<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Introduced in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Line</td>
<td>This contains the recipient's contact information - typically email address</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Copy</td>
<td>The CC line creates a copy of the original email sent to the intended recipient</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Need To Respond</td>
<td>Shorthand indicator that the message in question does not require a response from the recipient</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Message</td>
<td>Shorthand indicator that the message has reached its end</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>The receiver of the email message</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sender</td>
<td>The composer of the email message</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweet</td>
<td>A 155 character message used on microblogging site Twitter</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call(s) to Action</td>
<td>The action that the sender expects/requires from the recipient</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spell-check</td>
<td>A software used to filter words for inaccurate or common misspellings and grammar usage</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White space</td>
<td>The blank area on a screen not filled with text or other graphics</td>
<td>Module 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Line</td>
<td>This contains the succinct headline of the message's contents</td>
<td>Module 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Line</td>
<td>This contains the sender's contact information - typically email address</td>
<td>Module 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Software</td>
<td>A software or service used for electronic communications and mail</td>
<td>Module 1</td>
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</table>
Module One – Planning. Let’s look at some bad email habits that have to do with planning. First of all, a bad email habit is to send an email even if your message is better communicated by phone. I’ve been in a personal situation where I was sitting next to a person when all they had to do is turn their head and give me a message – but this person would insist on sending me an email regarding whatever information she had to relay to me. So, there’s a bad habit you’ll want to avoid. Always make sure an email is really the right way to communicate. Another bad email habit is to just start writing your email without thinking about your purpose or intent. A lot of people decide that they need to send an email, sit down, open up their email software, and just start writing – with no idea who it’s going to, what they want to say, and really no clear idea of what the intent of their message is. Another bad email habit is including too much all in one email. A lot of people go in with the idea or the thought process that well, I’m going to send this email to my boss or to somebody – doesn’t necessarily have to be your boss, but to somebody – and while I’ve got their ear, there are several other subjects that I want to touch base on, too. So let’s get it all in one email and make it easier for them. Several people, and I’ve received several of these type of emails as well, write email when they’re angry so that they don’t forget anything. Many people sit down and smoke is coming out of their ears, and they dash off an email, and later regret having sent it. So that’s another bad habit. So these are four bad habits that we’ve identified just even before the email is written. And how do we go about correcting these email habits, do something about these
email habits? Well, let’s take a look at a planning checklist. The way around all of these bad habits is through planning. Like I said earlier, it may seem like a lot of time spent just to write one email, but once you become used to and become familiar with the process and how to go about doing it, it will become natural to you and it won’t take nearly the time it did the first time. So what’s the first thing we want to do? Well, in planning an email, you want to ask yourself what do I hope to accomplish with this message? And there’s three functions of an email. The first one is to deliver information. You want to deliver some information to somebody else and give them maybe something they’ve requested or something you want them to know. It could be anything. But the purpose and the function of the email is to deliver information. Or it’s to request information. You want information from somebody else and you’re sending them an email to request that information. Or the third most popular use for email is to invite or request attendance. You have a meeting, you have a company picnic, you have any number of get-togethers that you need this person that you’re sending the email to, you need them in attendance. Those are the top three functions of email. Of course there are several other functions, but these are the top three. Our second step in the planning stage, who needs to receive this email? You don’t need to send an email to everybody you know, or everybody you know and their boss. So let’s answer these questions before we start to even write an email. Does it need to go to one specific person – one specific person and then a CC to everybody else? Does it need to go to more than one person? Are there several people going to be looking at that? That will be something to take under
consideration when you start writing the message. And thirdly, does it need to go to a distribution group? You want to ask yourself – be perfectly clear on this – does everybody on this distribution list need to see the information or what’s in this email that I’m sending off? With those questions answered, we go to stage two. The third step on our check list – is email the most effective way to communicate this message? As I spoke earlier, can I just turn my head and tell the person next to me what I need to tell them? Do I have to send an email? Is it really necessary? Do I even need to write this email? Can this message be better delivered by use of face-to-face dialogue? You don’t need to write a three page email if you can go and talk to some person for five minutes, get all their questions answered or all your questions answered. It’s much more effective to do it by face-to-face dialogue than sending the email. So answer this question before you even start to write. Stage three in your planning check list, the fifth step you want to take, do I need a reply? and when do I need it? You want to make sure that when you write your email, you make it very clear that you need a reply and what the deadline is. I need a reply by Tuesday on information of the cost of these chairs. Or can you attend the meeting, and when will you let me know? So, this is you asking them to take action and give you a reply. Number six, do I need to include supporting documentation? Do you need to attach a 13 page spreadsheet to the email that goes out just to prove one line, one point in your message? The fewer attachments you can send, or the more specific information, the better. You don’t have to send five or six attachments to make your point if it can be included in the body of the message. So, ask yourself and
make sure you’re very clear: do I need to include supporting documentation such as attachments? With these questions answered, you can begin to write out an outline or a quick outline in your head, even. Here’s what I want to say. Here’s where it goes. Do I need to visit them or send the email? Do I need a reply? And do I need to attach something? So with all these answered, you have pretty much defined the route you’re going to take on putting together this email.

[End of recording.]
Module Two – The Subject Line. Now we’re going to take a look at putting together the subject line and some of the bad habits involved in that. And oftentimes, the subject line is what ensures that your email gets opened rather than everything going to spam as in this illustration here. So it’s very important. Subject line: it’s after your name, it’s the second most important line in the email. We’ll talk about that in this module here. Let’s take a look at some bad subject line habits. Bad email habit one: it’s not important to put anything in the subject line. The topic will be in the body of the email. Many people don’t even bother to fill this line in. They just figure it’s not important and the person, if they need to know what it’s about, then they’ll read it in the body of the message. Or they go to the opposite extreme and include as much information as they can in the subject line. So it still doesn’t tell the recipient any more about the message than if it had been completely blank. So let’s take a look at the subject line of an email, and talk about its importance and how we can maybe improve the subject line. Subject lines are like headlines in a newspaper. Most people just browse through their in-box. They don’t read every one – they’re simply limited by the amount of emails they receive, and they’re limited by time. If they spent all of their time opening emails when they came in and responding to them, that there would no longer be any hours in the day left to do the rest of their work. As a matter of fact, as much time as it takes to write an email, it takes four times as long to respond to it. The recipient has to decide whether to respond, it may take some research, where to file it, what to do with it. And they do that by simply skimming
through the subject line and perhaps responding to it later. The key rule as far as subject line is concerned in email – always include a subject line. This makes sure that it doesn’t go directly to spam, and that there will at least be a chance that somebody will open your email and respond to it. Most people don’t read all of their emails. As we said before, over 90 percent of them skim, categorize, and read later. And it’s suggested by several subject matter experts to use the trick of direct marketing email – write a strong subject line and entice somebody to open your email and to respond. And several of the things that are covered in email marketing apply to regular emails as well. Let’s take a look at some of them. Here’s a check list of things not to do: Do not be overly wordy. Try to limit to ten words maximum. You don’t want to have your subject line jam packed so that somebody can’t quickly read it, quickly look at it, quickly decide what to do with it, or quickly categorize it. Do not respond without giving context. What we’re trying to say here is that you’ve received an email that required a response. Somebody’s asked you for a response. And there are several times where we see examples of emails being sent that somebody asked you for some information or whether you will be at a meeting or a party or a dinner, and you dash off an email to say, sure thing. Well, the recipient in processing maybe a hundred emails a day receives maybe 30 of them that say, sure thing, and no idea what they’re talking about. So try to include at least the thread of the message so they will at least know what you’re talking about. But even more importantly, include it in your subject line where they don’t even have to open the email that says something like – don’t just say “Dinner invitation” and then reply
in the body. But put your response in the subject line so they can just look at it without opening the message and say “Dinner invitation – sure thing. I’ll be there.” There, you’ve saved them that time. So think about that when you’re composing a subject line. Do not be vague or general. That’s the same problem with the previous example. Somebody opens their mail program and looks at just the subject line, and they have no idea what you’re talking about, or have no idea how you want them to respond. This is all just looking at the subject line before they’ve opened the email. So try to be as specific as you can in the subject line. Do not say “hi.” This is particularly for the office where you may not be as familiar with these people as you are with your friends or your family. Try to use professional business writing techniques in the use of writing an email as well as paper letters. It’s just a good idea not to use that type of familiarity. Your colleagues may take exception to it. Here are some other tips. Give the message’s bottom line. You want to get to the point as quickly as possible, and the first place to get it done is the message’s subject line. Aside from your name, the message header says who it is from, the second thing they see is the subject line. So give the recipient an idea. They may be able to respond, within a minute or so, and you may get a quick response turnaround. Try if you can in the subject line, in ten words or less, to summarize the message. What is this about? Like we said in the dinner invitation scenario, “Invitation to dinner – I’ll be there,” or something like that. Try to be as precise as possible as well. Give them exactly the idea or something in ten words or less like, “I need information”, “Must have by” – something like that. Be precise. It’ll ensure a quicker
turnaround in response by doing so. If you require an action, say so. Say, “I need a response by Tuesday.” That will give them an idea of how time sensitive this message is and the action that you require from them. Leave out unnecessary words, extraneous adjectives, articles. Remember, try to restrict your subject line length to ten words or less. Like we said earlier, include deadlines if necessary. You want to let them know just how quick you need this information, and it gives them a way to prioritize their work as well. We try to discourage the use of abbreviations in an email, but these two are key and may help improve the efficiency and effectiveness. One of them is EOM, and it’s a good one to include in the subject line. It stands for “End Of Message”. Let them know that you’ve put everything in the subject line, put EOM on there, and that’s the end of the message. They don’t need to open up their email or respond or look at it any further. Everything that you need is in the subject line. Another one, NNTR – “No Need To Respond”. They can skim through their in-box and look at the subject line and they will know automatically there’s no need for them to respond any further. Here’s another tip – try using a status category. These are helpful and give them more information on the subject line and they don’t have to open up the body of the email. Include info for an information request, or action for “I need you to do this”. Or time sensitive – you’re looking for a response within a short amount of time. Or low priority, just to let them know that they don’t have to respond immediately. It’s just something that you’re touching base with, maybe. But try to avoid the overuse of these: high priority; urgent; important. You’d be like our friend here, the boy who cried wolf, that if you
overuse these and all of your messages are high priority or urgent or important, you’ll start to be ignored – and we know how the story of the boy who cried wolf turned out – that when he really needed help, that there was little or no response. So try to concentrate on not overusing these.

[End of recording.]
BAD EMAIL HABITS
MODULE THREE – THE BODY OF THE MESSAGE

Now we’re going to look at Module Three – The Body of the Message. We’re going to look at some ways to compose this and some bad habits to avoid as well. Our first bad habit we want to be aware of is using an overly familiar salutation like, “Hey, what’s up?” You may use this with your friends or your family, but it’s really not appropriate in a business situation. You really don’t want to use an overly familiar salutation or use abbreviations or emoticons in your business messages. In face-to-face dialogue, you can often read the nonverbal language of the participant, but it’s hard to get that across in an email. Many people have tried to get around that by using emoticons – smiley faces, and frowny faces, and all kinds of other things. Abbreviations, like you may use in Tweets or text messages, are really not appropriate for use in a business situation. Many times, too, people do not bother to check spelling or grammar usage. Writers just think, “well it’s an email. They can pretty much make out what my message is.” Instead, a recipient will think “why should I respond if they don’t take the time to check their spelling or their grammar usage?” It gives people the impression that they’re too lazy or really don’t have any concern about the recipient if they don’t bother to check the spelling or grammar usage. And it may even falsely indicate their intelligence level. I know of a person who is a graduate of a highly respected university that cannot spell at all. It just makes them look uneducated, when in fact they’re a graduate of a highly respected university. You run into that problem as well, and that’s what people will look at, perhaps. Another bad email habit is to let your reader guess what they’re supposed to do with the information.
There’s been several times where I’ve received an email – a lengthy email, as a matter of fact – giving me all this information, and I was in the dark as to why I received it, or what was expected of me. What did the sender want me to do with it? So this is another bad habit to shy away from. We kind of talked about this earlier, but it’s along the same lines as including as many topics as you can in one message. Don’t think that you have the ear of the recipient and should try to tell them as much stuff as you possibly can. That’s a bad habit to get into. Here’s a favorite no-no: Using all capital letters to express anger or displeasure. I think we’re familiar enough with email to know that this is a bad habit. We certainly want to avoid doing this as well: Sharing a good joke or cartoon with the rest of the staff. Hopefully we’ve reached a point in our lives, too, where we know that maybe it’s not a good idea to send a joke or a cartoon via company email. I hope that most of us realize that, because it’s a bad email habit. Include only as many attachments as needed to document your point. We talked about this earlier in the planning stage - sending too many attachments is a bad email habit to get into. I’ve received emails with as many as 30 pages in an Excel spreadsheet, just to prove the documentation behind one line. It’s really not necessary. In fact, it may not even be received in the recipient’s in-box because it’s so large, and there may be a limit on the size of the email it will accept. So this is a bad habit to get into as well. Let’s take a look at some of the ways to avoid these bad habits and other paths to take in working around them. Body of the message check list: Use a standard business greeting in all business related emails. Better to err on the side of formality than risk offending the recipient.
You maybe don’t want to take a chance. There’s maybe some vital information you need or you’re even asking a favor of somebody, maybe asking for a recommendation for a job or asking for a job itself. You don’t want to send an email to the big boss asking her, hey, what’s up? So use a greeting like Dear John, or Dear Mr. Smith. It’s better to err on the side of formality than to go down the over-familiar route. Here’s another item on the check list that you want to make sure of when you’re composing the body of the letter: Please do not abbreviate. Take the time to construct a message the same as you would a business letter. This is another over familiarity issue that you want to avoid and it will save you a lot of grief if you write out every word and make sure it’s spelled correctly. Here’s another situation: Do not use emoticons in the body of a message. It may be all right with your friends and your family, but you don’t want to see that in a business email. It lowers the recipient’s opinion of you. Set up your email to automatically spell-check before sending. There’s a way you can set that up, depending on your software, such that before the email goes out, it will automatically spell-check before it does go out. Now, this doesn’t catch every word. But it certainly lessens the risk that you’ll be including a misspelled word in your email. Another thing you want to be sure of is to always include a call to action in your message to let the recipient know how to react: What do you want them to do? Why are they receiving this email? Here are a couple of tips on composing “calls to action”, a term taken once again from email marketing. You’ll see them in unsolicited emails, or subscribed emails as well, or advertisements that say “click here to learn more”, or “call this number now”. 
Make sure your call to action is specific in requesting what you want the recipient to do. How do you want them to respond? Enclose your call to action within the first three lines of your message, and include deadlines. Get to the point quick because if they do open up your email and if they have to go through maybe three or four scrolls before they get to what you want them to do, then they may have deleted it already. So you want to get your call to action up front and as close to the top of it as possible. Include it within the first three lines and let them know when you need this information. Limit the number of topics in your email to only one. Use another email to convey other topics. Say, for instance, that you need some information about project cost. And you also say, “And in addition, how about coming over for dinner tonight?” Break that up into two separate emails. Send the information in one, and then follow up with the dinner invite in another email. Don’t include them all in one. It makes it easier for people to read and to respond to. Try to limit the number of lines in your message to six. If somebody opens up your email message, they want to have it off their desk as quick as possible. So make it easy for them to read. Make it short and sweet and to the point. Be precise. Here’s one we talked about earlier: Use of all capital letters makes the recipient think you are shouting. We’ve reached a point now where I think we’re all aware of that, but it’s something to be heads up on. Don’t do it. Conversely, use of all lower case letters makes the recipient think you are mumbling. Don’t use all small letters. Use the shift key when it’s supposed to be used. You’re not E. E. Cummings. He was a famous poet that wrote all his verse in small letters. You’re not him. So use the shift key when it’s
called for. Everyone does not have the same sense of humor, political outlook, or religious outlook. Save jokes and cartoons for another time. Do not send jokes and cartoons to other people, other recipients, on the business email. Some people think it’s funny, and as many people that think it is funny or are amused by it will take exception to it. So do you really want to take the chance? And be particularly cognizant of this when sending that information to customers. It’s just so much better not to even take a chance with it. And a lot of people, there are legal issues and legal ramifications if someone does and is taken to court, or a company is taken to court. Absence of a policy on something like that indicates acceptance. You could very easily – very easily – lose your job. And the company could lose a big lawsuit. So stay away from this. Do not load down emails with unnecessary attachments. Compress any as much as possible. If you must send them, compress them or narrow down the information to specifically what is requested. You don’t need to send a big huge spreadsheet or pictures. Pictures are another problem because of how large they are. Try to avoid sending them as much as possible. It’s not really necessary. Another way around that is rather than sending it as an attachment, is to send it to a server and just include the link where the recipient can find the information if they need it. They can go to the link and pull it up and you don’t have to worry about attaching it to an email and having your email message rejected. So that’s another way to get around that as far as the attachments. Use a proper structure for your message. A couple of things you want to be heads up on – try to limit the size to six lines. Make it easy for the recipient to find out all the information
they need. If you’re limiting your message to one subject you can get quite a bit of information into six lines. If you must, try to arrange the message by paragraphs. If you need to send out a larger email, break it up into paragraphs. Nobody wants to read a block of 25 to 30 lines that’s not broken up into paragraphs. And also, it doesn’t hurt to use some white space. Use at least a line between paragraphs. That will make it easier to read and easier to skim and to categorize and see what they need to do about it. Be heads up on that as far as your structure for your message. Use bullets to delineate separate items. If you’re sending an email with specific information points or action points or separate items, use bullets liberally to make it easier to read. They won’t have to wade through a bunch of lines and paragraph to see what they need to do, or find the information they need. Try if you can to limit the message so it can be read on one screen, especially with the use of smart phones. They’re a much smaller screen that people use to check their email, a much smaller screen. So try to limit the message so it can easily be read on one screen. They don’t want to have to spend their time scrolling through a bunch of unnecessary information and other things that don’t really pertain.

[End of recording.]
Module Four – the From/To Line. This is important, too. Recipients of your email will want to know who they received the email from. If it’s someone they know and they trust, then they’re more apt to open the email message and take the action that’s required. So, take a look at some bad email habits on the From/To line: Filling in the To line first, before anything else. If you’re anything like me, that’s the first thing you look at – who am I sending this message to? – and I’ll fill in the To line. This is a bad habit. Using the CC - that stands for Carbon Copy – to assure a quick response. Many people think that if they send a request for information or an email to somebody that if they send a copy to the person’s supervisor that they will see to it that they get a quick response. Including everyone you can think of in the To line. This is a bad email habit to get into as well. If everybody spends four minutes on an email, and you send it out to 15 unnecessary people, you’ve wasted an hour of company time. So it’s not efficient, it’s not effective. So here’s a check list to go through: Always fill in the To line as the last thing you do before you hit send. I don’t know how many times people fill in that To line, and then start typing and get on a rant, or just get called away and then come back and hit send before they had a chance to think about it and reflect on what they were saying. They really wished they hadn’t sent it that quickly. So make that always the last thing you do before you hit send. Don’t do it first, but fill it out after you’ve compiled your message, after you’ve planned, you’ve compiled your message, you’ve worked on your subject line. Then go back and fill in the To line. Another item to look into when you’re
composing emails is that sending a CC to a recipient’s supervisor does not ensure prompt response. It may, however, ensure the opposite. Sending a copy to a recipient’s supervisor puts the pressure on that supervisor. At the least, you’re asking the supervisor to make sure this person sends you the information as quickly as possible, and it puts more responsibility on the supervisor. That’s not the response you want to engender with your email message. It may cause some resentment toward you by the supervisor. It may ensure the opposite. The person that is supposed to be receiving the email may take offense and put you low on the priority list. You may be the last person they would respond to, and it may come down from their supervisor that this person is bothering them. So it’s not necessary in all cases to send a copy to your recipient’s supervisor. If you’re sending out information about a person’s performance, or you send information and say I didn’t like the way you did this, or you sent me the wrong information, and send a copy to their supervisor, there may be more than resentment. If you’re trying to get them in trouble, there may be some legal action involved as well. So be considerate with who you send a copy to as well. When sending an email, make sure you only send it to the people who need it. Sending an email blast to the whole office greatly reduces productivity. Does everybody need to know that you need some information from this one person? Or that you’re having a meeting and you sent a copy to everybody on the email list? Once again, you have the same problem as before if giving one person some feedback, such as they sent the wrong information and that they messed up, to a group message. This can also put yourself in line for some reciprocal
resentment or possibly even a lawsuit. So be very, very cognizant and make
sure you only send it out to the people who need that email. Include the
following items in the email signature: You always want to include an email
signature, but it doesn’t have to be 65 lines long or include graphics. I’ve
oftentimes received an email message with a short message, but then the
signature is longer than the message. These are the only things that need to be
included in an email signature, unless there’s company policy otherwise: Your
name; position and the company that you’re with, like CEO of ACME Corporation
or something like that and include that on the same line; your phone number
where you can be reached if there’s information of an urgent nature, or the
conversation can be held better over the phone; and the return address. They’ll
have the return email address, but it’s always nice to include it in the signature
block as well so it’s easy to identify. Skip quotations and personal information
unless there is a compelling reason. Many people like to include a quotation by
their favorite poet or some type of religious quotation or something of that nature.
But is it really necessary to have those in a business mail signature block? I
don’t think so, and you’re better off erring on the safe side and leaving it out. It’s
Okay for your personal emails if you want to do it that way, but leave them out of
your business emails, please.

[End of recording.]
We’re going to look at Module Five now – Send and Receive. Let’s look at some bad email habits in this area. It is acceptable to send an email but forget the attachment. It can always be followed by another “oops” letter. I think we know the situation on this, but we certainly all have received emails that said “please see the attached”, and there’s nothing there. And we might have to write back or the person might catch it on their own, later. And we’ve received an email later that says “oops, I forgot to send the attachment”. Now, we’ve at least doubled the time it takes to deal with the email, and certainly added to the time it takes to respond. This is another thing to look at before you hit the send button. Don’t read your emails as soon as you get it. Many of us have our email set up to where it notifies us as soon as we have an email, and stop everything and go read it and see what needs to be done. It’s like a phone ringing. We can't ignore it. We must read emails as soon as we receive them. Another bad email habit is not checking your message for tone. I know we’ve certainly heard our parents or our teachers say, “Don't use that tone with me.” Your emails contain tone as well, and it carries over to the recipient. In the absence of face-to-face dialogue a reader may misinterpret your tone as well. Don’t use your inbox for storing messages until they can be read. This is another bad email habit – it doesn’t take long for the backed up emails to overwhelm your inbox. I’ve known people with over 3000 messages in their inbox. It’s another bad email habit. Our final check list, take these steps before sending an email: Check the spelling, grammar, and punctuation. We’ve gone over this before, but before you hit that
send button, make sure you’ve checked your spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Because of the way the email is written people can quickly get a negative impression of you or your professionalism. Check for tone. Before you send it out, read your email aloud and see if it sounds the way you expect – maybe even have somebody read it for you, if that’s possible. It’s not imperative, but check it for tone. Make sure you’re not conveying a message that you really don’t intend to convey. Check to see that the attachments are attached. Before you hit that send button, or even before you fill in your To line, which should be the last thing you do before you hit send, make this the next to the last. Check to see that the attachments are attached. Then fill in the To line. As far as receiving email, here are some tips on how to manage your inbox so it doesn’t become overwhelming. It’s possible for people without a systematic way of managing their inbox to spend half their work day responding to email. So set up a regular time to address your email. Personally, I let people know that I am going to check my email three times in the day. I am going to check it when I come in first thing in the morning; then I am going to check it first thing back from lunch, halfway through the day; and then last, I devote my last 30 to 15 minutes of the day once again checking my emails, managing them, and if anybody needs a response, responding to them before I go home. I set up three regular times. You’ll find in most cases that three times is all you really need to check your inbox and respond to emails. Don’t use your inbox to store mail to read later. Always, when you have set up these regular times to address your email, take the time to categorize it and do something with it. Set up rules to
automatically file emails. Some software allows you to set up rules for how your email will be filed, and you won’t even have to touch it before it goes to a folder. You can identify it as spam or direct it to another inbox or file it to maybe read later. Set up rules to automatically file emails. Use out of office alerts. If you’re going to be out of the office for an extended length of time, set your email program up to respond to emails that you received and let people know. Don’t leave them expecting a response in three days when you’re going to be out of the office for five. In a normal workday, try to respond within 24 hours to any email or any email request. If they’re asking for something and it would take maybe two minutes, you can respond immediately. Or if you can’t respond within 24 hours and it’s going to take gathering some information, just send a response that says “it’s going to take me about two or three days to research this and to get back to you”. So let them know what to expect and what’s up. Here, we’ve got a suggestion about how to manage your inbox – the four Rs system of inbox management. Maybe you’ve heard of this before, but it bears repeating. When you look at your inbox, the first thing you want to do, Refer. If it can be referred to somebody else, read what the message says and ask: are you the correct person to answer it? Or is there somebody that you, as a supervisor maybe, can delegate it to? Then, send it to the person that is the right one to respond to it. Recycle. Is it something that needs no response at all and you can throw it in the trash? Respond. If there’s something that you can respond to or you have the time within your allotted email response time or period, then respond to it. And Record. Is this something that I need to save or file, or that I will need to refer to
in the future? If so, put it in the appropriate folder. With all the problems with email and email response, here are some rules or some tips to consider about how to go about managing your email responses and what to do to get through the email problem that’s holding you back and maybe making your company or you less efficient or effective. Respect recipient’s time: Let that be the concern when you send an email, to respect the recipient’s time. Is it going to take a long time for them to respond? Are they going to take longer than they should because of the way I constructed it? Just respect the recipient’s time. Short or slow is not rude. If you’re brusque, people may perceive that as rude, but you want to respect the recipient’s time and send a brief, precise message. Celebrate clarity: Anything that you can get across in five to six lines is something to use as an example. Eliminate open ended questions. Be specific in your call to action or your request. Tell them exactly what you want and don’t just say something like, “well what do you think?” Eliminate open ended questions. Eliminate unnecessary CCs. We talked about that. You don’t need to send everybody in the office a copy. Don’t ignore the thread. Be cognizant of the context. Don’t just send back a response that says I’ll be there. Include the thread. I’ve seen several messages forwarded where there’s a response, and there’s a response, and another response. Try to limit that to three responses. You don’t need the whole conversation, but at least include the context to give the recipient a clue as to what you’re talking about. Limit attachments. One more thing we’ve talked about in this webinar is that you don’t want to bog every email down with an attachment. Use EOM and NNTR. These are the two most
acceptable acronyms – End Of Message and No Need To Respond. Eliminate content-less response: You don’t need to respond to every email that says thanks or no thanks or whoopee. It’s not necessary. And disconnect: If you need to call somebody on the phone, or just get up and talk to them face to face, then you don’t need to use email for those types of communication. And never forget, email is never, ever private. If you walk away with one rule from this webinar it should be that anybody, everybody, can read your email, eventually. And if you treat it as such, you shouldn’t have a problem.

[End of recording.]