

Susan R. Johnson

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**thriving**  
a m i d s t   c h a o s

[www.thrivingamidstchaos.com](http://www.thrivingamidstchaos.com)



**MANAGE EMAIL MORE EFFECTIVELY**

My articles written for *Academic Physician & Scientist*.  
(Posted at [www.thrivingamidstchaos.com](http://www.thrivingamidstchaos.com))

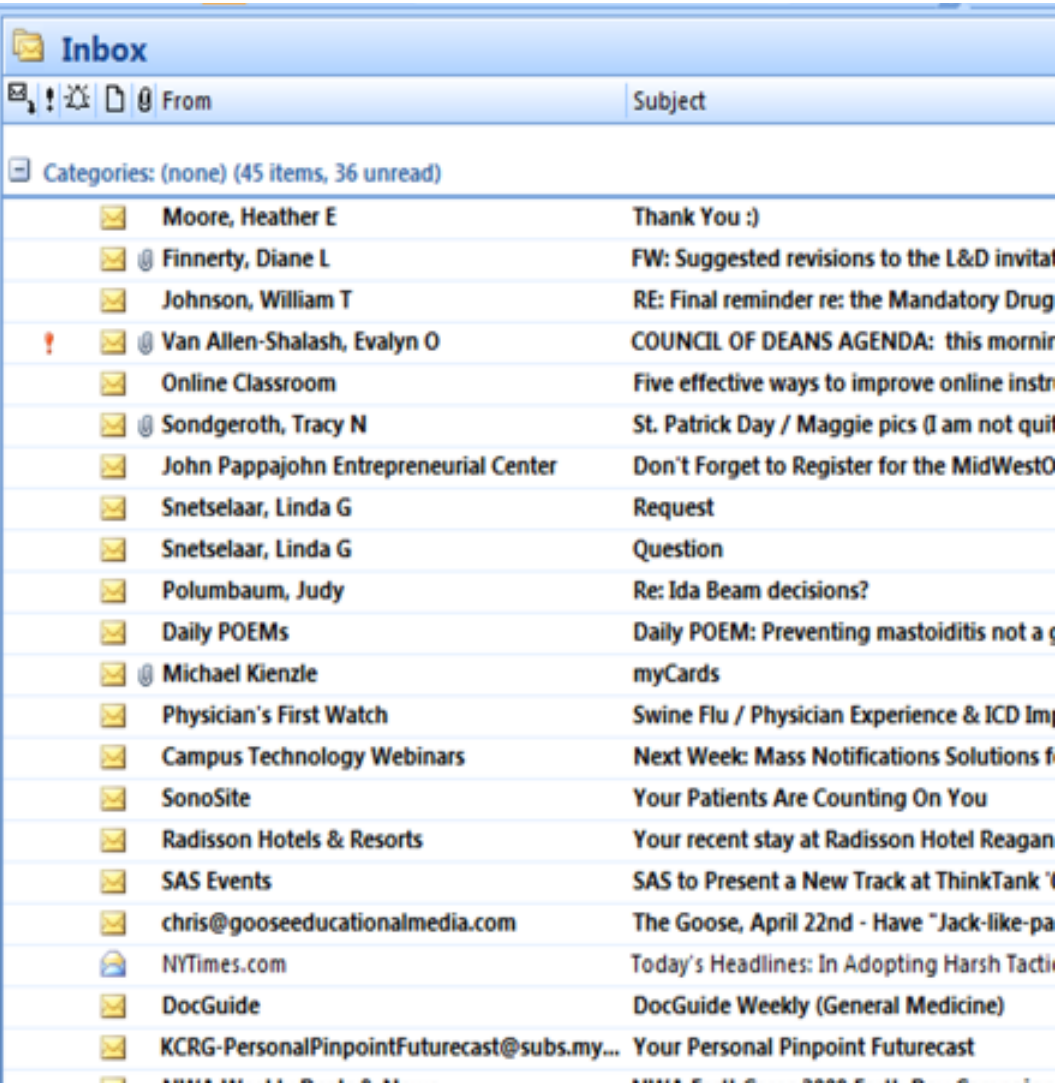
- [Code O: Recovering from overwhelm](#)
- [The basics of organizing your work and time](#)
- [Priorities: How to decide what to do, and when](#)
- [Execution: Getting your work done](#)
- [Getting e-mail under control](#)
- [Becoming a productive academic writer](#)
- [A plan for professional reading](#)
- [Time blocking](#)
- [Interruptions](#)
- [Delegation](#)

**From a k-12 school | Aberdeen, 1999**

“Administrative staff face 182 interruptions a day in primaries and 275 in secondaries, and cannot do routine tasks.”

# **1. DISTRACTION**

# Strategies

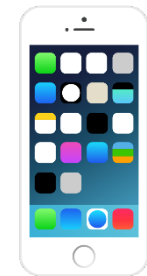


	From	Subject
	Moore, Heather E	Thank You :)
	Finnerty, Diane L	FW: Suggested revisions to the L&D invitat
	Johnson, William T	RE: Final reminder re: the Mandatory Drug
	Van Allen-Shalash, Evalyn O	COUNCIL OF DEANS AGENDA: this mornir
	Online Classroom	Five effective ways to improve online instr
	Sondgeroth, Tracy N	St. Patrick Day / Maggie pics (I am not quil
	John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center	Don't Forget to Register for the MidWestO
	Snetselaar, Linda G	Request
	Snetselaar, Linda G	Question
	Polumbaum, Judy	Re: Ida Beam decisions?
	Daily POEMs	Daily POEM: Preventing mastoiditis not a g
	Michael Kienzie	myCards
	Physician's First Watch	Swine Flu / Physician Experience & ICD Im
	Campus Technology Webinars	Next Week: Mass Notifications Solutions f
	SonoSite	Your Patients Are Counting On You
	Radisson Hotels & Resorts	Your recent stay at Radisson Hotel Reagan
	SAS Events	SAS to Present a New Track at ThinkTank '1
	chris@gooseeducationalmedia.com	The Goose, April 22nd - Have "Jack-like-pa
	NYTimes.com	Today's Headlines: In Adopting Harsh Tacti
	DocGuide	DocGuide Weekly (General Medicine)
	KCRG-PersonalPinpointFuturecast@subs.my...	Your Personal Pinpoint Futurecast

Set “no email time zones” at home.

Turn off notifications.

Stop “checking.”

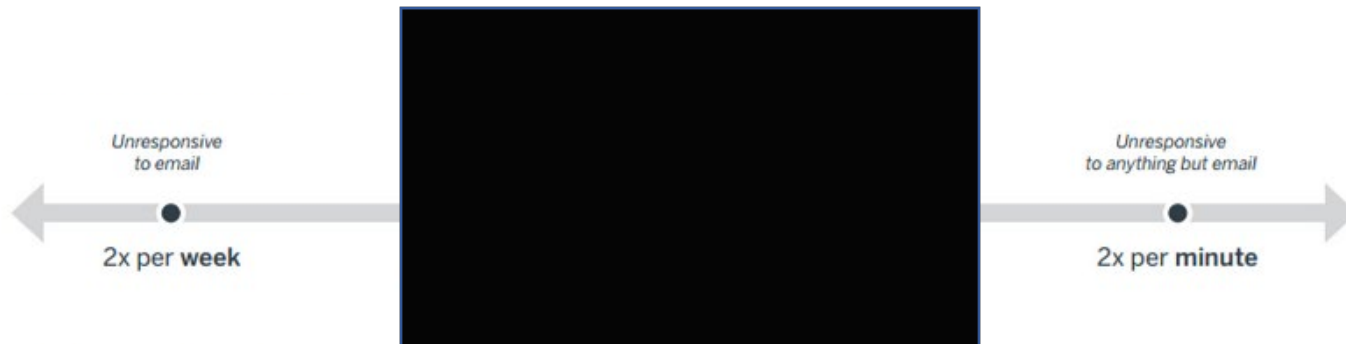


Work on email in batches.

No email access during work that requires focus.

## **2. EMAIL “TIME MANAGEMENT”**

# How often should you work on your email?



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Help desk operator: continuously

Average faculty member without  
admin responsibilities = 2 - 3x a day

Admin duties, managers, team leaders,  
“customer service” focus = ~ **hourly**

# **Minimize context switching**

Do most email work in batches

When you go into your email, choose one of these ways to work:

Full processing

Triage & Delete

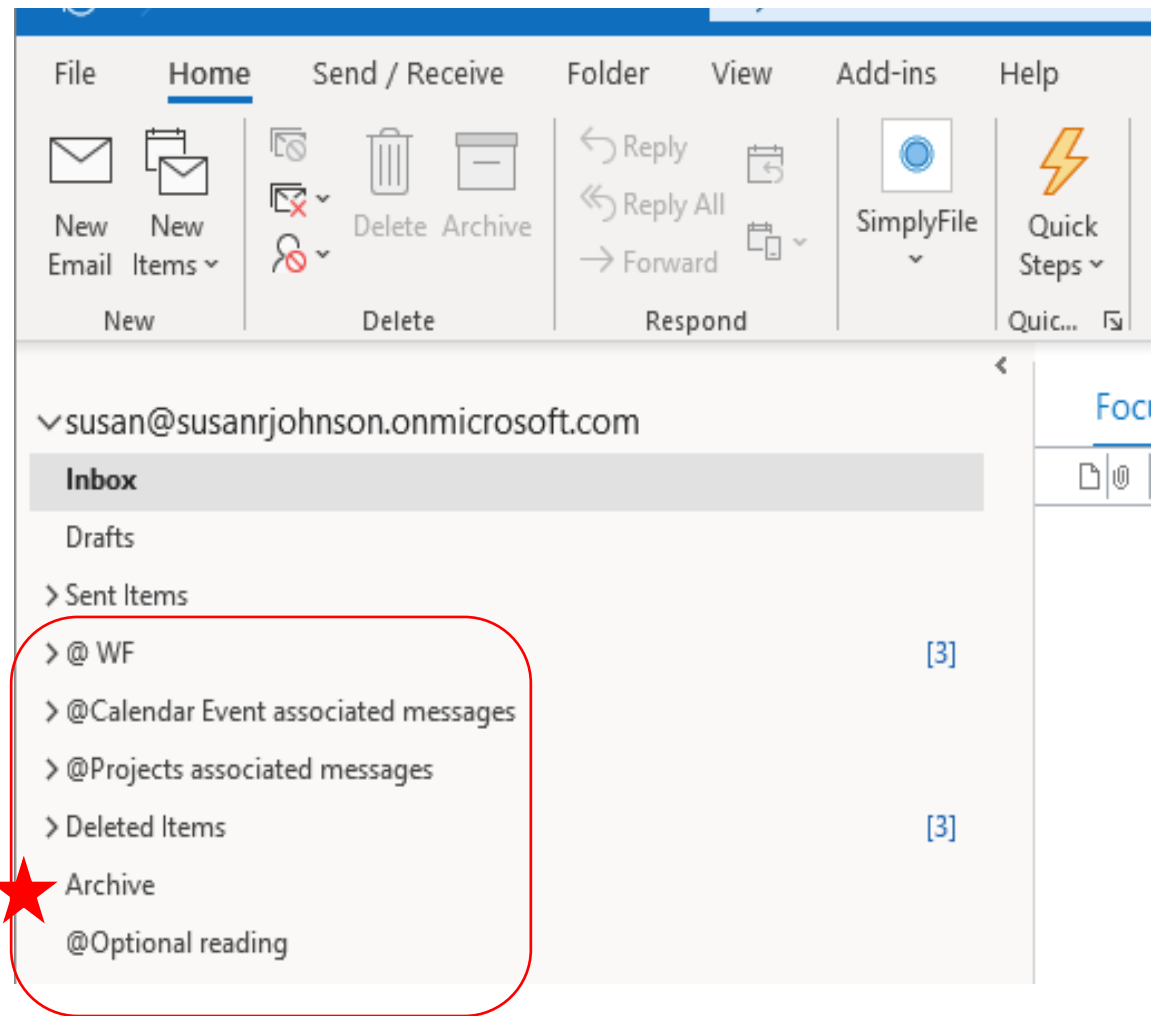
Urgent message  
scan



### **3. FOLDERS TO STORE MESSAGES FOR ACTIVE WORK**

## My folder system:

- 1. Targeted folders for “current work”
- 2. the Archive folder for everything else



**1**  
**Waiting for**

“Waiting for” = someone to get back to you with replies to your email requests or to follow up delegated tasks



**Message to individuals go in main folder**

**Messages to a group can go in a subfolder & all the replies be gathered together**



**Subfolders:**

**one for each calendar event with associated email messages**

**Folder name convention:**

**YYYY.MM.DD(-DD) Name of event**

What's in the subfolders?

*Trips:* Plane tickets, hotel reservations, correspondence with meeting organizers, documents I sent, including PowerPoint slides, handouts, travel reimbursement related emails

*Local meetings / calls:* agendas, correspondence among participants, documents for discussion, etc

yyyy.mm.dd-dd event

▼ @Calendar Event associated messages

2020.04.24 SWAN MPI call

2020.04.29 OSU zoom workshop



2020.05.04 Erin Litton's zoom undergrad class talk

2020.05.06 UVA zoom grand rounds PM&R

2020.06.03 OSAC staff talk MERF



> 2020.07.11-13 summer 2020 EWIM

WEDNESDAY

29

- Lydia classes: 6:00 pm-8:00pm
- Sadie phone time: 4:30-5:30
- OSU webinar

Workshop: Productivity Basics with Susan Johnson Virtual Rutemeyer, Mary Ellen

WRITING

LUNCH BREAK

BASICS

[Training] Workflow <https://zoom>

[Training] Workflow <https://zoom>

3

Active project  
work

> @Projects associated messages

Intro to Clinical Reasoning lecture DUE March 31

Lab manager hire

Paper - Hot flashes in men - data analysis

Paper- Single cell DNA analysis in fruit flies - SUBMIT ~ mid March

**4**

**Optional  
reading**

Professional group mass messages

Notices from your school / institution

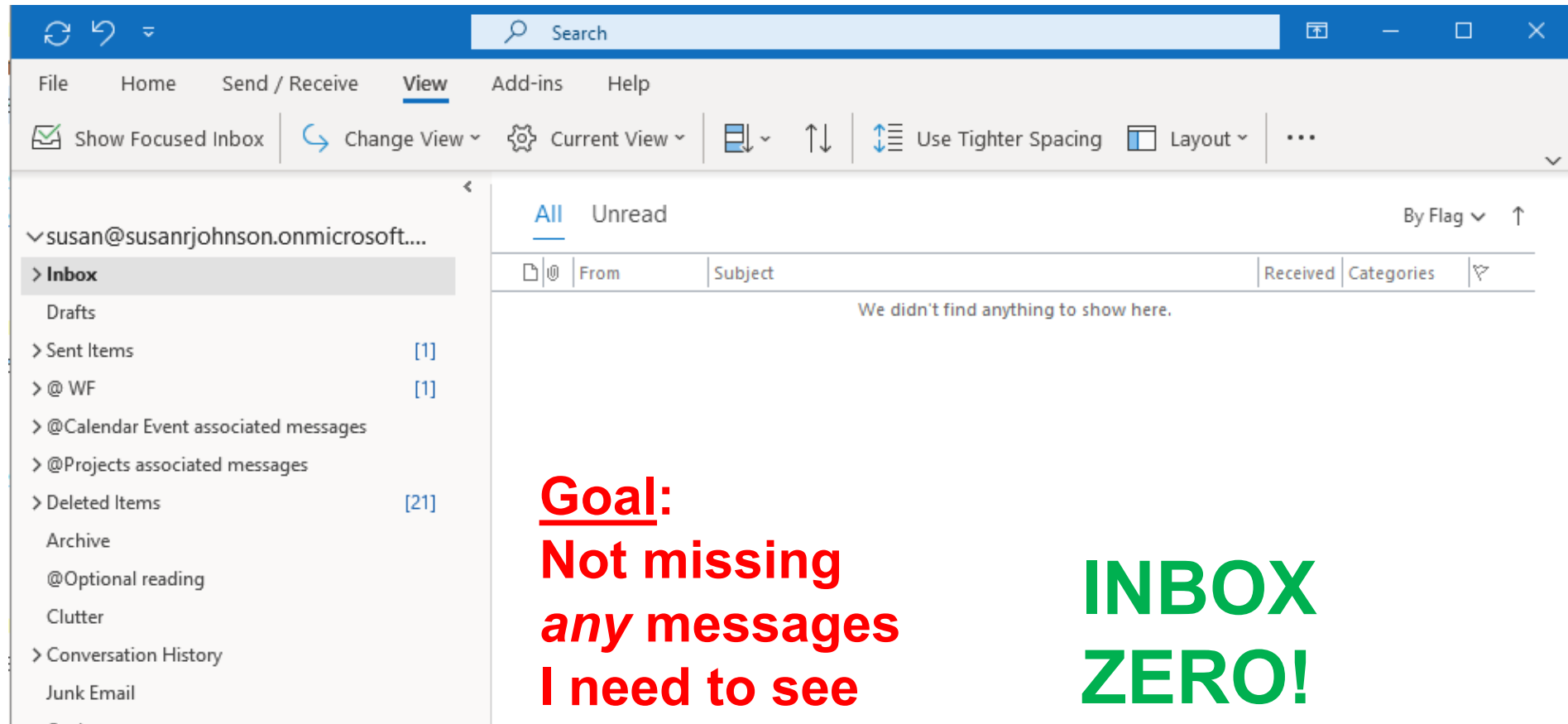
Blogs

Journal TOC

Advertisements you are interested in

Articles sent to you that are not directly  
related to your work

## **4. KEEPING UP**



**Goal:**  
**Not missing**  
**any messages**  
**I need to see**

**INBOX**  
**ZERO!**

# My “full processing” method

## Pass 1.

- Read each subject line
- Delete/archive if the decision can be made without opening the message
- If *urgent*, open and deal with

## Pass 2:

- Start with the newest message (or the oldest).
- Open the message, read it, and follow the algorithm.
- Open the very next one, *without skipping*, and do the same.

# ❖ **Decide the first time!**

- Delete
- Delegate
- File, no action required
- Is phone or in person better?**
- Do/reply now**
- Defer to later**

# Storing deferred messages in folders

▼ susan-johnson@uiowa.edu

▼ **Inbox triage**

00 Waiting For replies

01 REPLY TODAY

02 REPLY as soon as I can

03 Read & Review

04 Optional reading

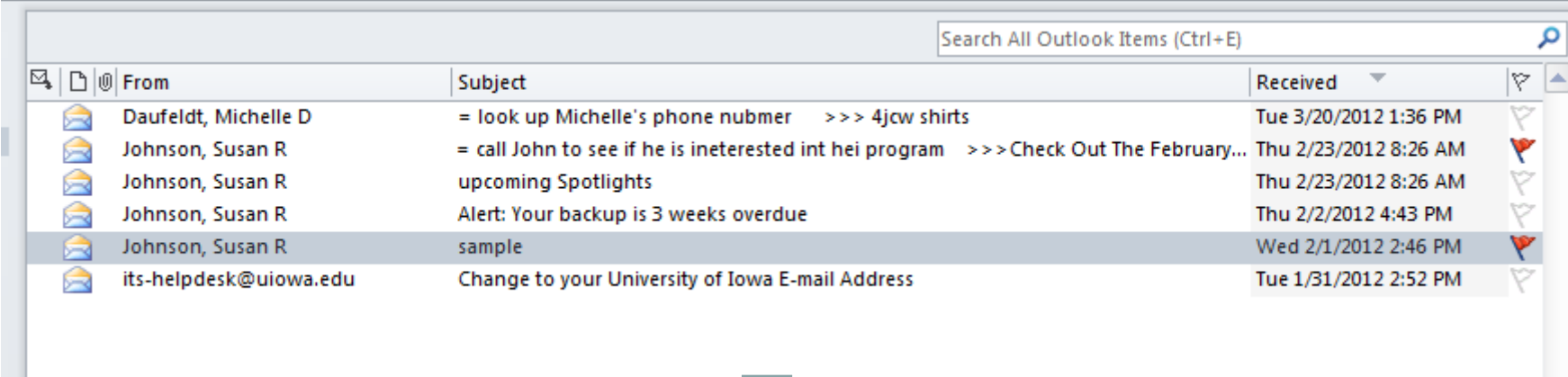
> Inbox

> Sent Items


[9]

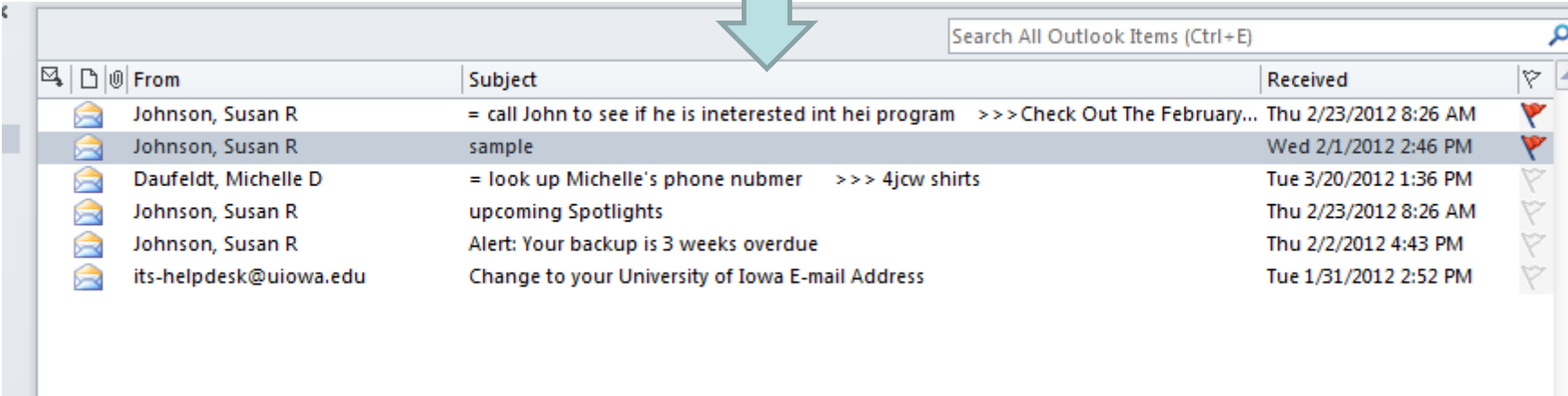
Archive

# Marking deferred messages with a flag



	From	Subject	Received	
	Daufeldt, Michelle D	= look up Michelle's phone nubmer >>> 4jcw shirts	Tue 3/20/2012 1:36 PM	
	Johnson, Susan R	= call John to see if he is ineterested int hei program >>> Check Out The February...	Thu 2/23/2012 8:26 AM	🚩
	Johnson, Susan R	upcoming Spotlights	Thu 2/23/2012 8:26 AM	
	Johnson, Susan R	Alert: Your backup is 3 weeks overdue	Thu 2/2/2012 4:43 PM	
	Johnson, Susan R	sample	Wed 2/1/2012 2:46 PM	🚩
	its-helpdesk@uiowa.edu	Change to your University of Iowa E-mail Address	Tue 1/31/2012 2:52 PM	

 Sort on "flag"



	From	Subject	Received	
	Johnson, Susan R	= call John to see if he is ineterested int hei program >>> Check Out The February...	Thu 2/23/2012 8:26 AM	🚩
	Johnson, Susan R	sample	Wed 2/1/2012 2:46 PM	🚩
	Daufeldt, Michelle D	= look up Michelle's phone nubmer >>> 4jcw shirts	Tue 3/20/2012 1:36 PM	
	Johnson, Susan R	upcoming Spotlights	Thu 2/23/2012 8:26 AM	
	Johnson, Susan R	Alert: Your backup is 3 weeks overdue	Thu 2/2/2012 4:43 PM	
	its-helpdesk@uiowa.edu	Change to your University of Iowa E-mail Address	Tue 1/31/2012 2:52 PM	

# Additional deferred message options

- Transfer/copy the email to a task list
  - Can do this in Outlook by flagging a message, but the list it ends up on depends on the version you are using
- Copy or move the email to the calendar to create a time block

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**thriving**  
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**Email me with your comments, questions,  
and tips!**

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