

## Work email is a waste, 9 per cent of the time, execs say



### Top Culprits are Spam, Rambling Messages

TORONTO, April 21, 2016 /CNW/ - Workers wondering where their time goes should look at how they manage emails, new research suggests. In a Robert Half survey, chief financial officers (CFOs) said 9 per cent of the time they spend on work email is wasted.

While spam is the primary culprit, according to 46 per cent of respondents, the research identified other distractors, including wading through rambling messages, being copied on irrelevant emails and receiving those that could be better delivered another way.

CFOs were asked, "**What is the per cent of time you spend on work-related emails that you consider to be wasted?**" The mean response was 9 per cent.

CFOs were also asked, "**What is the primary time-waster when it comes to email?**" Their responses:

<b>Spam</b>	<b>46%</b>
Long, rambling messages	27%
Being copied on irrelevant messages	19%
Receiving messages that could be better delivered another way	<u>8%</u>
	100%

"Email is an essential part of business communication. However, when inboxes fill with unnecessary or unsolicited correspondence, email can have a negative effect on productivity with workers losing time, while attempting to manage the overflow," said Greg Scileppi, president of Robert Half, International Staffing Operations.

"Setting up email filters to handle junk mail and attempting to keep communication brief and succinct are a couple ways workers

can control inbox distractions," said Scileppi.

Robert Half offers six email etiquette tips your colleagues will appreciate:

- **Be cautious about who you copy.** Does the person you're copying need to review the message? Is action required of them? Use "Reply All" as a last resort. Don't waste your time or the time of recipients who don't need to read the email message.
- **Go on a word diet.** Efficiency and brevity should drive your approach to sending email. As often as possible, keep it under two paragraphs. Longer emails take too long to digest, and you could lose your audience.
- **Save the detective work for Sherlock.** No one likes to read through a long email thread to find out what the sender wants and why you are being copied. Summarize the issue and what is needed at the top – and provide the string as background.
- **Send less, sift less.** Resist the urge to respond immediately, especially if it's a request that may resolve itself without your input. Consider "email-free Fridays" for internal communication, of course allowing for email from outside vendors and customers.
- **Make the subject line count.** Use a subject line that's direct and to the point. Do you need a reply? Try using "RSVP" within the first three words. Otherwise, let recipients know immediately what action is required (e.g., "For your review" or "Meeting rescheduled") so they get the gist and prioritize their response accordingly.
- **Watch your tone.** Email is the equivalent of a hard-copy business memo. It's an official record and should be written with the same professionalism. Check spelling and grammar, and read it aloud to yourself before you click send. The few extra minutes for review will give you another chance to fine-tune the message's content and tone.

#### **About the Research**

The survey was conducted by an independent research firm and is based on telephone interviews with more than 270 CFOs from a stratified random sample of Canadian companies.

#### **About Robert Half**

Founded in 1948, Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm. The Menlo Park, Calif.-based company has more than 330 staffing locations worldwide and offers online job search and management tools at [roberthalf.ca](http://roberthalf.ca). For career and management advice, follow our blog at [blog.roberthalf.ca](http://blog.roberthalf.ca). Follow Robert Half on Twitter at [@RobertHalf\\_CAN](https://twitter.com/RobertHalf_CAN) for additional workplace advice and hiring trends.

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