

EPISODE 111

Moving The Ball Down the Field: Making Steady Progress with Email & Paper



INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP SHOW



Essential Question



How can I get more of my work done each time I look at it, so the ball keeps moving down the field?

The “Touch It Once” Myth



- If you *can* deal with something the first time you touch it, great.
- Most work requires more than one “touch” to resolve.

Why We Often Need Multiple Touchpoints

- Check with someone else
- Gather more information
- Think about it
- Wait for other events to unfold
- Assess relevance



The Danger of One-And-Done



- It's obvious when we're trying to wash our hands of an issue with a single email
- Follow-up is often necessary
- It's easy to *forget* to follow up

1 Touchpoint vs. 2 Touchpoints



Dear Mrs. Johnson,

Thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. I will talk with the teacher and ensure that your child is being treated fairly. Please let me know if you hear about any further incidents.

Regards,

...

1 Touchpoint vs. 2 Touchpoints



Dear Mrs. Johnson,

Thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. We certainly want every student to be treated fairly. I will talk with the teacher today and contact you again this afternoon with an update.

Regards,

...

How To Make Sure You Follow Up

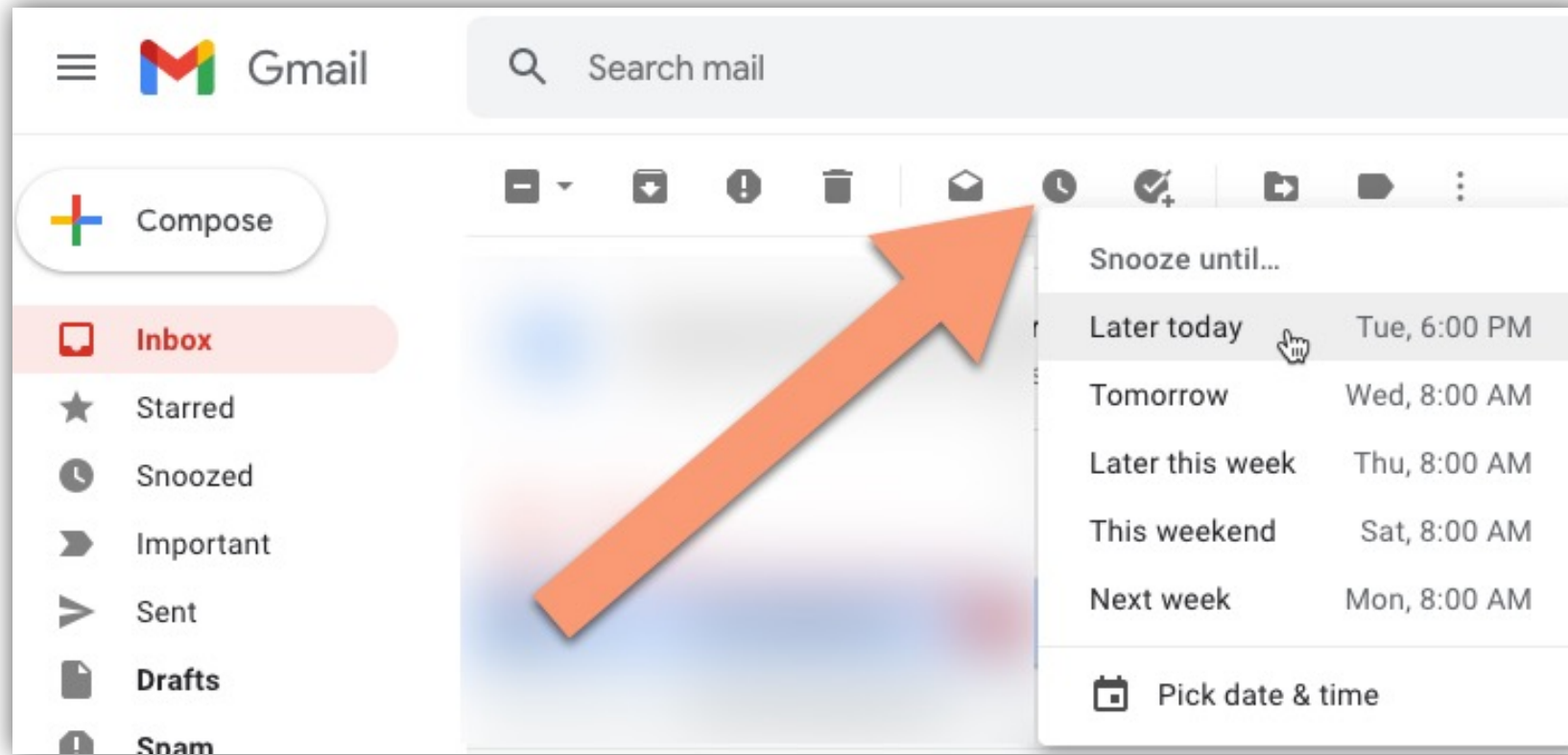


The best way to make sure you follow up on unresolved issues is with

date-based

reminders

Gmail's Snooze Feature



Dedicated Service: FollowUpThen.com

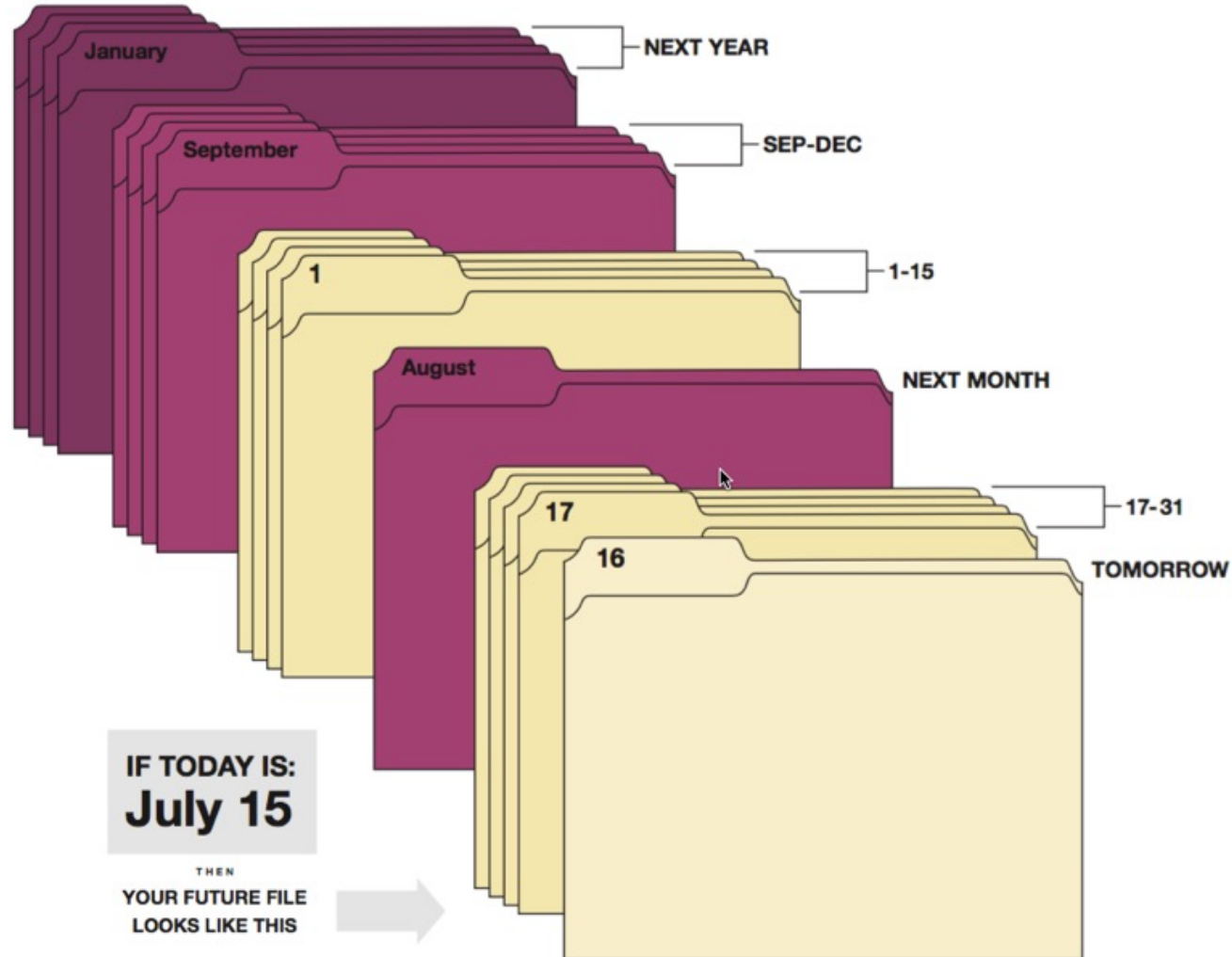
- tomorrow@followupthen.com
- 2weeks@followupthen.com
- Jan5@followupthen.com
- 2pm@followupthen.com

Additional examples:
FollowUpThen.com/how

followupthen



Hardcopy Reminders: Future File





Moving the Ball Down The Field with Each Touch



- Identify the very next action
- Be extremely literal and simple
- Write it on a sticky note

Next Action Stickies



Ask
Karen

Next Action Stickies

- *Give to Raul*
- *Read this*
- *Sign & scan*
- *Sign & return to Kathy*
- *Decide whether to register*



Next Action Stickies: Why Bother?



- We often need to think about an issue several times to make a decision
- We easily forget our thinking if we don't document it
- Thinking that's forgotten must be re-done
- Elaborate each time

Next Action “Stickies” for Email



- Forward to date@followupthen.com
- Add a few comments with your current thinking

To: July1@followupthen.com

Subject: FW: Register for our Fall Conference

Talk to admin team about going to this

---Begin Forwarded Message---

Join us October 1-3 for our Fall Conference and discover



Safely Setting Things Aside



What if I can't decide whether to act on this document or not, but I'm afraid to throw it away?

Paper Tools—Chronological File



Further Resources



Further Resources



- Chapter 7: Keeping Your Communication Channels Under Control
- Chapter 8: Managing the Work You're Not Doing Yet
- Chapter 10: Maximizing Your Mental Energy With Habits