



SWEET.GLORIOUS.NOTHING

BY SUE-ELLA PRODONOVICH

It's that time of year again. Yep, the time that 80% of the emails we send come back with an 'Out of Office' message on them. Aaaargh.

Only joking...

We all need a break and this is the time of year to take it.

That's right, I'm not one of those business development coaches who's going to give you a list of things to do over the holidays to sharpen your practice. Because you know what I think you should be doing? Sweet. Glorious. Nothing.

So, if you can, take some time off, stay well away from the office. Maybe even read an [interesting book](#). And come back full of beans in 2017.

Just remember, while you're away, not everyone will be. There still will be emergencies, many people will still need advice. And some of them may be your clients.

And that brings me to your 'out of office', or at least how to write one. And it goes a little something like this.

Your Clients Are Not Spammers

The first thing you need to remember is that legitimate clients may well want to contact you while you're away so don't treat them as spammers.

In other words, don't tell them that you'll be destroying emails or that they won't get read. It's tacky and counter-productive. Be respectful.

Start your out of office with a 'Thank you'.

Help Them Out

Make sure your out of office either provides a way of contacting you or puts them in touch another person who can help them. And be sure to let them know who else is monitoring your email, that way they won't be surprised when they get a reply from another person. If you're taking an extended break give your assistant a list of people to contact, whether it's based on speciality or by client.

Don't Tell Them When You Went On Leave

No one cares when you stopped working. Just tell them when you'll be back. Brevity is the soul of the out of office email.

If You Are Going To Check Emails

Tell them. But be specific about when. Appoint a time of the day you promise to read what they've written and when they can expect to hear from you. And give them someone else they can contact in case they can't wait that long.



And Now, Some Practical Examples...

If you want the easy option here's four out of office messages you can cut and paste.

Example 1 (holiday leave - office closed)

Thank you for your email.

Our office is closed at the moment and won't be open again until [day and date]. If you're facing an emergency and need advice now, you can call or text [me] on XX XXX XXX or email me at [aaa@aaa.com.au].

[Name] has also been copied on your email.

Regards, [Name]

Example 2 (standard annual leave)

Thank you for your email.

I'm on leave and will be back on [day and date]. If you'd like to speak with one of my colleagues about a matter, or schedule a time for me to call you on my return, then please contact [my assistant], [Name] on [Phone xxxx xxxx] or [2]

[Name] has also been copied on your email.

Regards, [Name]

Example 3 (working but not contactable/no assistant)

Thank you for your email.

I'm working out of the office and will be back on [day and date]. During this time I'll be checking emails [at the end of each day] [intermittently].

If your matter requires immediate attention please [call] [text] me on [mobile] or call my colleague [name] on [Phone xxxx xxxx] or [email]

Regards, [Name]

[Mobile number]

Example 4 (extended annual leave/sabbatical)

Thank you for your email.

I am currently on leave and will be back on [day and date].

Your email been forwarded to [my assistant] [my colleague], [Name], who will contact you in the next 24 hours if the matter requires [assistance] [a response].

If you would like me to call you on my return please contact [Name] on [Phone xxxx xxxx] or [email] so they can schedule a time for us to [talk][catch up].

Regards, [Name]



And now...

It's time to set up your out of office, turn off the computer and enjoy the holiday break!

Have a wonderful Christmas, a peaceful break and a prosperous New Year.

See you in 2019.

Sue-Ella.

Want More?

If you'd like to know how to cultivate referrers, email [Sue-Ella](mailto:sueella@prodonovich.com) or [get in touch](#).



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