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with Barbara Best

Transcript: Email Enigma

Hi, I'm Barbara Best and this is Humans Working Remotely, a podcast where I'll show you how to meet the expanding needs of your organization by utilizing alternative solutions for operational staffing. Through expert insight and meaningful conversations with business professionals, we'll talk about common challenges and proven strategies that will provide you with more time to focus on your organization's mission, relationship building and other high value growth activities.

Did you know you can get a jump on your day by not checking your emails first thing in the morning? It's true. We all do it, we get into our inbox first thing and respond, respond, respond. Next thing you know it's lunchtime, and we haven't got a thing done. Take charge!

Here's a few tips and advice on how to train yourself to get a handle on this and get through your daily tasks more effectively.

Today, I have my colleague, Kerri Quirt here and we're going to have a dialogue about email.

Barbara: Kerri, good morning. Thank you for joining me.

Kerri: Good morning. I'm excited about talking about this terrible time sucker!

Barbara: Yeah. Have you been thrown down the drain by email? Because I have!

Kerri: Yes. And in seventeen years, I've learned what not to do. So, I want to talk to you and give you some pointers.

Kerri: Thank you. Yeah. It's bad because I love email. It's wonderful, because it is actually a business record.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: As opposed to maybe talking to your clients via social media.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: It's not as professional as email and email is a business record. So if there's any dispute or question on who said what, you have that record.

Kerri: Yeah, it's a paper trail.

Barbara: So virtual paper trail. Yes, but that comes with some costs. And I learned very early on the first thing I remember doing is turning off all my alerts, in Outlook, the bell, the notice, the thing in your system tray. Yeah, I turned them all off. Because it's like Pavlov's dog. When you hear that bell, you just dive right into your computer. *"Oh, what happened next"* and why your whole morning is gone. Have you experienced that?

Kerri: I have. And what I've noticed is, even if you try and ignore it, like if you set it up that, okay, I'm not going to do my email right now, and then you don't turn off all the notifications, the notifications come up, and then you're in this internal battle of *"No, no, I said I wasn't gonna check."* Like, What about? I want to find out? Oh, I need to hear back from so and so. Yeah. Right. And then and you get so caught up in it so fast, *"I'll just check and see if I got that email yet"*. It's like, no, no, don't, you can't. Because if you do, it's a rabbit hole that you can't get out of. And like you say, half your day is gone. And it's like, what did I get done today? Yeah, I struggle with it regularly. And sometimes I have to just not even open up my email, like I have the whole program down, closed entirely, because otherwise it doesn't work.

Barbara: Yeah. And what you just said too Kerri, sometimes when you sort of beat yourself, you think, well, I should just check and see if that one thing came in. But you know, sometimes, and I've learned this of myself, sometimes that's really an excuse for doing something you don't want to do. You have a task you really don't want to do so you go and check your email instead.

Kerri: Yeah, because it makes you feel like you're being productive.

Barbara: Yeah, of course. Yeah. But in reality, you or me in this case, I just don't want to do that task. So, I'll think of any other excuse possible to not do that task. We are so human, that way. Yes. It can really lead around.

Kerri: Yes, exactly

Barbara: So, what I've learned over the years, is like you just said, schedule time to do the email thing, and that does not include in the morning.

Kerri: No.

Barbara: It's a hard thing to get your head around. And what I found that works for me, is that I check my emails after lunch and at the end of the day.

Kerri: Okay.

Barbara: Then I bring forward to the next day, the things that I find at lunchtime, and the end of the day. So, it paces out my day for me, I do actually get to those tasks that I don't want to do.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: And it makes me more productive and more efficient.

Kerri: Because you're dictating what you're going to do when.

Barbara: Yes. I'm telling the email program, or whatever application you use, that I'm the boss. It's the same thing as back in the old days when we're used to using telephones. Everyone used to dive to the telephone when it rang.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: Right?

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: In reality, the telephone is just a tool. You can leave a message and you have the power, you can empower yourself to say, *"I'll pick up that voicemail when I'm in my time slot for checking emails and voicemails"*.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: Same thing.

Kerri: Exactly the same I, I had my aunt and uncle when I went to visit them once or no, my aunt and uncle that I had, I don't have them anymore. But one of the things that is so powerful about, it's directly related to what you just said. My Uncle George would sit beside the phone reading his paper and the phone would ring. And my auntie Colleen would be *"George, are you gonna answer that phone?"* And his response was, *"I pay for the convenience of a phone and right now it's not convenient to answer it."*

Barbara: Yes. See? That's what I think exactly.

Kerri: And when and when you, like you said, it's like when you have stuff planned for lunchtime, and then at the end of the day, you are planning it you're controlling your guests, what you're doing. And now a question about that.

Barbara: Yes?

Kerri: Have you ever used an autoresponder for your clients? To let them know that that's what your process is?

Barbara: I don't have to.

Kerri: Okay. Because you've always done it that way?

Barbara: It's a more broad-based statement from me. All of us here at Virtual Works, we always say, our minimum turnaround on all inquiries is within two business days, usually within one business day.

Kerri: Okay.

Barbara: I personally think that's reasonable.

Kerri: Oh, I do, too. The only reason I'm mentioning this, is because I have spoken to people and I've had the challenge too when I'm set a time to not be answering emails. And then I get somebody who's a little bit miffed that I didn't get back to them as quickly as they would have liked. And I've spoken about this with other people, and what they what I have had suggested to me, if it's a new practice of not going in first thing in the morning, the best way to avoid anybody getting ticked off, or less ticked off, is to have an autoresponder on your phone or on your on your email that says, emails are picked up at, like for you, at noon, and end of day.

Barbara: Yes.

Kerri: And we'll get back to you within two business days, something like that, like I get when you say about with your business, it makes sense that you would have that across the board with everybody on the team. But I'm thinking for people who are new to setting this boundary for themselves. You know, that's just a way that I have heard is really effective to kind of appease people, because everybody is so intent on that instant gratification. We live in that mentality. And when we don't, like somebody will text you. And if you don't get back to them right away, especially now that it says, "*Oh, it's been delivered. Oh, it's been read*", you know, then they get mad because you're not responding.

Barbara: I know. I know.

Kerri: And it's silly, but people really do it. Right. So I just wanted to mention that about the autoresponders. Because it does kind of take the take the edge off the shock for people who might be accustomed to getting an email back within an hour when they're having to wait for an hour or longer because they mailed it late at night and you don't respond.

Barbara: Yes. Right. So yes it's a really great idea for those who aren't used to taking charge. And it also trains your clients to, you know, you're telling them what to expect.

Kerri: Yes, teaching them how to treat you.

Barbara: It's a really good idea. And it also empowers you as the user to say, look, I got your email. I know what it's about. I'm going to respond when I respond. Not based on your calendar and your priorities. Yes, it really is about taking control. But in a nice way, you know, you can be very professional about it. It's all about boundaries.

Kerri: Exactly.

Barbara: You know, sometimes it may take a conversation using the old fashioned telephone, just to have an open dialogue to say, look, this is what I expect. This is what I do. This is what I'm going to do to respond to you.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: Can we agree that this is the way that we're both in sync and we can work together.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: It's as simple as starting a conversation about it.

Kerri: Well, and I remember something that you said to me once about the old adage, your failure to plan does not constitute an emergency for me.

Barbara: Yeah, it's true.

Kerri: And but again, there are people who are accustomed to having everybody drop everything and run to them. When they don't get that they need to have that, like you say, the dialogue on the phone.

Barbara: Yes.

Kerri: Let them know, this is this is how it's going to work. "Well, I want you to write back to..." well, this is how it's gonna work. You can tell me everything you want, but this is how I work. And this is when you'll be answered and this is how it's going to work. As long as they know, then there shouldn't be any problems. Right?

Barbara: Right. Absolutely.

Kerri: Yeah. And if you can't come to an agreement, then maybe the relationship has to change.

Barbara: Yes. It's simple. We're all human. We're all we all make mistakes. We all have our idiosyncrasies, and our boundaries and our, you know, all kinds of things going on, especially now with more and more remote work, we have to juggle more and more.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: If it comes down to a two minute phone call to state what each other's boundaries are, go for it.

Kerri: That's a pretty simple fix.

Barbara: It's pretty simple. You know, just say what you think. And you agree, or you just disagree or you adjust or, you know.

Kerri: Yes. And if you can't find common ground, then maybe we're not meant to be working together.

Barbara: Maybe, maybe.

Kerri: And that's okay. Because we're not a client for everybody. Right?

Barbara: That's right.

Kerri: And that's okay. So what else besides ignoring what other what other methods?

Barbara: Ignoring?

Kerri: Everybody is ignoring. Actually, it's not even outwardly ignoring, because it's not like the notifications are coming up.

Barbara: That's true, that's true.

Kerri: It's more of an out of sight, out of mind thing. So other than that, what other things have you developed that make, you know, managing email easier?

Barbara: As a company owners support provider, a company owner, I segregate all my emails into different folders,

Kerri: Okay, with rules?

Barbara: With rules. So that they shunt themselves into where they're supposed to be.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: Instead of coming from all different directions into one inbox, that would drive me nuts, because I'm a very regimented person, very logical, so, I set up my rules in Outlook to shunt everything that comes in to different places where it's supposed to be, and then I go through on my daily schedule, when I check my emails after lunch, I go through each inbox. And then I bring forward on my schedule and my calendar. What goes where? And who does what, you know, that kind of thing? Some responses, I would say probably most responses, take less than a minute.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: So, I go through quickly and if I can respond straight away, I will do so.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: The other thing that I do, and this is sort of like cheating kind of, because I do, believe it or not, sometimes I work after hours.

Kerri: Oh, yeah. That is so not you, but sometimes you have to.

Barbara: Yes. I was going to say don't we all? That sometimes we have to.

Kerri: We just yeah, we just don't say that out loud.

Barbara: It doesn't happen all the time. But no, obviously, if you have a deadline, you have to work after hours.

Kerri: Exactly.

Barbara: And what I do quite often is all do up all my emails for the next day, schedule them to send the next day at nine o'clock. That way clients don't expect that I respond at all hours of the day and night.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: They know, I respond only during working hours.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: I've kind of cheated because I did it ahead of time, but it looks like I responded at nine o'clock, you know, but you have to do it. As a business owner, you have to do these things. You're responsible for the welfare of your company and your professionalism and what you're responsible for, so you do have to do that and it's a useful tool to be able to delay send to the next day or whatever it happens to be.

Kerri: Yes. Now speaking of delay send, that's something else when we were talking about doing this. I am a firm believer in delay send for the next day because it's scheduled during business hours. I'm a firm believer of, when you are during business hours, to not have your email set to be sent immediately.

Barbara: Absolutely.

Kerri: Many people do that. Because *"Oh, it needs to go right away"*. Well, if you leave it like that, you're going to end up having to write a second email, when you forget to mention something.

Barbara: That's right.

Kerri: Or in the worst case scenario, when you said something that could have been said a little bit better. You can't go back and polish it before it goes, because you've already sent it.

Barbara: That's right.

Kerri: Yeah, I love your idea about the different the different inboxes though, even if it's per client or per area of work, if you're waiting, like I mentioned earlier, you're waiting for an email to come in. And it's like, *"oh, I gotta check. Maybe it came in"*. Looking at the inbox list, as opposed to the list of all the emails.

Barbara: It's a lot easier to go, I'm gonna be looking from this person on this or in this topic, and it's one box that you look and you find it and it's done. I love that idea.

Barbara: Yeah, it's a real brain saver. I can tell you. A real brain saver.

Kerri: Well, I wonder how many people use email rules like to set them up, because that's such a simple way of making it organized for your own needs before it even lands in front of you.

Barbara: Yes, that's right. Yes, but everybody's different. Everyone processes information differently. You really have to find what works for you and there is no one correct way of doing it. Because I think the way I do, the way I process information is much different than the way you process information. So, I go through my emails, say after lunch, and again at the end of the day, I have a process that I kind of sort things through on my calendar on my schedule, I have an operations diary, and then for the day to day technical stuff, I use my Outlook calendar. So, all of these things in interplay with each other, and it helps me segregate again, what's operational and what's client facing. So there again, everyone's different, but that's what works for me. And it's taken me a good, I would say, at least ten years to find what really works for me.

Kerri: Wow!

Barbara: And that's because we're human, and that things change all the time. Especially if you're a business owner, whether you're in person or working remotely, the goalposts are always changing, every day, all day, priorities change, people change, clients change, team members change, you know, there's a lot to take control of.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: So, in my mind, you do have to be somewhat regimented, and taking control of all the things coming at you. Otherwise, you won't get anything done.

Kerri: No, you're right. I agree one hundred percent. It's like the priority list that you were mentioning earlier.

Barbara: Yes. Right.

Kerri: Even if it does have to be tweaked. And like you say, it will have to be because over the years and the months and whatever, people change, priorities change, clients change, everything changes. And now we have a pandemic.

Barbara: Yes, right. There's that too.

Kerri: But that's the thing. If you have that in place, then you can polish it, polish it, polish it as you need to, to tweak it to make it work for how the changes are implemented. If you are flying by the seat of your pants, and then something lands in your lap, that's totally out that you're not expecting it, then you're starting from scratch every time.

Barbara: That's right.

Kerri: And that just means you're losing more time. And the whole purpose of managing email is not to waste time.

Barbara: So yes. And having said that, though, if you're thinking about switching to a new way of being in control, especially after listening to us today, if you want to switch to a new way of managing yourself and taking control, it is going to take a bit of time commitment initially, but as you refine and go through it and work through it day by day, the time it takes to implement and manage it will reduce in, you know, no time at all. Yeah. And before you know it, you'll be doing your new system automatically, which is what you want to do in the end anyway,

Kerri: You just want to find your groove.

Barbara: Yeah, that's right.

Kerri: Now, I'm not on that same topic, with the fact that we have to struggle to find our groove and the fact that it's going to take time to transition into that nice, easy process. How do we manage, how do I manage, let's own it.

Kerri: How do I manage that I set myself up to have a specific time of day that I do this. And it's going to run from say, say twelve to one, or twelve-thirty to one-thirty, because I've just had my lunch at twelve. And then four to five at the end of the day.

Barbara: Okay.

Kerri: What happens if I don't get through everything? And then I'm beating myself up thinking, Oh, my God, I haven't got through all my email. And then the next day, I'm beating myself up still, because I haven't got through my email from the day before. And my first instinct is to get on my email and get it managed from the day before.

Barbara: Oh, my God, Kerri slow down. Oh no!

Kerri: But I'm serious, though.

Barbara: I know. I know.

Kerri: And I know, I'm not the only one that gets in that place.

Barbara: I know.

Kerri: So how do you set a time limit that's going to be comfortable for us, me, you, other people that want to do this? How do you set a time limit that's going to give you, you know, a proper way of managing your day, an opportunity to transition without beating yourself up and a sense of accomplishment that you're not leaving things undone?

Barbara: That's it's a great question. First of all, don't beat yourself up. Don't be so hard on yourself. You are only human, you know, it's just a human experience. I would say realistically, just stop for a second in that particular space and time on that day. Say it's, I don't know. Eleven-thirty.

Kerri: Okay.

Barbara: And you've had a full morning. You haven't checked anything. You're hungry. You need a coffee and you know, you're just blahh.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: Just stop for a second. Stop for a second. A couple of minutes. Take a breath, get up and stretch, do something. Get out of your head for a second and think about it. Think about where you are in that particular moment. First of all, congratulate yourself on everything you've accomplished in the morning because you haven't been lured by emails. Right?

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: Congratulate yourself on that first. And then when your mind is clear, you're allowing yourself, and something I quite often do is set the timer on my phone, you know, it's eleven-thirty, I want to spend the next half hour checking my emails. So, I set timer on my phone, get into my inboxes, go through them all. Keep an eye on the timer from time to time. And then see how you do. You're not going to get it bang on the first time.

Kerri: No, that's true.

Barbara: You're learning this new process. Start with half an hour, you can even schedule it. Say it's Friday today, so say on Monday write in your calendar at eleven-thirty to twelve, you're going to check your emails, schedule it, write it down, that'll increase your chances of it actually happening.

Kerri: Okay, right.

Barbara: So, in your mind, you're already committed to that half hour. Monday morning comes along, it's eleven-thirty, set the timer on your phone, get into your inboxes. Right? Go through them inbox by inbox.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: Whether it's a functional area, or by client, or whatever it is that you've set up. Go through them. I would suggest you go through them briefly, just a quick scan of each email that has come in, just to see what's urgent, what can wait, know what it is you're looking at and then filter and sort through them all again, address the quick ones first, the ones that take like a

minute, reply to all those straightaway, right? Then go to your priority ones or urgent ones. And decipher if it can be responded to in a minute, five minutes. Does it need research? Does it you know, whatever it is, schedule those. And then your next category, the routine ones, they're just like general inquiries, or whatever it happens to be they're non urgent. Again, determine if you can respond to them right away. Do you want to schedule time maybe at the end of the day and your next time slot to respond? You know, whatever it happens to be. And then if you do that, you know, daily, eventually, your mind will get queued in to doing that as a routine.

Kerri: Yes. Okay.

Barbara: You'll train your mind to think "hey". And as you see that it starts to work really well for you, your mind will think, "Hey, this is great. I'm in total control".

Kerri: Yes, let's do it more.

Barbara: Yes, do it more often.

Kerri: Exactly.

Barbara: Right. And then before you know it, you've got it scheduled on eleven-thirty and four-thirty every day. Of course, it may happen where your date totally slides out from under you, it happens probably more often than we would like it to happen.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: But I think if you get used to it, and you've trained your mind to block off those times, you will eventually make it a priority. I think you have to.

Kerri: Well and it sounds like it would be very natural, even with when, like you say, a day gets out from underneath you.

Barbara: Yes.

Kerri: Just thank you for explaining that way. I loved how you framed it all because it sounds like even if the day gets away from you, you're still going to have the confidence in the process because you already have the experience of it being effective.

Barbara: Yes.

Kerri: And that's powerful. That, in itself, is just knowing that because that's when you said whoa, stop. I'm I was caught up in that, like I know, and I have to get there, right. And I know, it's not always, but when I do, it's that time when all of a sudden everything is just all over the place.

And I'm just thinking in that, in that moment, what I was feeling how I would feel, knowing that I had a process in place that was going to be effective. When I got into it. It's going to alleviate some of the stress of *"Oh, my God, I didn't get to it today"*.

Barbara: Yeah, it's very empowering. Yes, very empowering. It's like you're giving yourself permission to take control. Really, on your terms.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: Yes, that's really what it comes down to. And you can tie into that, you know, other people's priorities, and so on and so forth. And that gets back to boundaries. But in the end, really, it's you giving yourself permission to take control of a process.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: And you're really just managing information. That's all it is.

Kerri: Yes. And when we're managing when we address it.

Barbara: Yes.

Kerri: I'll get on our terms. I love that. Okay. Thank you. Yes, that's really powerful. Thank you very much.

Barbara: Oh, you're welcome. I also wanted to mention Kerri, I have to confess, I feel a rant coming on. Some emails I get, they just drive me nuts. One thing that drives me nuts more than anything, is when people dig up an email I sent them five years ago. And I was like, I'm in BCC somewhere. And they want to ask me a question. So they dig up this email, they hit Reply All. They don't change the subject field. And they asked me a question in the body of the email. First of all, I probably won't read it because the subject pertained to a board meeting that happened five years ago.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: You know, I've moved on since then. Yes. And, you know, I probably will see it eventually. And when I open it, it's got nothing to do with a subject line. And then all these hundreds of people are in BCC. And they probably don't like the sender very much.

Kerri: I know, exactly. Yes.

Barbara: And I really want to say in my rant, people, you can change the subject line of an email, you can do that, you know, it's not fixed if you've sent it already. Yes. And reply and change the subject line. I feel better now.

Kerri: I'm so glad.

Barbara: I know.

Kerri: Well, and that's a danger with the reply all too. I've noticed this for even for myself, that I've done it. And I've had it done with, like showing up in my box where somebody replies to, you know, somebody else, and I end up getting it because they're so caught up in sending that email right away.

Barbara: Yes.

Kerri: Forget to look that somebody else has been CC'd.

Barbara: Yep.

Kerry: Right. And so this is etiquette, you're talking etiquette.

Barbara: Yes, it is.

Kerry: Yes, so one of them is to not reply all when you can set up a default. Make a default to reply only to the sender.

Barbara: Yes. Right.

Kerri: And the other one is to always change the subject line.

Barbara: Yes, especially if that's an email from five years ago. And the other, about the reply all. I know, we're all fast paced, and we've got a lot on and we're juggling everything. But you really just need to give it some thought.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: When you're replying, think about who else needs to know about what you're writing about? You know, it just takes a minute. And you can just delete all those people who don't need to know. You know, it. It's a simple thing, and changing the subject line as well. Certainly, if there's an email going around, as we're all talking about, say, an upcoming board meeting or something, and who's available and what date, if it's current, you know, then yes, the subject line probably still applies.

Kerri: Right?

Barbara: And when I reply, I usually put a numeral at the end of the subject line saying, you know, upcoming board meeting and then I put it a two.

Kerri: Yes. So they know it's the second round.

Barbara: It's the second round of what we're talking about. And it helps people keep track of what version of that email there is, you know, that works for me.

Kerri: I love that you do that. That's something that actually I had never seen before, until I started working with you. And I loved that, because it did give how far back is this? But when you've got the numbers to see, then it's easy to see them in a row. And it's like, okay, the other thing that I'm thinking to when you were talking about, if you leave the subject line there, and you're all talking about something, I think one of the things that drives me crazy is people who put their message when they're forwarding, replying, put their response after all the other messages instead of before. Yeah, I know. I know. And I mean, they may not realize that there's a setting that's that you can go into email and say where you want your reply or forward. But I want to see when I open the email, I want to see exactly what they're talking about right now. Don't make me scroll through ten pages. Oh, that drives me crazy.

Barbara: I know. And when emails are that long, like pick up the phone, for God's sake, just pick up the phone. They still do work. Yeah, they're still our phones.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: Whether they're mobile or landline phones that we can use.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: Exactly.

Kerri: And if they can't talk, they won't. They won't answer. You'll leave a message. They'll get back to you when they can.

Barbara: Yes, exactly. Everything about this is pretty easy, really.

Kerri: Any other pet peeves? Oh, I have one for sure.

Barbara: Oh, yes, go ahead.

Kerri: And I'm sure it's one that you have too. I hate, and I don't use that word lightly, I hate bad grammar and spelling.

Barbara: Oh, I know. I hate it. It drives me nuts.

Kerri: I cannot. I mean, I've got I have a friend who will have me do like a proofread over a copy that she's writing and the first thing that I notice is spelling or grammar, and it's like, you know, and she said, and I said, I can't help it, you know that I see it. And she said, I know and I hate it, because it's the first thing you notice, and you miss out on the point. But that's the whole point. If the first thing that you're noticing in somebody's written communication is a spelling mistake, or a grammar, that's going to upset the person that they're reading. Because that, to me, the first thought is what you can't take time to check your spelling or make sure that you're writing grammatically correct. Like that's just bad, especially in business.

Barbara: Yes. It's happened to me many times, when people who are interested in working with us, send me their resume and covering letter and a brief email.

Kerri: Right.

Barbara: And I've seen it many times where the covering email in the content and the body of the email, it's, you know, four lines long, and it's one sentence.

Kerri: Oh, wow.

Barbara: Almost no semi colons. No. It's like they're writing automatically what they're thinking, not realizing that we don't type the way or write the way we think. So it goes on and on and on. And you know what happens? I just delete it.

Kerri: Yeah. Yeah, it's like they haven't taken the time.

Barbara: No. And if people are like that in emails, and they want to work for us, I don't want to work with them.

Kerri: No, no, I agree.

Barbara: It's harsh. But you know, and my thought is, if they're going to correspond with my clients like that, no, because that's not going to happen. That's not professional.

Kerri: Well, it's like people who communicate with text speak. Right? They read an email, and they're writing it as if they're texting, and I'm as guilty as the next person for using text speak when I text. But when I write an email, I do not ever do that.

Barbara: It's two different mediums. It's just two completely different things.

Kerri: Yes, exactly.

Barbara: It's two ways of communicating. So yes, we really need to pay attention to that. And on those same lines, and I've done this many times, a little technique I do, especially when I'm mad.

Kerri: Yes.

Barbara: When I respond to an email, and you know I'm not my, let's say best self, and I get mad, and I want to write everything I'm feeling and send it. Yes. I've learned the hard way to give it twenty-four hours before you send that email. Especially if you're mad. And take time to think about what you're saying or what you want to tell this person, and you have to take all the emotion out of it. You have to, you know, so a good technique I do is I put my initial thoughts down. Let me back up. The first thing I do is I hit reply, I take that person's email address off.

Kerri: Yes, that's exactly what I do too. Take it off the email first, just in case the Send gets done by mistake.

Barbara: Oh, my God. And that's actually happened to me too. And it was not pretty. I take that email, the email off the reply. I hit save. So I've saved a draft. And then I start to write my initial thoughts about, whatever the subject is.

Kerri: And you get it out of your system.

Barbara: And once I am done, save it. And I walk away. I don't look at it again for another day.

Kerri: Yeah, I do the same thing.

Barbara: I know. And oh, my God, we're so human.

Kerri: You have to do it, because you have to. And if you don't think about stuff like that, and you do get caught because sometimes it happens. You're in the middle of writing, and all of a sudden, you know, and you're venting. And it's like, you know, no, I'm gonna go back and fix it later. And it's like, all of a sudden it gets sent. And then you're backpedaling when you have to reach out to that person again.

Barbara: Yes, you could lose a relationship, a business relationship with anybody. And you could lose it. Just because you're, you know, and when we're in person, ideally, we take a moment, if we're triggered, we take a moment to breathe. And then we, you know, or we do a checkout for ten minutes, or ten seconds, whatever, and we come back to it. That's why you don't want to do that without having, you know, the things in place, like when you set up, because as you're talking about this from the beginning, I'm thinking, and you've got to get the email off there. And then you set it, and it's true.

Kerri: Yes, so true.

Barbara: It's so true. I've been caught a couple of times on that night. I never forgot it, believe me.

Kerri: No. And I'm sure they didn't either.

Barbara: No, I haven't talked to them since so it's hard to tell. But, yes well, probably not.

Kerri: No, more than likely. These are good things. Oh, good things. Yes, I mean, it turned off I remember way back when, showing my age, when email was new. And yes, the main thing that they talked about for etiquette was not to write in caps because it was yelling.

Barbara: Yelling, absolutely.

Kerri: And now there's so much progress with technology, technology and communicating with technology. And, you know, some people are of the mind that email isn't even for business anymore. And it's like, no, yes, it is. It's actually still very powerful with business. They don't talk about the email etiquette as much now because it is so old and people assume, right, which is not good, because we know what assume does assume that everybody knows the rules.

Barbara: Right.

Kerri: And I think that this conversation that we're having is going to be really valuable for people who maybe haven't thought of some of these things. Because all of a sudden, it's like, oh, I never thought about that. But you don't know unless somebody is talking about it. And you get to listen to a little conversation, like how else you supposed to know if you don't have your own personal experience?

Barbara: That's right.

Kerri: So I think this is really valuable information.

Barbara: And I think what you said too Kerri earlier, is that we've been overboard with texting. And that itself is a different language altogether. And I don't believe it belongs in business really?

Kerri: No.

Barbara: First of all, because it's not a business record with the date and timestamp. But also, it's not professional, because it's a different language. Really, you know, it has its time and place of course, but it also maybe depends on the relationship you have with the person you're corresponding with.

Kerri: True, true.

Barbara: But I would say in formal business, I would say email is still the way to go for all these items we've talked about today.

Kerri: Yes, I agree.

Barbara: Yes, for sure. So, thank you for joining me today. That was a great conversation. I really enjoyed it.

Kerri: Me too. Thank you for sharing your ideas. Because it's so nice. Again, if we don't have somebody to, if we don't have an opportunity to listen to somebody who's been there, done that, then we don't have another perspective to look at things. So I'm really appreciative of the fact that you shared the different ways that I mean, it's awesome that we have the same methods, a lot of places. Well, and that we have so many things in common to begin with, but it's just so for me, it was really helpful to hear the different methods and the different consequences that happen if you do or don't follow these methods, right? Because I think that's really important, too, is it's one thing to say, Oh, you can do this, you can do this or don't do this, but having the why attached, right, because we've talked about the why and all of these things. And that's really important to understand why we're doing this for the best customer service experience, and for the best way of managing the operations of our businesses.

Barbara: Yeah, absolutely.

Kerri: So yes, thank you for having me. It's been marvelous.

Barbara: Oh, it's been wonderful to talk to you. Thank you.

Kerri: Thank you.

In closing, I'd like to thank you so much for listening today. I hope this information was helpful, and I look forward to providing more. I'm Barbara Best CEO of Virtual Works, Inc.

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