

For this design challenge, I chose to explore the iPhone mail app. This app does many things well, such as allowing the user to perform common actions on emails from the inbox, rather than needing to open the email. However, one thing that it does very poorly is the right-swipe action. As indicated in the picture, a slow swipe to the right leads to a menu that has “more,” “flag,” and “trash.” Not pictured, a rapid swipe to the right immediately trashes the message. Initially, this seems like a good idea- what action is more common than trashing an email? The problem lies in consistency. Typically, a user will flag an email if it’s particularly important and they want to keep track of it. Trashing an email gets rid of it, indicating that the user finds it particularly unimportant. The soft right swipe could therefore be used for both exceptionally important emails and exceptionally unimportant ones, causing a disconnect in the user’s mind. Additionally, if one swipes too quickly on a message that one is trying to flag, it will be automatically trashed- the exact opposite of the user’s intent.

