

CAREER COACH

➔ **KATE EMMERSON** is a life coach who assists clients to de-clutter through her coaching and online courses.

Q/ "I'm drowning in emails and it's stressing me out – help!"

A/ Being constantly available makes us feel needed, but it also creates immense pressure by making us feel that we have to respond to emails immediately. To enjoy the flexibility that technology affords us, it is important to manage it successfully. Here are some smart strategies to keep on top of your inbox:

DON'T KNEEJERK: Instead of dealing with your mail as your first task of the morning, tackle a productivity task first – completing that report or contacting a potential client, for example. Then focus on your mail.

BATCH YOUR MAIL: Deal with your mail in 20-minute batches. Start off four times a day and reduce to twice a day. **Lessening online time will sharpen your focus and shorten your time lines.** The spin-off from batching means you'll check and process mail less often, leaving more time for your real to do list.

POWER PROCESS: When downloading new mail, habitually process your entire inbox at once. Start at the top of the new batch and use the following rules:

- **Do it** If you can reply to mail in less than 20 seconds, do so.
- **Ditch it** If it's junk mail, delete it.
- **Defer it** If mail will take more than 20 seconds, defer to your to do list. Leave them in your inbox. The moment you've processed all easy-to-attend-to mail, focus on these items.
- **DELEGATE IT** Pass along immediately and, where feasible, ask to be kept out of the loop and only copied in on vital mail.

THREE MORE TIME-SAVING TIPS:

- Subscribe only to vital newsletters that enhance your life and send them directly to a folder to read once a week over coffee. Unsubscribe from all others.
- If an email is going back and forth more than twice – use the phone.
- Only ever send concise mails that all recipients will be able to understand immediately.

For more info, kate-emmerson.com



Shoe-be-do

If sweaty shoes make your toes curl with embarrassment, it's time to banish foot-odour misery.

➔ These antibacterial, antifungal charcoal bamboo inserts get rid of funky odours and excess moisture while your shoes are in your cupboard.

Made from carbonised bamboo harvested from sustainable forests, these nifty smell-eliminators will make

your eco friends green with envy. Get them from Cape Union Mart from R45 per pair. For more info: fu.co.za

TIP Instead of trashing them, remove the charcoal from the bag and add it to your garden to improve the soil quality.



Find Focus

Cramming a lot of to-do's into a limited amount of time gives us the false impression that we're über-efficient. But studies show chronic multitaskers have elevated cortisol levels, more incidences of depression and weaker immune systems – all of which can diminish cognitive prowess as we age. To reduce multitasking, but still bang through your to-do's, jot down your tasks – but focus on three that have the biggest impact on your day or involve strategic thinking.

SHAPE PS.

Lips sealed? Forty-seven hours is the average time a woman can keep a secret.