

[Inbox Zero](#) (2 min to read, 1 hour to implement)

We all get deluged daily with Inbox messages from email, text, Slack, CRMs, and other online tools. It's critical to have a thoughtful methodology for dealing with them all—otherwise, it will bury you in communications, and you'll risk missing time-sensitive messages.

Think of your combined inboxes as a single triage room at a hospital. Some cases that come in are urgent, others not so much. It is critical to notice the urgent matters immediately and get them to see a doctor now. To do so, you must keep the triage room clear. If you use the triage room as a waiting room as well, then a new patient can enter the room, sit down in a chair, and bleed out from his stab wound before you even realize he is there.

For this reason, every well-functioning hospital separates its triage room from its waiting room and keeps the triage room absolutely clear. To be efficient, you must do the same with your Inbox. This action means addressing all the urgent cases right away and maintaining Inbox Zero every day.

I recommend checking your Inbox only twice a day (once in the morning, once in the afternoon). If you check your email incessantly, multiple times an hour, you are wasting hours of productivity. Instead, batch your time and clean out your entire Inbox at those times. Each time, follow this process:

1. If the email/message takes less than two minutes to address, do it immediately.
2. If it takes more than two minutes, write down a Next Action (according to the Getting Things Done methodology) and then place the email in its correct location (Next Action, Waiting For, Someday/Maybe, or Reference).

The best way that I have found to do this when using Gmail is to read and implement Andreas Klinger's [iconic blog post](#) on GTD in Gmail. In it, Andreas explains how to use Gmail's Multiple Inbox features to create an inbox for Next Action, Waiting For, Someday/Maybe, and Reference. You can set the system up in 15 minutes.

3. Repeat until you get to Inbox Zero. If you are truly fearless, you can get to Inbox Zero within the hour (yes, even if you have 1,000s of emails in your Inbox right now).

★ Interested in coaching or software to help implement the Mochary Method at your company? Please fill out our interest form [here](#), or book a discovery call with Nancy Xu [here](#).