

# How to Keep Email from Ruining Your Life

BY [DAVE KERPEN](#) AS POSTED IN INC MAGAZINE [SEE DAVE'S BIO BELOW]

## How to use technology as a force to help you, not slow you down.

Executive coach [Karen Elizaga](#) has some timely and supremely helpful tips for turning down the cyber noise in your life. Karen recently wrote her first book, *Find Your Sweet Spot: A Guide to Personal and Professional Excellence*, a guide aimed at helping identify goals, achieving true potential, and enhancing everyday life.

Here are five key ways to keep [technology](#) on your side, according to Karen:

### 1. Use passwords as inspiration.

Instead of using the name of your cat from when you were six years old, pick words like *serenity*, *peace* or *patience* and tack a couple numbers on them for safety. This way, you'll get a spike of inspiration every time you access your mobile, email or shopping website. It's a cyber mantra!

### 2. Set technology aside.

Designate certain hours as "no technology zones." Whether it's dinner time with the family or a 20-minute spot in the middle of the day, take a breather, rest your eyes and your brain. Connect with people around you. No need to be attached electronically all day long.

### 3. Pick up the phone.

Instead of tapping out an email or a series of texts, see if you can create some real interpersonal connections by actually speaking out loud to the person you want to communicate with. Better yet, meet up in person, even if it's just by the water cooler.

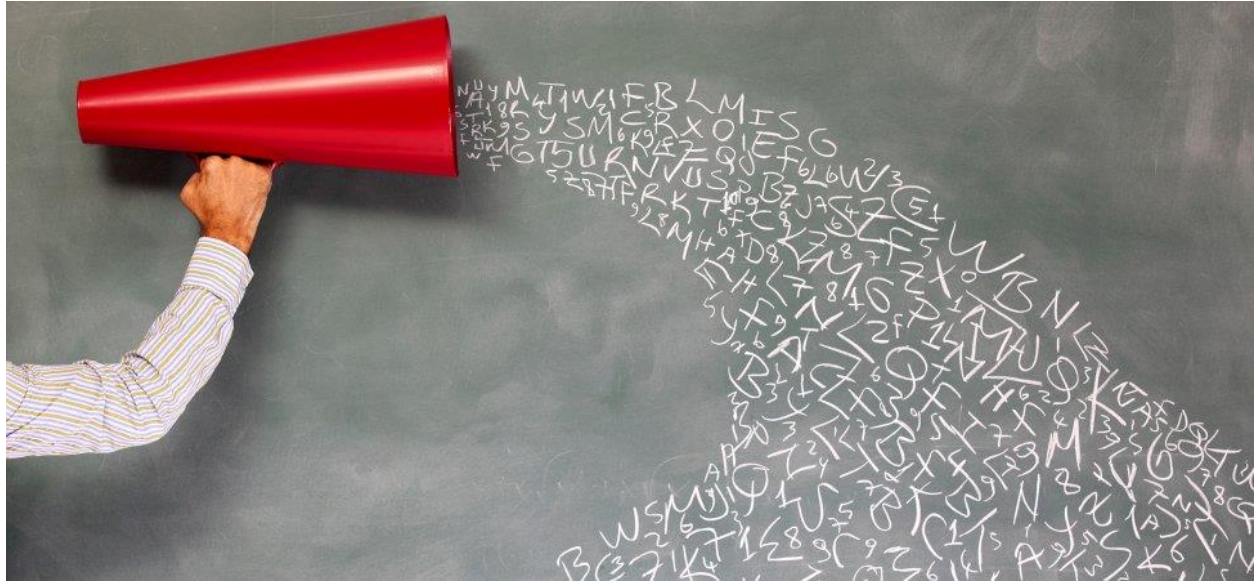
### 4. Strive for zero email.

This is a tough one, but you will feel much lighter if you do it. Aim to clear out as many of your emails as you can every day. This means deleting and filing emails as appropriate. Otherwise, they add up and bog you down.

### 5. Focus on the task at hand.

If you can't resist the temptation, turn off connectivity to do the work that you have to do and carve out periods of time later in the day to check emails and texts. Turning off connectivity will minimize the pings and temptations to shop around the internet. It's all about focus.

DAVE KERPEN is the CEO of [Likeable Local](#). He is also the co-founder and chairman of [Likeable Media](#) and the *New York Times* best-selling author of [Likeable Social Media](#) and [Likeable Business](#). [@davekerpen](#)



*What is going in your email in-basket every moment*