



Education, Engagement & Early-Career Development

Guidance on Meetings and Emails

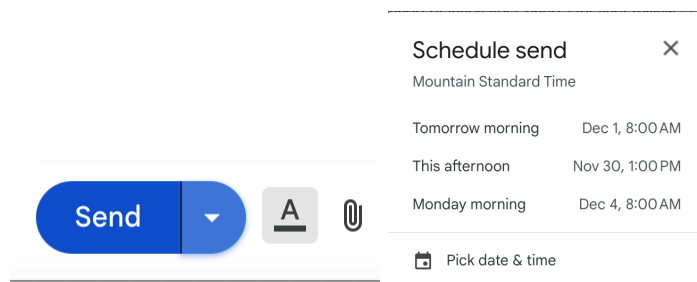
Meetings:

1. Effective recurring meetings can be vital, but let's actively cancel them when there's nothing crucial to discuss or items can wait without impacting deadlines or individual's schedules.
2. For all types of meetings, it is important to recognize normal working hours of staff. For staff, it is helpful to identify those time windows on your calendar.
3. It can be very hard to find time for meetings on everyone's calendars. It is OK to email individual staff to ask if a conflict is moveable.
4. When there is a need to schedule a meeting on short notice, such as on the same day or the next day, inquire about the feasibility of the meeting even if there appears to be availability on individuals' calendars.
5. Normalize the practice of ending meetings when the agenda has been completed, even if that is well before the scheduled ending time. Meetings should not run longer than the time allotted. If needed, schedule another meeting, or specify asynchronous assignments from the actions of the meeting.
6. Consider the varying time requirements for check-in meetings versus working meetings when scheduling. Aim to allocate the minimum time necessary for each meeting. Instead of defaulting to 30 minutes or 1 hour, try setting the standard duration to 25 or 50 minutes.
7. Add agendas and relevant documents to the calendar invitation. The agenda can be written out in meeting notes, or as an attachment. This makes it easy for everyone to find the relevant material. You can deviate from an agenda if the meeting necessitates. The point of meetings is for them to be productive and informative, not to just blindly follow a preset agenda that may not be addressing the most pressing topics.

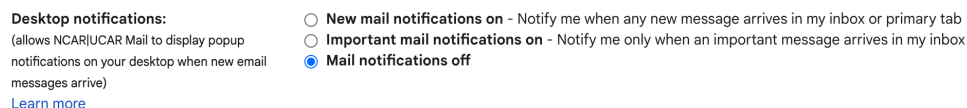
8. Select a note-taker (who doesn't have to be an administrative staff member). Rotate this responsibility for recurring meetings. Ensure prompt availability of notes post-meeting. Encourage all participants to add to the notes document, not just the selected note-taker, to capture any overlooked details. Meeting notes should summarize discussions rather than transcribe them and highlight action items (what, by when, by who?). Consider recording meetings (with consent) for a verbatim record if necessary.
9. Let's explore if we can establish meeting-free Fridays for EdEC. Several staff in EdEC already keep their Fridays free of meetings to focus on other tasks, writing, creative projects, etc. At minimum, please be respectful of people's blocked days.
10. Please keep in mind that these guidelines are most effective when our calendars are up-to-date.

Emails:

1. Use "Schedule Send" to make sure emails arrive in other peoples' in-boxes during acceptable time windows, generally not on weekends, holidays or in the middle of the night.



2. To reduce email-related stress, consider adjusting your checking schedule or turning off notifications. Notifications can be turned off under "Settings."



To pause your inbox, you can also try a Gmail add-on like '[In Box When Ready](#)' which has been [approved for use](#) by the UCAR Office of Information Security.

3. If you're writing an email that requests an action or deadline, make these clear. Put "response requested" in the subject line, possibly even the deadline when response is needed. Make deadlines realistic; based on your audience and considering time constraints they might have.

4. If no response deadline is specified, try to respond to the email within 48 hours.
5. It is OK to send a reminder to respond to a request. Wait at least 48 hours to do so unless something (driven by forces outside EdEC) is incredibly urgent.
6. Be aware of power dynamics when sending emails. For example, receiving an email from a supervisor outside of normal working hours can have a different effect on an employee than receiving an email from a project collaborator outside of working hours.
7. Always remember that email can be a terrible form of communication. Try not to read between the lines of emails or infer emotion or intent that is not stated; write and read for literal interpretation as much as possible. Propose a direct conversation if there is a chance of misinterpretation.