



### *Or is it?*

What happens when that message is *always* email?

Are we in email overdrive?

Remember when the words “You’ve got mail” were new, different and exciting? We were all so intrigued by this unique communication approach and how to use it. The age of technology was opening another chapter that brought intrigue and adventure into all of our lives and, best of all, it was quick, easy and global! It enabled us to reach people across time zones and those we could just never get on the telephone!

But what happens when the intrigue and adventure of email starts to wear off and we are getting 30, 40, 50 emails a day? Have emails become so routine that other forms of communication in the workplace are thrown off balance? Add to that IM and text messaging!

Have these constantly increasing methods of communication led us as a society to a shortage of face-to-face verbal communication and the natural “human” connection! Where are we headed? What have we become?

As renowned primatologist Jane Goodall said in an interview: “Emails can be the most dangerous form of communication because of its peculiar character: email ‘compels’ the recipient to send an answer immediately, and with usually a huge number of emails waiting in our inbox, we usually end up saying things

we wouldn't say in person or on the phone.” Add to that emotion, stress, impulse and instant action! But our innate personality style—the human side of each of us—often shows up immediately! We respond to those e-mails based on our own “perception” - our own frame of reference and our personality biases. Add temper to that and we may respond NOW and regret later!

Are we as a society “out of whack” in our communications? Like everything in life, it is a balancing act. Some of us prefer e-mail, others face-to-face communication. But weren't we born to want and need each other both physically and mentally? And yet we also know that new technology is not going away. In places like Microsoft, according to NFO CM Research Ltd., “email has become the pervasive communication medium...where probably 99% of communication takes place via email...and the phone never rings.”

According to the Media Richness Theory first proposed in 1984 by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel, “the greater the likelihood of a message being misinterpreted the greater the need for rich media. The theory suggests that choosing a medium which matches the task is likely to lead to the most effective outcome.”

But remember, more information does not mean better information! Think before you “react” to an email. Sometimes it's better to “wait” or just go and see the person (or give them a call) than to respond “right away.”

Remember: The Medium Is the Message!

Think before you press that Send Button!

If you wouldn't say it to someone face-to-face,  
it's probably a good sign that you shouldn't write it either!!

**Happy emailing!!**