Save Time & Brain Cells with Inbox Transformation Transcript

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Introduction to Email Productivity

How many of you have such a love hate relationship with email? Email, I think, is the one thing that's really congruent for most medical practitioners.

We use it, we love it, we hate it. And there's a lot of different nuance to email. But I came across this platform called superhuman. And it was something I came across on, on Instagram.

I click the button, I downloaded it and decided to just take it for a ride, and lo and behold, I did not realize that 20 minutes was going to absolutely change my productivity in my life.

So it's something I really want to share with you guys because it's such a simple concept, but it goes far deeper than you can possibly imagine to improve your outcomes, improve your productivity, and have less stress for the day by hacking your email.

So today I have Rahul, who is the founder and CEO of Superhuman, and it's the fastest email experience in the world and it gets to your inbox twice as fast for me is probably three times as fast.

And, and, you know, I think that this is a topic that's not touched the one before, but technology has the ability to limit you or has the ability to prop you up.

And we're going to talk about the technology that really props me up when it comes to email inboxes and my own sanity. Yeah. Welcome to the summit. I'm so happy to have you here. Awesome.

Thank you for having me. Yeah. So, you know, as I was saying in your introduction, is that I think a lot of doctors are kind of burnt out of the email system.

So, I honestly wasn't expecting to, to interview someone who designed an entire email platform until it absolutely changed my life. You know, my wife can tell you that right now.

She's outside the door and so, you know, I, you know, and let's just kind of get into really quick, you know, I think a lot of doctors get so burdened with communication because I'll tell you why.

Right. So yes, we have email and then a lot of doctors in the United States have something called secure messaging. What's behind a secure platform. And then there's texting and then there's secure texting.

And then so right now there's just so many forms of communication. And we feel like we're just being land blasted with, with different items to do, you know.

And doctors also sits on boards of companies and medical directors. So so just the email alone becomes an absolute gargantuan stressor, like when we kind of open in the morning and stuff like that, you know, how do you like how do you how do you think, you want to address the automation of all of these different things into a simple format?

Just make it just not stressful. What are your tips here? Well, we have quite a few. Every week.

Stop Filing and Use Keyboard Shortcuts

We welcome hundreds new customers to superhuman and through tens of thousands of personalized onboarding, I've actually seen firsthand how some of the most productive people in the world get through hundreds, if not thousands of emails a day.

And so, as you were asking that question, what I came to mind was, was the the nine things that we tend to teach people. So number one, I would say trash your folders, labeling emails or dragging them into folders can feel orderly and satisfying.

But if you're filing emails manually, you're actually wasting colossal amounts of time. It actually takes longer to find an email via folders than it does to search.

In fact, you'll save more than an hour per week if you simply stop manually filing emails or applying labels. So the next time you're about to file an email, you know, resist that urge.

Let your email client do the hard work for you to automate triaging. And of course, you can use superhuman to do that. That's one of the things that it makes very easy.

So I would say is tip number one, that it's so counterintuitive because, you know, I was obsessed about labeling everything. And as email comes in, I'll say, oh, here's red for this company or this, this, this thing that's here.

Right. But I think after using superhuman, I think you're right. But it's very counterintuitive because you feel like, hey, I'm organizing, but at the same time, it's wasting time.

It is doing preemptive work. In the vast majority of cases. It will never actually results in anything. In engineering, we have a phrase for that. It's called premature optimization.

Why would you make something faster if you're not actually going to take advantage of it? And technology has got so good these days, you don't even need to do the premature optimization.

Oh, wow. Okay, that that makes some sense. But you know, along with your tip number one of of stop organizing in the way that you have the trash folders.

Now, there's, there's not many email systems that have that sort of automation is is really superhuman. The only one or or is that it superhuman is by far and away the best one.

We've taken all of these tips and polished iterated them to the nth level. Hopefully you see that as a customer, which I think kind of neatly brings us on to tip number two, which is to use keyboard shortcuts.

This one is simple, folks. Don't touch your mouse. Email power users love keyboard shortcuts. You can do any action searching replying you can scheduling meetings all without leaving your keyboard.

And we actually did a calculation earlier on this year. If you get familiar with keyboard shortcuts for email, you can save about 17 days per year. And in super human, we make it very easy to learn the keyboard shortcuts.

If you don't know how to do something and you want to just hit command K, or if you're on a windows machine, Ctrl K that opens this thing that we call superhuman command, and you can then type in the thing that you want to do.

It will do it immediately for you, and it will show you the shortcut for next time. So even if you're thinking, I don't know, I'm not that tech savvy or I don't have the time to learn shortcuts.

Trust me, we make it super easy and it's just one of the biggest things you can do. And this is by the way, this is true for everything. It doesn't even have to be email like whatever app you find yourself in.

A lot. Learn how to drive it like a power user. You know, I'm not I'm not terribly tech savvy, but I'm relatively tech savvy, right? And so when I see all the things that super human can do and I have a mac and I hit command K, there's a whole list of things you can do.

It seems a little daunting at first, until someone walk me through it, which actually was quite simple. So I'm glad you guys have a staff to do that. Yeah. That's right.

So we actually have about 30 or 40 folks on staff. But team is our most rapidly growing team. That 30 minute walk, every new customer 1 to 1 through how to do that email, which I think brings us to tip number three, which would be, again, this may sound counterintuitive process your inbox once or twice per day.

Now, if you don't set aside specific time for email, what will happen is it's you'll be dragged into your inbox throughout the day, especially if you set up notifications and interruptions make you compensate for lost time by trying to work faster, which only works to a degree.

And that means you're going to make more mistakes. Now, with dedicated time for email, you can actually fire off replies while staying in flow. A big part of superhuman is designed to keep you in flow.

I actually used to be a game designer back in the day, so that's something I've, studied very intensely in very deeply. And as a bonus, if you do this, you'll actually avoid the expectation with other people that you're available 24 seven when you start, encouraging that behavior, people will start to take advantage of it.

Never, ever thought of that. That that's actually very true. Because sometimes I get a little obsessive about the emails. Got a reply back and stuff like that.

But but you're right there. There's, there's a there's a concept there that the minute you reply your availability is there.

Batch Email, Archive Backlogs, and Reduce Notifications

And so, it actually would just often one of my favorite things about, this email platform, the superhuman platform is, I can schedule to send it later.

And so I know that I'm not necessarily going to be getting things, you know, pinged already. And that just gives me a higher level of stress. The last thing I want to do is Monday morning.

You have all these different things pop up. So sometimes that two tend to send it later and kind of, you know, let it trickle out in a very controlled fashion depending on the project.

That's right. Sometimes it's so important to slow down conversations, especially the ones that are less important, and then to speed up the ones that are importance, what helps is being able to see what is important versus what isn't.

And that brings us to tip number four, which is to archive your backlog. So generally speaking, forget email for a second. But when you approach a new task, our brain is one of two modes.

We're either in mind wandering mode or in task focused attention mode. And a daunting inbox actually primes your brain for mind wandering mode. This distracts you from the email you're replying to, as well as any other tasks you're attempting, so clean your slate.

First of all, I recommend deciding your own personal use by date for email. Let's be real. Will you really reply to emails that are older than a months or even a week?

I think we all kind of intensive, but and we keep them in our inbox out of a misguided guilt, but I think we'll probably never catch up. And guess what?

What I've learned is the most productive people in the world. They don't even try. So figure out what your own use by date is. Personally, I do this about once a year and I say it's usually a week and then just archive everything older than that time.

You'll then be within a stone's throw of inbox tier, and you'll be able to focus on what matters. So yeah. So let's talk about archiving for a second, because I think that I am definitely guilty of the guy.

That'd be like, okay, I'm going to take care of this later. And it's two and a half months later, I love leaving my inbox, but it's buried so deep that I don't take care of it.

And it drives my stuff crazy. So, and so but aligning, setting aside time to, to take care of the email, but also allocating into category into a folder category really allows me to take care of the things I want to take care of first.

So I'll give you a little confession. So before, I was I was using Gmail platform like I still am. And so, what I did is I used, Zapier to connect it to Trello, which is basically another, project management software.

And I had it just automate it into different columns. But we got all that also got very, very messy as well. So I've been trying to like, hack my email box literally for like ten years now.

And then I think I'm finally, finally get into that. So so it's given me a much bigger peace of mind. Great. Yeah. I think one of the challenges with that flow, Zapier, Trello, it's first of all, it's going to be a little bit fragile.

Secondly, it's not going to have what I call the information density that you need. And one of the things that as a visual designer, we worked really hard on at superhuman is making sure that you have, a very large horizon.

Horizon is how far you can see down your inbox. And so you can see, I don't know if you noticed this, but compared to Gmail, you can see way further. And compared to Trello, the information density is is probably 4 or 5 times what you can get there.

And not just it just gives you a sense of mastery, of feeling, of control. You truly have agency and you can make the best decisions that way. Yeah. Well, when you say in information density, are you talking about like how much is shown like on the screen? Right.

There's all we talk about. Yeah. Literally the number of conversations. So I think when I last benchmark's it in Trello, you're probably going to Fitz.

It depends on the size of your screen. But for a normal MacBook, let's say, you know, maybe 7 or 8, nine things in one column, depending on how many lines they have in Gmail, you might have 15 threads, conversations on the screen and superhuman on the same size monitor.

You'll have 20 to 30. And, what that lets you do is just do more. You know, you have a wider horizon. I mean, imagine, trying to drive a car and you can only look forward to a very narrow aperture or field of view.

It's stressful, it's anxiety inducing. And the same is true in software. Yeah. So yeah, you're right. So I think that by looking at it and then seeing that there's different categories that I get to choose what to take care of, right now because I can tell what's really important, when allocating my attention to that time, I can say, hey, you know, 8:00 Am, I'm going to take care of these three buckets.

And then, 6 p.m. when I take care of these four buckets. And that actually feels pretty good. So, so for, for me, that really gave me, a really beautiful peace of mind I was really expecting.

And then it became addictive. So that's what I like. Exactly. I think you're touching on something really important, which is being able to see what's importance and one of the best ways to achieve that.

Now, this this might be new for folks watching. This is don't marked as unread, but archive instead. So broadly speaking, there are two ways of organizing an inbox.

You can let your inbox grow infinitely and treats all of your unread emails is things to do. Or you can archive emails when they're done and see the inbox itself as the full list of things to do.

So in other words, don't pay attention to the unread status. Just pay attention to what's in your inbox. When something is done, take it out. Now it turns out it's way, way faster to do the lesson.

Because if your unread emails are your to do list, you then have to meticulously maintain the unread status. Think of all the times that you may marks in the emails and wrote.

Let's say you receive an intriguing email, and you can't help but open it because the subject line is so interesting. Well, now you have to market is unread.

But wait, there's one more thing you want to check. And so you open it again. And then once again you market as unread. But if your inbox itself is your to do list, you avoid this really archaic ritual.

Simply archive the emails that have done. Those emails disappear from your inbox. Your view is now what's important, but you can still easily find them via search.

So not only is archiving much faster, it also creates the less stressful inbox. You know the other. The other thing that I think when we do that is whenever we archive and and especially when I hit done and actually goes to zero, I get I get this reward center, this little, little dopamine rush as well.

Right. So it's almost like the the platform is gamified a little bit. And whenever that happens, it's almost like a, like a mini goal has been accomplished.

And I get to check it off. And that actually makes my whole day better the more I actually do that. So empty in each particular sub inbox, really becomes that addictive behavior.

Amazing. That's great to hear. Yeah, like I said, I used to be a game designer professionally and I like explains, when you get deep into it, we, we actually differentiate gamification, which most people define as, points leaderboards, trophies and badges.

And it's a very specific set of game mechanics. And we differentiate that from game design, which is a very holistic practice that has you thinking about what is a good goal.

Are those goals clear? How do you design for flow? What is the difference between a toy and a game, and how can you use toys to create games? What is the emotional journey you're trying to take your user or your player on as a designer?

These are all things I think, about very intensely. And the things that we've been very conscious about and super human. So, so, so you're saying that from a design standpoint, you're taking basically the user like myself and from a very holistic process, try to predict the behaviors of the user, maybe pick out the pinpoints and try to tackle that that way because that's, you know, that's I think that's how we actually practice medicine as physicians.

So it's very similar that way. Yeah. It's it's interesting. It's it's a little nuance. I would argue that's how most products management and most product development works.

You interview people, you, try and identify the pain points. You solve things in that way. But when you're making a game, it's very different. Well, I'll give you an example.

Today, most software feels like work. You know, we have to check our email. We have to submit expense reports. We have to use our CRM or, medical record system or what have you.

Right. But the question I've always asked is, what if we could make software feel less like work and more like slate? Now with game design, we can. But here's the thing most software companies worry about what users want or need, but nobody needs a game to exist.

There are no user requirements per se for a game. When you make a game, you don't worry about what users want or need. You instead, obsess over how they feel.

And when your product is a game, people don't just use it, they play it. They find it fun. They tell their friends they

fall in love with it. So it does turn out that game design isn't altogether a different kind of product development.

And in a nutshell, that's how we made it so fun to be in. And so you use the word addictive. Hopefully you feel that in the good sense. That's how it helps you achieve the things that you previously thought were impossible.

Right? Absolutely. Yeah. Addictive. It actually is in a good sense because like I said, a lot of times we're we're doing things that are empty. And even though it's a virtual bucket, you have to empty that bucket in my brain.

And when I'm able to take that stressor off, everything else feels a lot lighter. And then if I empty another bucket, it feels a lot lighter until we get to something that is that is now going to be very achievable rather than seemingly unachievable.

And I think that's really the key here, behind burnout in general. I know here we talk about doctors burnout, but I think, you know, all industries have two levels of different burning out.

But I think that the psychological impact of burning out is pretty prominent. Ever since the pandemic hit, and probably even before that, but especially since the pandemic hit.

Game Design, Burnout, and Control

So for a lot of doctors, what's going on is that there's so many things that are shifting and changing that's maybe perceived as outside of our control, but there are some things that can be within our control.

And I think when we hold on to those things, accomplish those things, check those bucket off. Everything else becomes much calmer. And that's what we're really trying to create in this environment.

So make sense 100%. Couldn't agree more. Focus on the things you can control. And let's learn to let go of the things that we can't. Yeah, absolutely.

So I think the other thing is, whenever I have something that pings in my, in my inbox, right. I have this thing called Apple Watch that, that, sometimes I had to turn off notifications for because it just throws me off.

Right. So let's talk about notifications for a second. I think this is a big deal. Do you use notifications? How does it not throw you off? And what do we do in these situations?

We'll get a ping in an email. And I'm like, oh my gosh, I have to take care of this right now. Great question. I turn all of my notes. I don't I have my watch as well.

But I don't let any email notifications reach me on my Apple Watch. And even for text messages, there are only 1 or 2 very, VIP or close personal contacts who are actually able to ping me on my wrist.

I think that's, you know, we we live in a golden age of technology, but that that also means we have to set physical boundaries quite literally. It shouldn't be possible for a piece of technology at the whim of, you know, an email marketer to be able to ping our wrist.

I think that's that's obviously a very unhealthy thing. I also don't run with desktop notifications, believe it or not. So if I couldn't. Oh really? Yeah. Okay.

Like if I'm working, let's say I'm in Google Docs and I'm doing a piece of deep work, or I'm doing a piece of deep design over in Figma or whatever tool I'm using.

I, I just, I can't handle the email notifications. But to give you an idea, I get thousands of emails a day and I'm not exaggerating. There are certain minutes where I'm getting 5 or 6 emails spaced apart by about 10 to 15 seconds.

And I'm sure that many of us, in this conference are the same way. Right? We're running successful businesses.

People want our time. They want our attention. They want to sell us stuff.

And there's there's important things in amongst those things as well. The key thing is, remember, like we are in control and we get to decide what we read and what we don't.

And it goes back to that thing of setting expectations at the moment that you, show people through your behavior that you are available and you available 24 seven.

That's when that becomes expectation. I see. So not only do you not have notifications on your watch, you don't necessarily have it on your desktop or phone either until it's for very specific purposes.

And I think that's something for our audience to really understand. It's okay to shut off sometimes, and sometimes it's absolutely necessary. We don't really have to feel guilty about that.

But I think just, you know, I think physicians in general, we all of us sort of have this character that we just want to serve. I think that a lot of us feel guilty that we're kind of shutting, putting boundaries and shoving us off to serve.

But at the same time, that creates a lot of internal struggles, whether it's professional, whether it's personal. And, and I'm sure you've kind of come across that, yourself as well, right?

I mean, absolutely. I as an entrepreneur, I'm also in the service business. But as an entrepreneur, it's also my job to figure out how to scale and create leverage.

And it's something we take very seriously. It's super superhuman. So if you were to email our customer support, I track these numbers very intensely. You will get a response within five minutes in 26% of your emails, within 26% of the times.

And we will respond within two hours, within 85%, I believe, currently. So, yeah, it's it's, you know, I think it's industry leading. It's it's certainly very hard to do.

We invest a lot of resource and training and energy into making sure that that's possible. The point being, I could have said I'm going to continue to be the guy that's doing that, but that's obviously ultimately self-destructive.

It feels like the right thing to do. I, you know, if you email me and you have an issue with my software, or if you have a great idea of how to make it better, of course I want to reply to you personally, but it's not rational.

And there are ways to achieve the levels of service and response. But I think we as entrepreneurs all aspire to, but without necessarily having to feel like we do it all ourselves.

I'm also an angel investor. I've invested in, north of 85 companies, almost all technology startups at this point. And one of the biggest points of coaching I have for those founders is you got to learn how to let go.

You got to learn how to simultaneously hold the bar of the service that you want to deliver, but let go of doing it yourself and figure out how to train and coach other people to do it.

Because if you don't, you will become your own worst enemy and you'll slow down the growth of your business. So and that's something that I've struggled early on with that I'm still struggling with, to be honest.

And, you know, as we're trying to, intake more and more and trust things more and more because we do have the pride in our companies or the pride in our services as physicians as well.

It's all about setting up those workflows and processes so that these specific workflows and processes can be trained, can be scalable. Because another big issue right now is the turnover.

The turnover rates ever since the pandemic hit for like physician practices, medical assistance is just it's just

astronomically high. And, and part of the reason is because the culture, a lot of the cultures of, physician practices aren't at a point where it can sustain a massive change like that.

And, and I feel like when I started using superhuman, I actually noticed something about myself. There's specific thing. There's specific inboxes that I gravitate towards and specific things I don't like to, to look at.

And maybe until later in, I realize that these are just my own insecurities. And then when I, when I actually shifted my, my tabs, to in different directions, you know what?

I'm gonna I'm gonna kind of face my insecurities and tackle this on. And what really happened, honestly, is that, a lot of the people who who work for me started saying, like, something's different, like, so there's something different.

Like things started happening where things were getting done faster, things like that. I'm beginning of the day and they're like, oh, doctor, I didn't really expect you to answer this till tomorrow.

And I think all those things really connected with me, and it really forced me to understand my own psychology. And I think that's what was truly valuable about this whole experience.

Well, that's amazing to hear that, that you've had that journey. I think one of the, the craziest things is and you train for so long to become a doctor, and in any profession, you train so hard and you work so much to become world class, the thing you do, no one teaches us how to do.

You know, very few of us have been taught how to be productive. And I mean that in the most general sense. That boggles my mind. We've become really good at taking exams.

We become really good at bedside matter. We can really good. You know, my case, raising capital, hiring people, training people who's actually teaching us how to be productive and how to do email properly.

I when I started Super Human, that to me was just a clear, huge gap in the markets.

Meditation and Time Tracking for Focus

And it's a big part of our success, is teaching people how to be mindful and self-aware about our behaviors and our practices so that we can be better.

You're absolutely right. Yeah. There's there's no, there's no teaching on the whole email side. But the I think the bigger the bigger issue is that we become at the mercy of our technology, and we expect technology to to keep up with us.

In reality, we can't keep up with the technology. And that's the that's the main issue here. And because the, let's, let's, you know, I have two daughters, for example, one is five, the other one is seven years old.

Okay. And and they are very, very savvy on the iPad and everything like that. And so I think we're hitting a generation where we have to learn these things and then teaching it to the next generation, because the generation of attention deficit is absolutely has, has climbed, dramatically since, I think the early 90s, the average attention span of a human was 6.2 seconds.

At that time, that was 1.3 seconds. And this is done on marketing research of what we call viral footage. Basically, if when commercials go from one scene to another.

So if it's more than 1.5 seconds, it does not it does not attract an audience. And that's really scary. And I think it's time for us to take the discipline to be absolutely focused, turn off all notifications and streamline the things that we do.

So I think, I think what you're doing is, is absolute necessity, but does it have a couple more, just to kind of close it off? But, you know, aside from from superhuman, are there any other productivity tools that you personally use for, to help you see my things?

Gosh, yes. Many, I don't know if I'd classes as a productivity tool, but I would recommend, if you're not already doing so right now, to practice meditation and specifically transcendental meditation.

So I've personally had several false starts. I've tried various apps and techniques over the years, but I was never really able to stick to a practice.

And then several friends recommended I talk to Lawrence Vlasic of the Peak Leadership Institute. Now he specializes in teaching TM with the specific goal of maximizing leadership performance of potential.

Who's not coming at it from a, spirituality background a little bit about their it's really about executive function and performance. And he's been the CEO of three technology companies.

So he knows exactly the kind of stress that I'm under. And I thought, well, you know, people work with coaches for things like nutrition and physical training and, and everything else.

Why not meditation? And so I now do TM twice a day, once in the morning, once in the afternoon. And what's amazing is, is that it's been life changing now.

Initially I simply felt happier. And my coach said, you know, it's a very normal kind of outcome. What you you will just genuinely feel happier. But later on, the effects became more profound.

And in particular, I'm now more creative than I was before. And to your previous point, I can stay focused for much longer. You know, my ability to to sit down into a really hard piece of work is probably gone from, I mean, it definitely atrophied from when I was in school, when I was in school, I could do it for, like, you know, 12 to 14 hours.

Like, we probably all could. But at this point in my life, it had really fallen down. So, you know, maybe half an hour, 45 minutes. But through practicing transcendental meditation, I've got that back up to an hour, back up to two hours, where I can just be really on it and be 100% engaged with a very difficult task.

And there's plenty of research to show. Some of it done locally here at Stanford, that there of all the kinds of meditation, TM is the type that most positively affects things like focus, memory, creativity and executive function.

And interestingly, most of the forms of meditation are only about as effective as placebo. So as far as tools and processes go, I haven't found one that's been more impactful than TM.

It's totally unexpected. So I ask you about productivity tools, like your tools to stop for a second and do some meditation, which is really powerful.

So I, I'm very familiar, transcendental meditation. I have a guide as well. And so Transcendental Meditation has it. Without it, I don't know if this conference would even exist, to be honest with you. So.

So it is something that I that's really deep into my, my toolbox. It is something that I have to start, every morning with now, otherwise everything just kind of goes very haywire for me. So.

So thank you for that. That's that's very unexpected. But thank you for that. But any other productivity tools or anything, if you're looking for actual software tools.

Let's see. Let me have a quick think. You know, again, this isn't really a tool, but it's one of the things that has been most life changing and that's to log my time.

I kind of log it a little bit like a lawyer down to every five minutes or so. And I'm fortunate to work with a really great executive assistant. Now, if you were to work with the productivity coach or consultants, the first thing they would tell you to do is to put your tasks on your calendar.

Because if you don't, the things that are on your calendar will eventually overtake your tasks, especially if you have a meeting, driven work culture, which many of us have, right?

Whether it's patients or management, you end up having to do actual work in the evenings or in the early hours of the morning. And, you know, we we start burning the candle at both ends. So the advice is put your tasks on your calendar.

I tried that, but it never actually works for me. Okay, reason it didn't work for me is I don't really like my calendar telling me what to do. Like I like to decide moment to moment what to do.

I like to roll with the punches. And besides, you know, I run a company with 100 people. Something is on fire all the time and I have to be able to be reactive.

So how do we how do we marry these to realities? So here's what I do. I we use slack internally as well. And I have a direct message channel. This would work over text as well with my executive assistant.

Every single time I change task I write her a message t s like standing for Task Switch column. And then the new thing that I'm doing. And that's even if I'm changing task every minutes or every two minutes, I'm just like, okay, pts marketing, pts recruiting, pts, investor relations, pts recording video for the Automation Summit would have been one I sent her earlier on today, and she knows how to categorize each of these things into the different parts of my work life that they represent.

Now, the amazing thing about that is I am 100% fully in control. I'm not a slave to my calendar. I am deciding what I want to do. Of course, there are still meetings on there and I still have to still go to those meetings.

And I'm very respectful to the people I work with. But fundamentally it's very different to having every single task on the calendar, the tasks, the tasks that I want to do.

And then I'm working with somebody else to log it. At the end of every week. Her and I sit down and she goes through and make sure everything is properly categorized.

And then she presents me this chart and the chart is down to every five minutes. The percentage of time categorized by where it's going. So I can see that, you know, for example, in a typical week, I might be spending 35% of my time on one on ones and, working with the people who report to me, I might percent spend 10% of my time on products, another 15% of my time on marketing, and so on.

I also have access to rules of thumb for how much those things should be. So for a hypergrowth company like superhuman, it's pretty well known that the CEO should spend about 25 to 35% of their time recruiting.

This goes back to what I was saying earlier about sometimes we can be our own worst enemy if we're not growing our organizations. However, many founders, and I had to learn this the hard way.

You know, we didn't get into this business to to become excellent recruiters. We got into it because we have a love of making products or a love of serving our customers.

And what this does is it shines a light on where we're actually spending our time. We can then define ideals and make adjustments as appropriate. So for me, that's been as life changing as transcendental meditation is this idea of a test, which I happen to do over slack.

But you can do it over iMessage or over text or really whatever messenger you want to use. Really. It's like budgeting, right? And so if you're basically budgeting your time and every time you type two, it's basically like, cha

ching, it's it's a statement right on the ledger.

And and then at the end, you're basically doing the same thing that you would do for accounting for your budget, your time. And my gosh, I think that's that's very impactful.

And and that's something that really want to start trying. So thank you for that. I really appreciate that. The nuance I will add though is it's 100% retrospective.

So budgeting, at least in my world, is very, very forward looking. It's like, all right, I am deciding I'm going to do this and that. That's kind of stressful.

I wouldn't recommend anyone do that though. All I'm saying is do the things that you feel are important and they're probably the right things. Log what you did and then look back and reflect.

Was that correct? So I am advising a 100% retrospective form of budgeting, if you will. Well that's that's that's brilliant. So our last question here and then I'll let you go.

So this is something that I asked a lot of people and I get a ton of different answers, but I feel like you might be the expert on this. What is the secret into writing a very compelling email?

What is your secret? Well, okay. Subject line. We got to stop. Keep it short, keep it pithy.

Writing Better Emails and Closing Thoughts

And sometimes if you're emailing someone who's incredibly busy, maybe put in the amount of time it might take them to read. Oh, interesting. Okay. Yeah, that's a great idea.

In the early days, when we were doing for superhuman and we didn't have a brand, you know. No. Why would anyone open our emails? And so what we did was we put in square brackets in the subject line, read time colon 40s or less.

And we found that dramatically spiked upwards. Now it's it's a bit of a gimmick, right. It's not always going to work. So I think the message point is think about the subject line and think about ways to, entice people to open your email.

It's well known that certain things make people less likely to open your email. Exclamation points, emoji in particular. These things are going to reduce opening rates.

Then we get into the actual meat of the email itself. And a rule that I like to stick to is three sentences or less. If you can't explain it in three sentences or less, then you should have a pretty good reason for writing a longer you know, maybe a more nuanced way of describing this would be either very short or very long.

If it's kind of in the middle, you've got to ask, you know, maybe this is the time to pick up a phone, or maybe this is a text message, or maybe, maybe it's some maybe it's an in-person meeting or a zoom meeting.

So either very short if you're just going to quick, quickly get a, a question or a decision or response to a decision across or very long, if what you're trying to do is explain very complicated logic or thought processes or creating a, a record of knowledge or decision making for future reference.

It's really. So you got your subject line. I'm, I'm going to start doing that. I'm going to start doing, the amount of time it actually gets you to take an email.

And I love short email like really quick. So for me, so I use a lot of screen recording. I use loom, and I record and if it's really long, I'm like, oh, here are the actual bullet points.

Watch the video because I can't type, he typing. And so and I put that into the email as well. But that's that's brilliant. All right. Well thank you so much for for coming on. It's been absolutely brilliant.

And guys if you want to check out superhuman there's a link in the description below. Just click on it and check it out. There's not much of any risk.

And then the worst thing that can happen is that you succeed. Just kidding. So the worst thing that can happen is if nothing changes and you continue going on the way that you go on and the burnout continues and all these things and nothing happens.

That's why the worst thing that can happen, we don't like status in our world. And that's because we're doctors as well. And we want to continue for continue to have a sense of growth and contribution to the community and to our patients.

So thank you for coming on, I appreciate it. Thank you for having.