

Communication: The Intangible Asset

Make Communication a Valuable Asset (Not a Liability)



Message

What does it take to optimize client loyalty, productivity, and revenue in today's competitive, workforce-challenged business climate?

Focus on the intangible asset of communication.

This report explores the pivotal role that communication plays in your company's success.

- How the seeming "soft skill" of communication demonstrably impacts client loyalty, productivity, and sales.
- The quantifiable losses resulting from poor communication.
- How your business can shift communication from a liability to an asset.

The single biggest problem in communication
is the illusion that it has taken place.

- George Bernard Shaw



Contents

- 4
Quantifying the Impact of Poor Communication
- 5-6
How Poor Communication Threatens Client Loyalty
- 7-8
How Poor Communication Diminishes Productivity
- 9-12
**A Three-Step Plan:
Turn Communication into a Business Asset**
- 13
Contact Information
- 14
Industry Resources



The facts speak for themselves.



How pivotal is communication to business success?

That depends on how much your company values brand, customer loyalty, and productivity, the very factors hindered by poor workplace communications.



70%

The percent of corporate errors caused by poor communication.*

\$ 396 billion

The annual cost of poor writing for US companies.



One-fourth of consumers say they would think twice before doing business with you because of poor writing.

\$ 420,000

The annual cost of miscommunication for companies with as few as 100 employees.

This number quickly jumps into the millions for larger companies.

* All data references are detailed on Page 13 of this report.



COMMUNICATION:

Impact on client loyalty

How much does communication factor into client trust?

No company is immune to the disruptive nature of unclear, unprofessional communication.

Misunderstandings often result in the immediate loss of business opportunities. Errors and unprofessionalism also chip away at client loyalty.

To minimize negative impact, ask yourself these questions about the communication skills of your client-facing employees:

- Are they equipped to clearly present your products and services?
- Are their words a positive reflection on your brand and commitment to excellence?
- Are they capable of resolving problems through written channels?

➤ This could be you.

According to a study by Aberdeen Group, companies that excel in customer communication **retain an average of 90% of their customers**, compared to 30% for those companies that produce poor communications.



When credibility diminishes, revenue follows.

Impact on Client Loyalty

The competition for brand loyalty allows little room for writing that confuses, frustrates, or angers your revenue-producing clients.

The Trickle-Down Effect

One glaring business reality is this: Poor communication always has a negative impact on revenue, whether directly or indirectly.

71% of customers have ended a business relationship due to poor service, with a significant portion stemming from communication issues.

COMMUNICATION:

Impact on Productivity



Poor communication significantly undercuts productivity.

Written communications among colleagues are intended to inform and accomplish business objectives. Unfortunately, poor communication slows, even halts, the process.

- Errors require time-consuming clarifications.
- Off-putting tones shut down projects and relationships.
- Lackadaisical habits contribute to sluggish or incomplete responses, failed collaboration, and reduced morale.

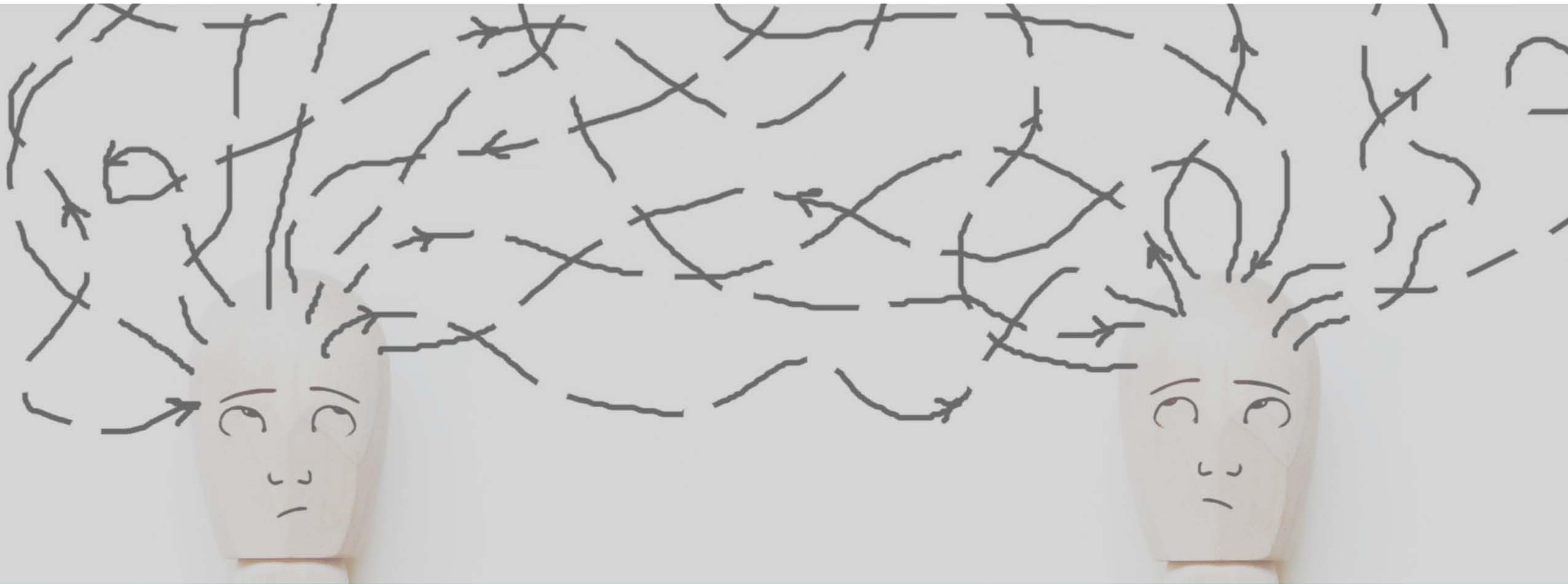
Employees spend approximately 3.2 hours per week trying to decipher information communicated by colleagues.

➤ This could be you.

A study by Pumble.com reports a **25% increase in productivity** among teams that communicate effectively in the workplace.

Emails comprise 62% of all business communications.

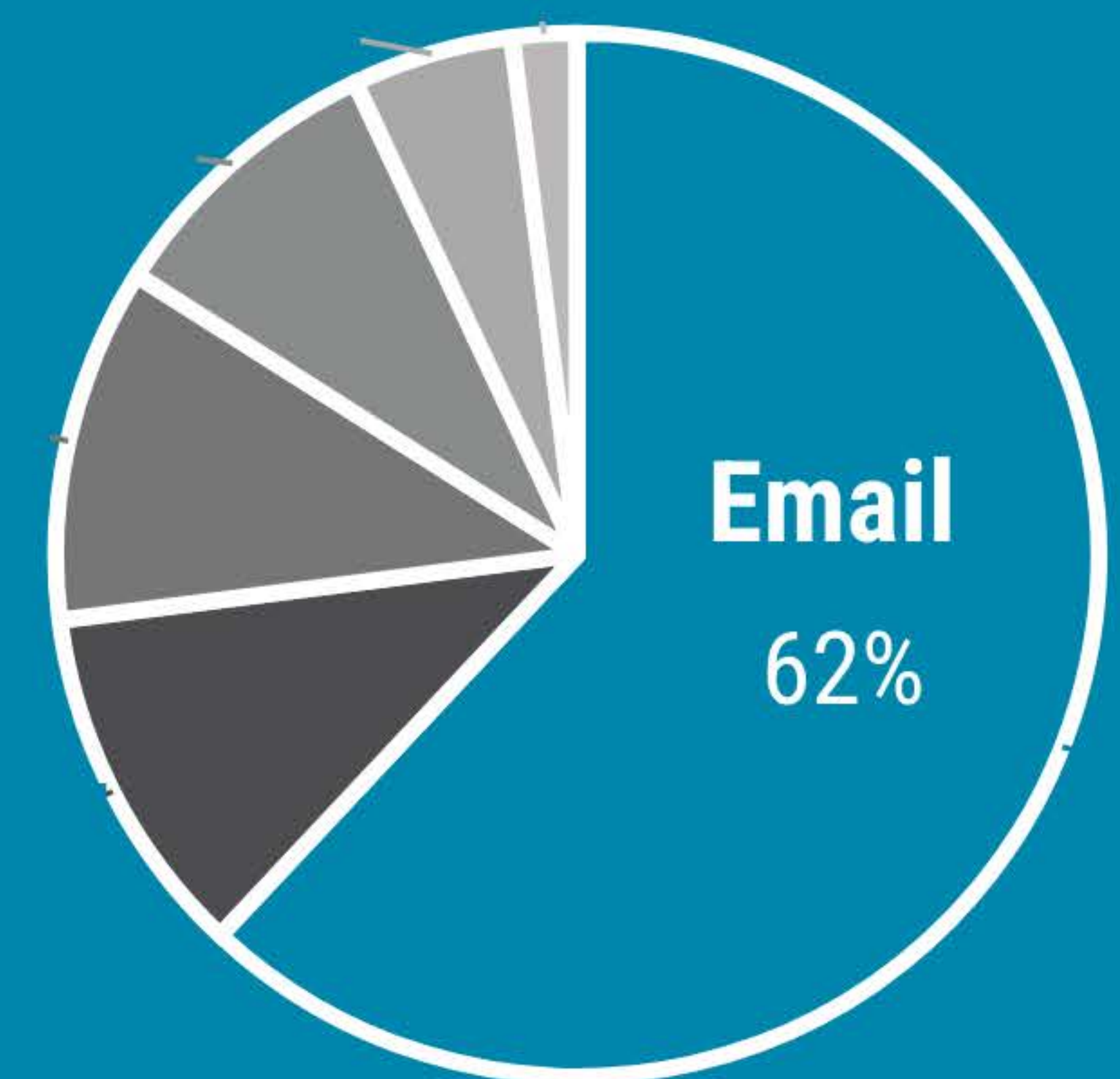
Accordingly, emails are a significant source of misunderstandings and lost productivity.



Because of sheer volume, emails pose the greatest communication risk for most companies.

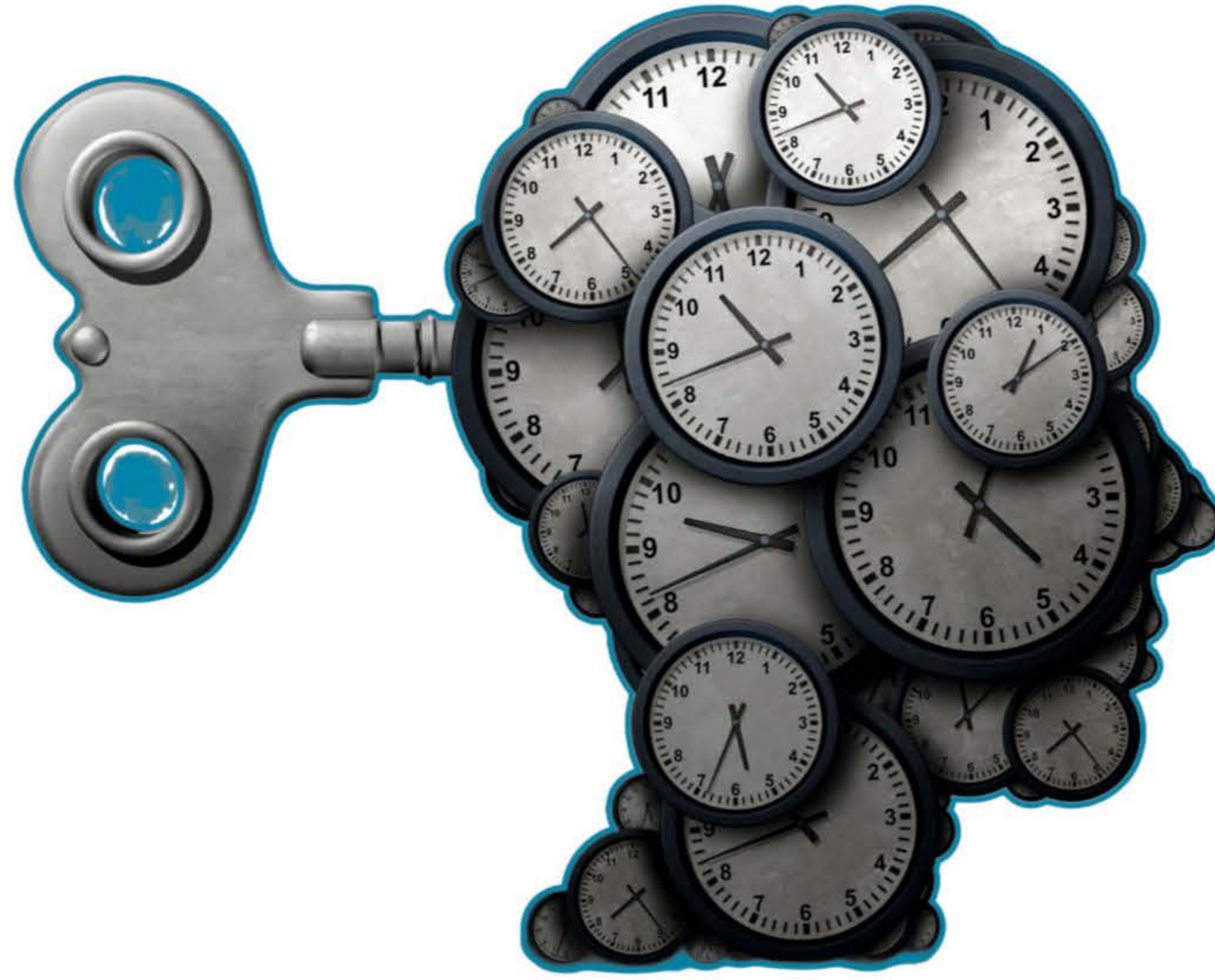
On average, employees :

- receive 120 emails per day
- send 40 emails each day
- spend 25-30% of each work week managing emails



Percent of employees who say poorly written emails are time wasters.

Turn Communication into an Asset



The evidence is overwhelming: Poorly written, unprofessional communication threatens client trust, productivity, and revenue.

To counteract these negative impacts, change must begin at the top. Company leaders should prioritize the development of a robust communication strategy and invest in training to enhance employees' writing and communication skills.

Boost Employee Productivity

- Equip employees with a process to write better content in less time.
- Reduce time wasted deciphering unclear messages.

Increase Business Opportunities

- Build client trust.
- Increase customer satisfaction and retention.

Strengthen Brand

- Convey expertise and professionalism.
- Differentiate yourself in a competitive market.
- Share more polished, persuasive messages.

Your investment in training will lead to more competent, confident employees who are better equipped to drive business success.



A Three-Step Plan to Shift Communication from a Liability to an Asset

Do you have a solid communication strategy? Have you equipped employees with the skills to communicate effectively and efficiently?

STEP I: ASSESS EXISTING COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

Written communications are integral to the success of your business.

- [Assess the communications of executives and managers.](#)
Company-wide standards begin at the top.
- [Assess the flow and quality of internal communications.](#)
Every workplace communication should have a clear purpose and be effective in advancing a specific business objective.
- [Assess the professionalism of client communications.](#)
In today's digital world, written communications often serve as the face of your company.

Invest in an objective assessment of your company's written communications.



A Three-Step Plan to Shift Communication from a Liability to an Asset

STEP II: ESTABLISH A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY*

Can you (and each of your managers) intuitively answer these questions:

- What is your brand message?
- Who are your target audiences?
- What are your intended outcomes?
- What methods of delivery are appropriate for different types of content?
- Whose voice should be used when sharing various messages?

Your marketing and communications experts will have a handle on these points, but few companies have the capacity to push every client communication through a structured review process.

Be certain that managers and employees who are communicating directly with clients are equipped to do so in a professional manner.

**If you have a communication strategy in place, it could be time for a refresh.*



Equip your employees to communicate with excellence.

STEP III: EQUIP EMPLOYEES

Every type of written communication is integral to the success of your business:

- emails
- employee training materials
- letters
- presentations
- procedural manuals
- reports

An investment in employee training will pay dividends in the form of:

- clearer, more professional communications
- effective conveyance of ideas and intentions
- enhanced internal collaboration
- improved employee confidence
- reduced likelihood of misunderstandings and wasted time

Your investment in professional communication will pay dividends.



Kathy Serenko

Communications Strategist & Facilitator

412-629-1159

kathy@create-a-buzz.CO



"Helping you turn communications into a business asset."

Industry Resources

Businesswire.com, May 2018; Press Release by NewVoiceMedia: "Research Reveals Bad Customer Experiences Cost U.S. Businesses \$75 Billion a Year"; [https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20180517005043/en/, NewVoiceMedia-Research-Reveals-Bad-Customer-Experiences-Cost-U.S.-Businesses-75-Billion-a-Year](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20180517005043/en/NewVoiceMedia-Research-Reveals-Bad-Customer-Experiences-Cost-U.S.-Businesses-75-Billion-a-Year).

Fitsmallbusiness.com, Nov. 2023; Article by Hazel Emnace: "17 Business Email Statistics & Trends to Watch in 2024"; <https://fitsmallbusiness.com/business-email-statistics-and-trends/#:~:text=62.86%25%20of%20business%20professionals%20prefer%20to%20communicate%20by%20email&text=Email%20statistics%20show%20that%2062.86,communications%20over%20any%20other%20tool>.

Forbes.com, March 2023; Article by Leeron Hoory and Kelly Main: "The State Of Workplace Communication In 2024"; <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/digital-communication-workplace>.

Gartner, April 2024; Blog: "11 Remarkable Workplace Communication Statistics to Know"; <https://www.apollotechnical.com/workplace-communication-statistics>.

Harvard Business Review, Sept 2016; Article by Josh Bernoff: "Bad Writing Is Destroying Your Company's Productivity"; <https://hbr.org/2016/09/bad-writing-is-destroying-your-companys-productivity>.

Hubspot, March 2023; Article by Adam Hayes: "Businesses Still Can't Nail Effective Communication"; <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/businesses-still-cant-nail-effective-communication#:~:text=And%20the%20impact%20on%20the,demand%20that%20they%20do%20better>

Microsoft.com, Dec. 2019; Article by Microsoft 365 Team based on Results of Grammarly and The Harris Poll: "Improve communication in the workplace to grow your business"; <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/business-insights-ideas/resources/improve-communication-in-the-workplace-to-grow-your-business>.

The Aberdeen Group, March 2018; Article by Jess Burns based on a study by Aberdeen Group: "Consumer Connection: Effective Approaches to Customer Service"; <https://www.gartner.com/en/customer-service-support/insights/customer-loyalty>