

# **Mastering Digital Communication**

**Better Practices for Successful  
Interactions**

**Jeff Iannucci**



Barky McBarkerson

bark bark bark bark



Barky McBarkerson

bow wow wow wow wow wow



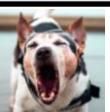
Barky McBarkerson

woof woof woof woof



Barky McBarkerson

ruff ruff ruff ruff ruff ruff



Barky McBarkerson

arf arf arf arf arf arf arf arf



Barky McBarkerson

yip yip yip yip yip yip yip yip



Barky McBarkerson

yap yap yap yap yap yap

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!





Barky McBarkerson

bark bark bark bark



Barky McBarkerson

bow wow wow wow wow wow



Barky McBarkerson

woof woof woof woof



Barky McBarkerson

ruff ruff ruff ruff ruff ruff



Barky McBarkerson

arf arf arf arf arf arf arf arf



Barky McBarkerson

yip yip yip yip yip yip yip yip



Barky McBarkerson

yap yap yap yap yap

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!

DING!





What just happened...?

# Who in the world is Jeff Iannucci?

I live in Arizona...



...and I sell used cars!

# Who in the world is Jeff Iannucci?

Senior Database Administrator at DriveTime



SQL Server data professional since 1998



# Degree in Mass Communication



# No one taught this stuff



# Resources

<https://livelearn.ca/article/digital-citizenship/7-tips-for-effective-communication-and-etiquette-using-chat-and-text/>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-novel-perspective/201301/the-trouble-texting>

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90350516/how-to-decide-whether-to-email-text-call-or-talk-in-person>

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3068909/heres-when-you-should-use-email-instead-of-slack>

<https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill>EmailCommunication.htm>

# More resources

<https://www.plainenglish.co.uk/how-to-write-in-plain-english.html>

<https://deardesignstudent.com/how-to-read-a-client-e-mail-ea67e54171a0>

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/now-more-than-ever-your-digital-interactions-matter-buck-woody/>

<https://www.nohello.com/>

<https://dontasktoask.com/>

# Even more resources

<https://www.quora.com/What-makes-chat-better-than-email-for-team-collaboration>

<https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/never-say-in-a-meeting/>

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/email-writing-tips/>

<https://www.textrequest.com/blog/how-to-write-professional-text-messages/>

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/business-insights-ideas/resources/6-tips-for-video-conferencing-like-a-pro>

# Seriously, a lot of resources

<https://newatlas.com/telecommunications/zoom-fatigue-video-exhaustion-tips-help-stanford>

<https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/8-tips-for-better-video-conference-calls>

<https://blog.trello.com/6-tips-for-better-video-meetings>

<https://blog.trello.com/communication-mistakes-remote-team>

<https://news.stanford.edu/2021/02/23/four-causes-zoom-fatigue-solutions/>

A photograph of a Steller's Jay perched on a wooden log. In the foreground, a Collins Axe lies horizontally across the log. The background is a soft-focus green forest. A white speech bubble is positioned in the upper left corner.

We're just  
handed tools

Email

Instant Messaging

Videoconference

Now we  
have some  
bad habits  
to unlearn

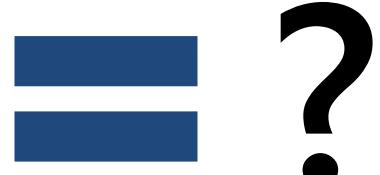


# And then came the pandemic...

All interactions  
are now  
remote/digital



Perceptions  
come from  
interactions



# You ARE your digital interactions



A large male lion with a thick, light brown mane is lying down in a field of tall, dry, golden-brown grass. He is positioned on the left side of the frame, facing towards the right. His gaze is directed straight at the viewer. The background is blurred, showing more of the same grassy landscape under a bright sky.

Professional

Effective

Influential

# Session Overview

**Successful communication**

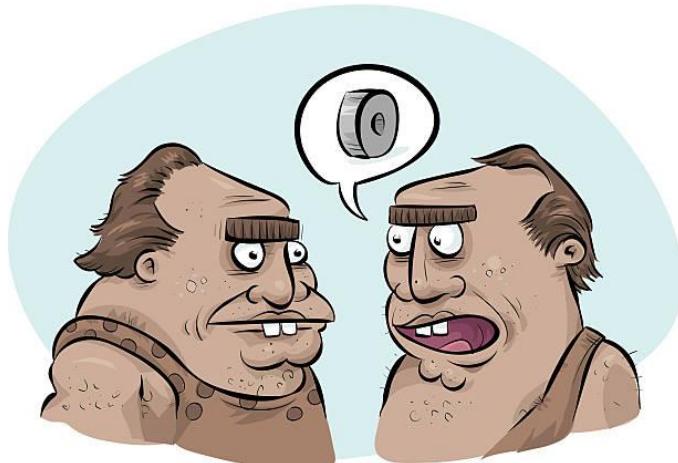
**Effective use of each medium**

**Choosing the best medium**



# A brief history of digital communication

In the beginning...



# A brief history of digital communication

But then...parchment and paper



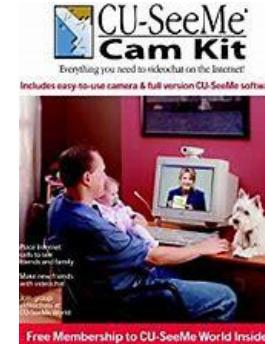
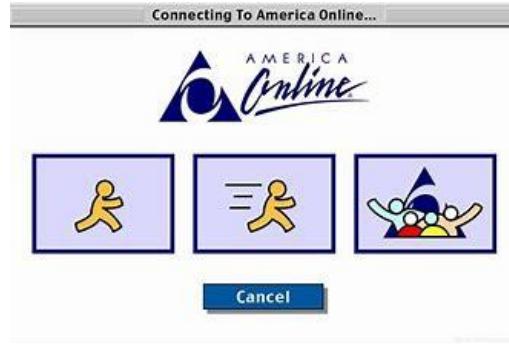
# A brief history of digital communication

## Era of electronics



# A brief history of digital communication

## The Internet arrives

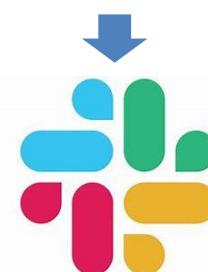
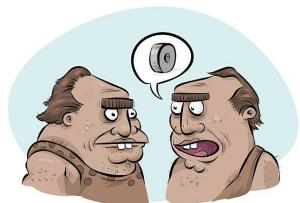


# A brief history of digital communication

## Modern digital applications



# A brief history of digital communication



A photograph of a monkey with dark brown fur, sitting on a dark wooden railing. It is looking directly at the camera with its hand near its chin, appearing thoughtful or contemplative. The background is a blurred green forest.

# Which to use?

**How urgent?**

**How much information?**

**What is the purpose?**

# Communication Purposes

Make an introduction

Make a request

Educate or inform

Respond



# Three keys for all forms of communication

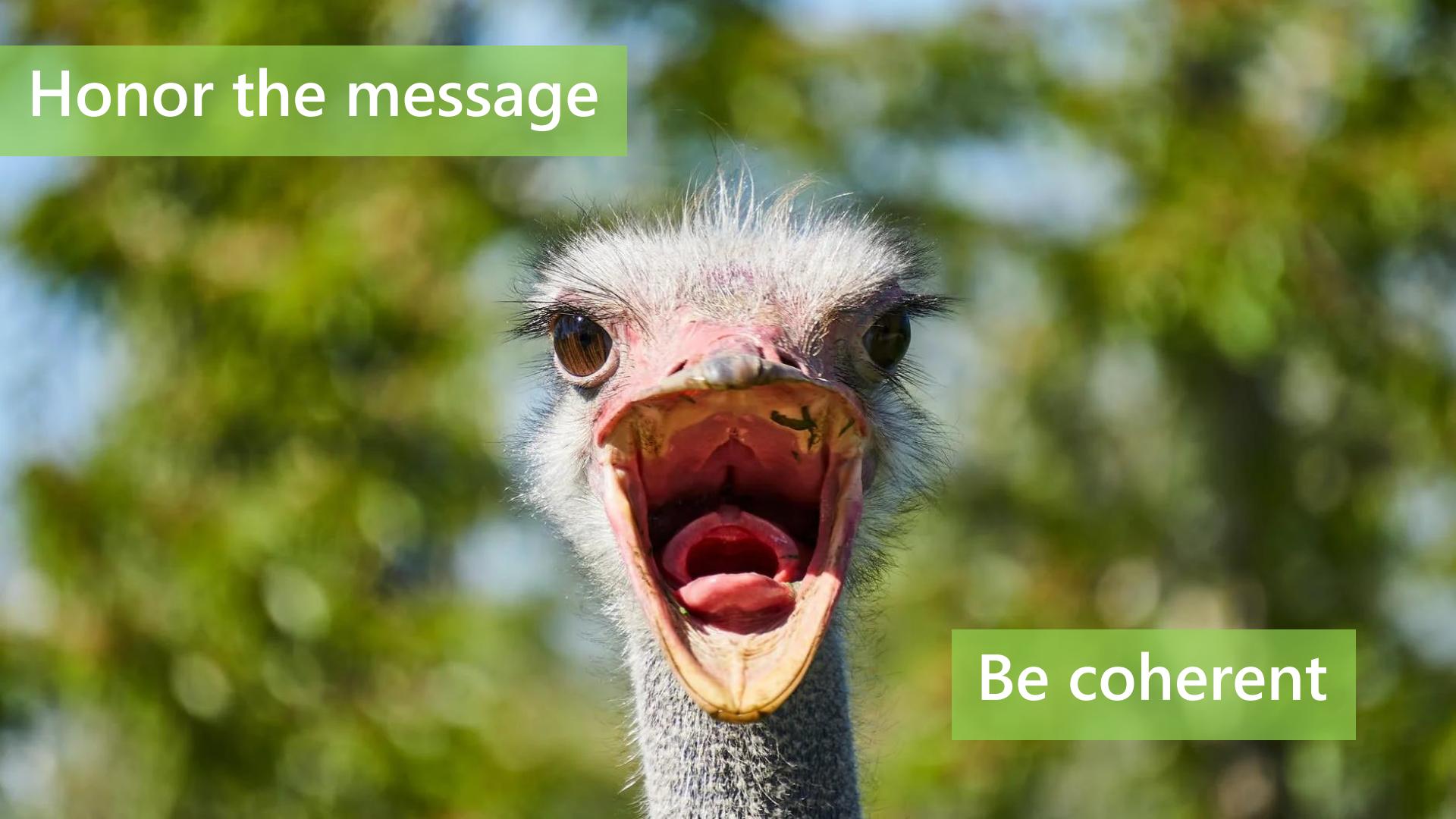
- 🔑 Honor the purpose
- 🔑 Honor the message
- 🔑 Honor the recipient



# Honor the Purpose



Avoid distractions



Honor the message

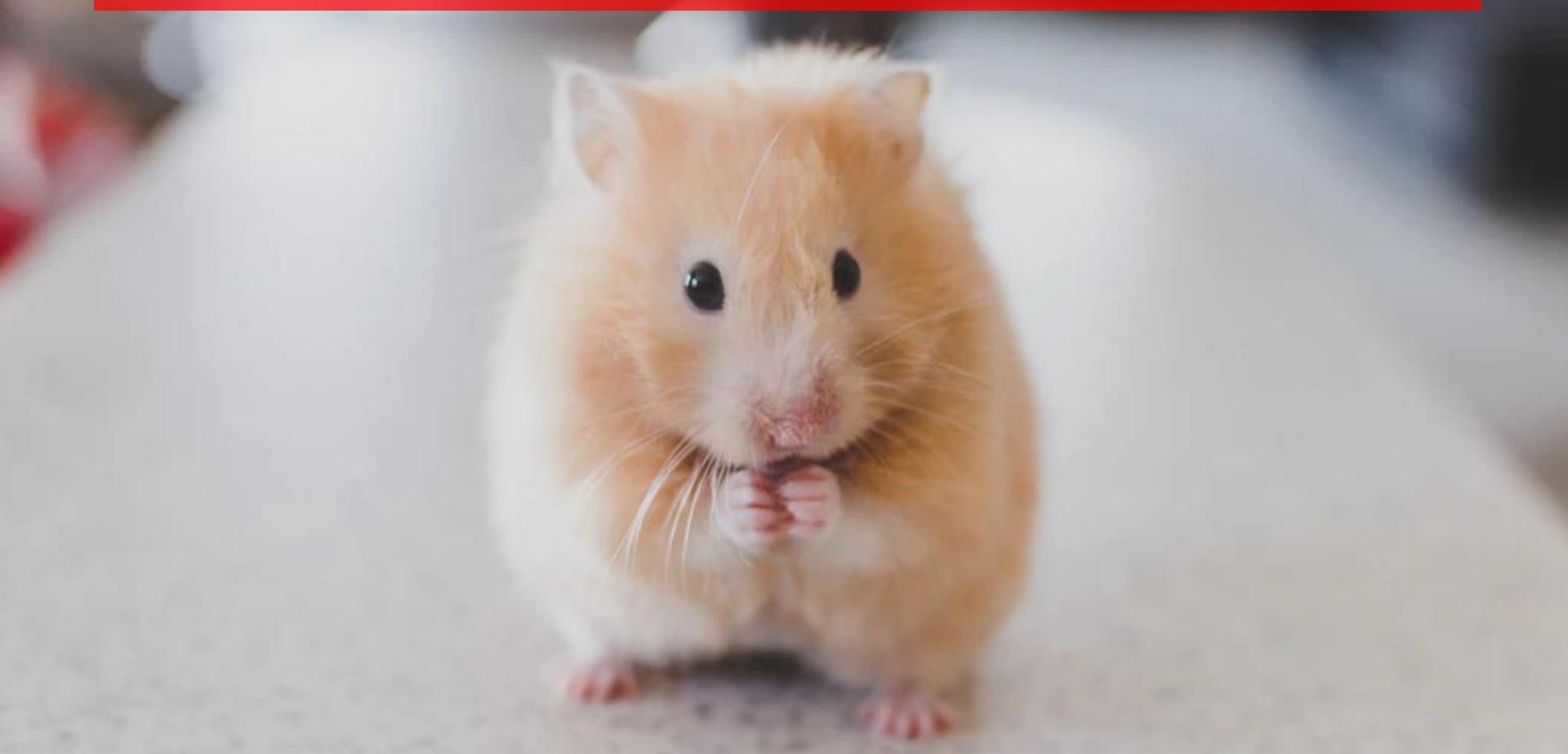
Be coherent



Honor the recipient(s)

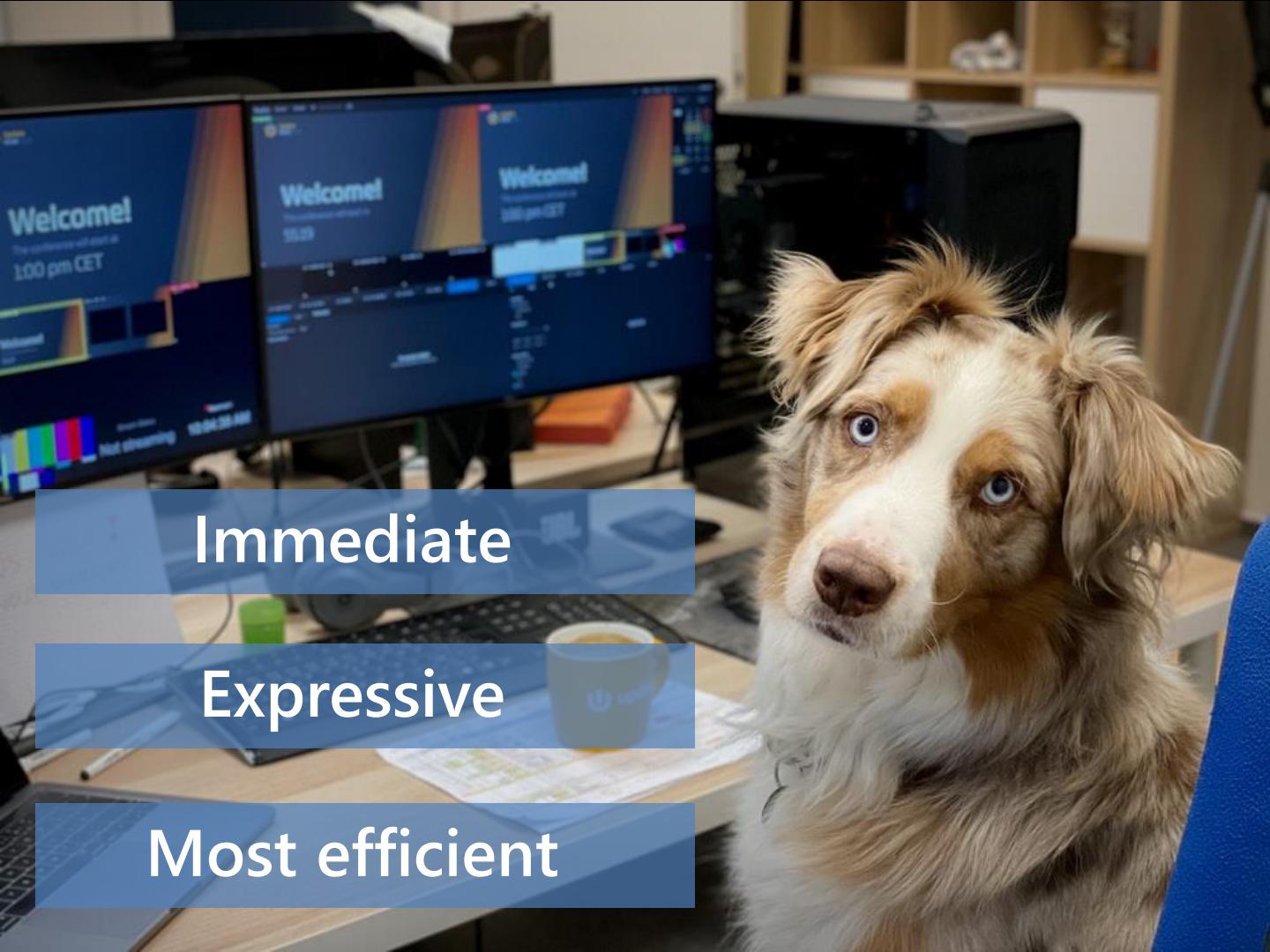
Show empathy

Do you need someone to do something?



# Videoconferencing





Immediate

Expressive

Most efficient

**Be kind**

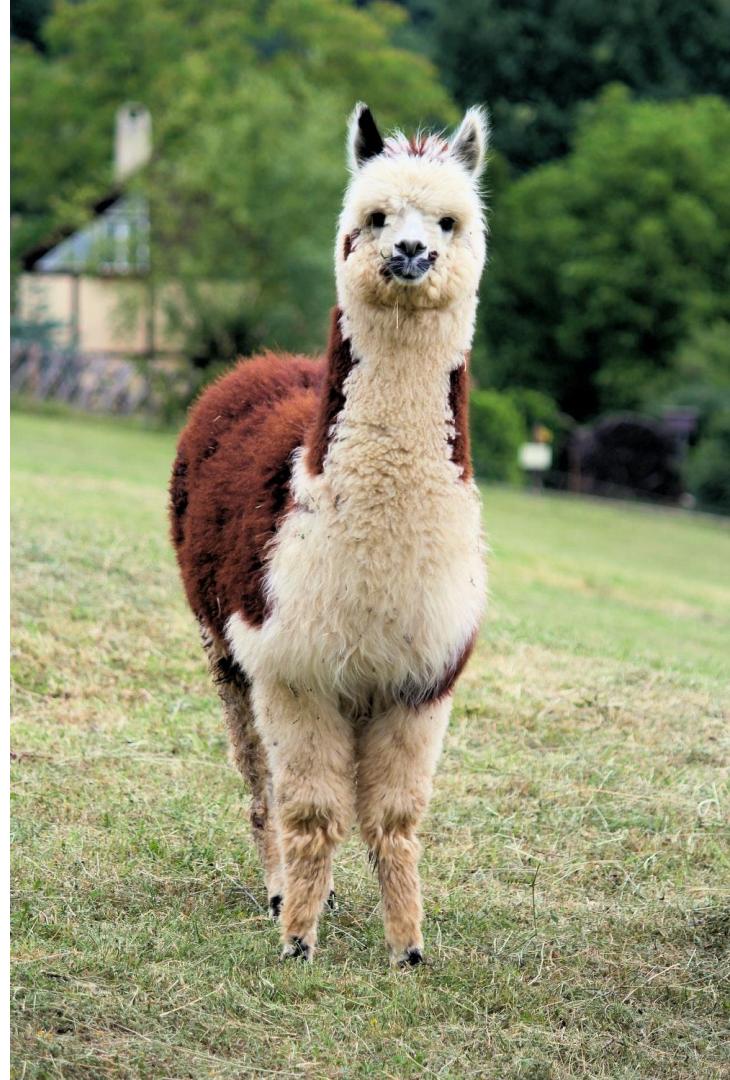
**Have an agenda**

**Address by name**

**Limit time to what is required**

**Let others leave when done**

**Cameras only for participants**





**“Zoom Fatigue”**



**Everyone  
is staring  
at you**

You  
are staring  
at yourself





You  
are not  
moving

Increased  
cognitive  
load





“While we’re all here...”

A photograph of a red fox standing in a field of tall green grass and small white flowers. The fox is facing left, with its mouth wide open as if it has just caught something or is yawning. Its fur is a vibrant orange-red color on its head and neck, transitioning to a greyish-brown on its back and tail. The background is blurred, making the fox the clear focal point.

Light from  
front, not  
from above

Position your  
eyes 1/3 from  
top of screen

Your head  
should fill <  
1/3 of screen

# Email





Asynchronous

Slowest

Most Organized

Important <> Urgent

# Five parts of an Email

Subject Line

Introduction

Message

Call to Action

Signature



# Subject Line

Generates interest

Avoid being deleted

Short (< 15 words)

Descriptive

Subject

REQUEST: decommission server DODO

# Introduction

Subject

REQUEST: decommission server DODO

Establish trust

Hello Somebody,

Establish relationship

My name is Jeff Iannucci, and I am on the DBA Team.

Create context

# Message

Subject      REQUEST: decommission server DODO

---

“The Purpose”

Only “The Purpose”

Be concise

Be clear

Hello Somebody,

My name is Jeff Iannucci, and I am on the DBA Team.

We have been told by the executive team that the database server DODO is no longer needed. We have confirmed through monitoring tools that it has had no connections in the previous week.

# Call to Action

“The Request”

After the message

Be specific

Who? What? When?

Subject      REQUEST: decommission server DODO

---

Hello Somebody,

My name is Jeff Iannucci, and I am on the DBA Team.

We have been told by the executive team that the database server DODO is no longer needed. We have confirmed through monitoring tools that it has had no connections in the previous week.

Could you please backup and power down this server, and notify our team when completed?

# Signature

Subject      REQUEST: decommission server DODO

---

## Contact info

## Personality info

## Brand info

Hello Somebody,

My name is Jeff Iannucci, and I am on the DBA Team.

We have been told by the executive team that the database server DODO is no longer needed. We have confirmed through monitoring tools that it has had no connections in the previous week.

Could you please backup and power down this server, and notify our team when completed?

Thank you.

Jeff Iannucci  
[jeff@desertdba.com](mailto:jeff@desertdba.com)  
Senior Database Janitor

# Kinds of Email Recipients

To:



# Kinds of Email Recipients

To:

CC:



# Kinds of Email Recipients

To:

CC:

BCC:





Use BCC!

Reply All



# **Proofread before you click “Send”**

**Is there a single purpose?**

**Is it clear, concise, and of value?**

**Are there any unnecessary distractions?**

**Is there a clear call to action?**

**Are there spelling/grammatical errors?**

# Improve readability

Use headers to break up long emails

Summarize with bulleted or numbered lists

Indent any quotes

Sparingly use highlighting/bold for emphasis



Avoid...

Italics

Underlining

ALL CAPS

Emojis

Acronyms

Background

Most visuals

Switching fonts

# Instant Messaging



# Instant Messaging

Requesting action  
...or maybe just info?

Least information  
Synchronous-ish



# Challenges of instant messaging

Delay-caused misunderstandings

Difficult to convey emotion

Can encourage bad grammar/spelling

Categorizing or archiving

Individual or group?

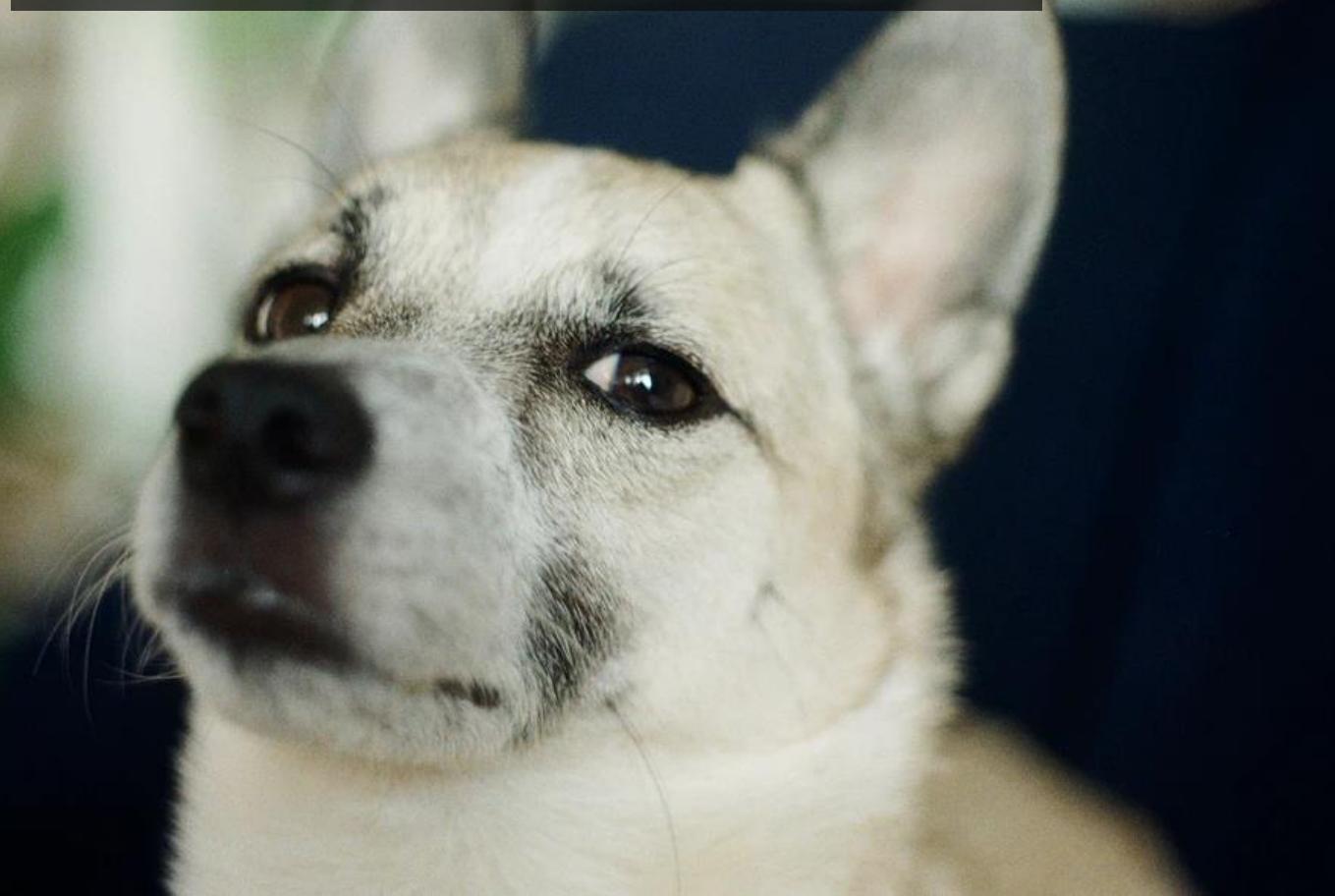


# Identify and Clarify

Identify the recipient

Clarify the call to action

# Avoid drive-by greetings



“hi”  
“hey dude”  
“good  
morning”

# Don't ask before asking



“Can I ask you  
a question?”

“Is anyone available?”

“Are there any  
admins around?”

# JUST ASK!

# Don't bury the lede

Who?

What?

Where?

When?



Don't  
@all,  
@here, or  
@channel



Don't  
be  
noise



# Avoid the noise

Stop hitting “Enter”

Shift-Enter for carriage return

No scrollable messages

No more than 8-10 messages

Consider video or phone call



# Summary

Choose the correct method



A photograph of a monkey with light brown fur, sitting on a dark wooden railing. It is looking directly at the camera with its hand near its chin, appearing thoughtful or contemplative. The background is a blurred green forest.

# Which to use?

How urgent?

(Email is not urgent)

How much information?

(IM is for limited information)

# Summary

Choose the correct method

Identify the recipient(s)





Use BCC!

Reply All



# Summary

Choose the correct method

Identify the recipient(s)

🔑 Honor the purpose



# What is the purpose?

Make an introduction

Make a request

Educate or inform

Respond



# Summary

Choose the correct method

Identify the recipient(s)

- 🔑 Honor the purpose
- 🔑 Honor the message



# Don't bury the lede

Who?

What?

Where?

When?



# Summary

Choose the correct method

Identify the recipient(s)

- 🔑 Honor the purpose
- 🔑 Honor the message
- 🔑 Honor the recipients



You are  
increasing  
someone's  
cognitive  
load



# Summary

Choose the correct method

Identify the recipient(s)

- 🔑 Honor the purpose
- 🔑 Honor the message
- 🔑 Honor the recipients

Clarify any call to action



Don't ask before asking



JUST ASK!

# Summary

Choose the correct method

Identify the recipient(s)

- 🔑 Honor the purpose
- 🔑 Honor the message
- 🔑 Honor the recipients

Clarify any call to action



# Thank you!



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[@desertdba](https://twitter.com/desertdba)

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