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When to assume it's a yes

By Kristy Grant-Hart

How annoying is it when you send the third (or seventh) email waiting for an answer? It's incredibly irritating, especially if you've received nothing but silence. There's a way to respond to this that can sometimes be sneaky, but it's highly effective.

Positive assumptions

Instead of chasing a person again and again, simply write, "If I don't hear back from you, I'll go ahead and (do what I want to do)."

This puts the impetus on the other person to proactively respond. If they don't, you've already described the outcome, and they have accepted it with their inaction. It's a highly defensible way of moving forward in a timely manner.

Let's say you have a working group to create an updated code of conduct. If the human resources and IT representatives haven't responded with comments to the most recent draft, rather than chase them, tell them that if you don't hear from them by tomorrow, you'll assume they don't have changes. The project will stay on track, and you won't irritate your colleagues.

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