Move Messages from Someone into a Folder
- Then, click “People or Public Group” and add email address of those you want to move
- Click “Specified Folder” to choose or create the folder you want the emails moved to

How to create rules



#7 - When you're out of the office...

- Don't forget to set your automatic replies
- Make sure phone email alerts are disabled, except for your VIPs (see handout)
- When on vacation, alter your scheduled times to check emails to once per day



Bonus: #8

- Be flexible – There will be times when your schedule does not work
- If you find yourself getting frazzled with emails again, just begin again with your goals in mind

Other applications

- Personal email accounts
- Social Media
- Gaming
- Texting
- Others?

Questions?

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