

[ORG SPOTLIGHT]

UNICEO

Founded in 2015, this association for corporate planners is intended to help members create better events by sharing best practices in event strategy and through networking opportunities. Be in the know for when it launches a U.S. chapter next year.

WHAT The United Networks of International Corporate Events Organizers is a nonprofit association providing training resources and a peer network for corporate event planners to share experiences, ideas and knowledge through conferences, seminars, roundtables and more.

WHO UNICEO's 1,350 international members are senior decision-makers for corporate events. Members include heads of events, vice presidents of communication, vice presidents of marketing, event managers and heads of procurement.

WHERE/WHEN

Based primarily in the U.K., UNICEO will begin operating networks in Asia this year, and in the United States in 2018.

WHY As a nonprofit, peer-only network, UNICEO gives planners a space to meet and learn without interference from suppliers or intermediaries.

HOW Planners must be recommended by an active member to be eligible to join. There is no registration fee, but applicants must be approved by the UNICEO board.

YOU'VE (STILL) GOT MAIL

As other apps come and go, email remains king of communication—for better or worse.

"Email is the cockroach of the internet," says Jocelyn Gleib, author of "Unsubscribe," a book about managing distractions at the workplace.

Her statement has at least two meanings. One, and most pertinent to the book's premise, is that email is often a manager's enemy when expecting workers to accomplish their goals. Secondly, Gleib is referring to email's lasting power. Indeed, in the age of Slack and its Facebook-powered competitor, Workplace, email remains the predominant mode of online and interoffice communication.

Gleib estimates people check their email about 11 times per hour and spend nearly 30 percent of their time at work looking at and responding to email. You've probably already taken one break from this story because of a phone notification. (Don't worry; we won't judge.)

The former planner of 99U conference, Gleib says email addiction is out of hand. "Email is designed for nonurgent communication," says Gleib, who is planning a new events series. "We use it in a very different manner." Namely, many people feel compelled to respond right away to a message, even if another task is more pressing.

Out to make the world a more productive place, Gleib offers these suggestions to balance workflow.

Set expectations.

Office supervisors who get bogged down sometimes plow through email on the weekends, as Gleib used to do. "I would get anxiety on Sunday

afternoons because I would get 10 emails and feel like I needed to deal with them [right then]," she recalls. Gleib recommends managers give employees realistic timeframes for responding to messages.

Set adjustable routines.

During nonbusy seasons at work, it's relatively easy to avoid email. But weeks and days before a conference or another big deadline, that's not realistic—as Gleib knows from her planning days. Senders will need your responses much sooner during those times, so plan to respond to messages more frequently. "It's important to think about anticipating the shifting nature of what tasks you're going to have to be handling," she says.

Try alternatives.

Have something pressing to discuss? Opt for a face-to-face conversation.

"EMAIL IS THE COCKROACH OF THE INTERNET."

WHY WE'RE HOOKED

Gleib says email remains a powerful time suck because it taps into the part of our brain that seeks instant gratification. "Email is like a slot machine," says Gleib. When you pull the lever, you often get junk email or (worse) an assignment you don't want. Occasionally, though, you'll get a note from a long-lost friend or other good news that keeps you coming back. Additionally, cleaning out an inbox scratches your itch to accomplish something. But even if you read all your messages, it's less productive than working on another project when you consider the amount of time you've spent achieving inbox zero. "That feeling of progress is false in a lot of ways," Gleib says.

