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WHICH IS THE RIGHT APPROACH FOR MY COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY?

Pros and Cons of Telephone, Face-to-Face meetings and E-mail communication

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E-MAIL: PROS
1. Multiple people can be part of the conversation
2. E-mail can be sent – and responded to – at anytime from anywhere
3. E-mail allows for tracking of sent messages, replies and receipt
4. E-mail can be long or short and include visuals, images and other attachments
5. E-mail is inexpensive, fast, and easy
CONS
1. E-mail isn't always guaranteed to be safe – or confidential
2. E-mail content, and its intended message, can be misinterpreted without context or intended/preferred emotion
3. E-mail can be limiting on many levels including providing proper context and sophistication of content (compared to face to face or telephone calls)
4. E-mail can be a distraction, which causes a loss in productivity
5. E-mail can easily be sent to the wrong person with the wrong message

FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS: PROS
1. Participants can gain instant reaction, feedback and/or approval
2. Body language and gestures help to clarify and convey intended messages
3. Participants can get to know each other better in person than over the phone or E-mail
4. People are more likely to participate when they're having a face-to-face conversation
5. Once people have committed time to a face-to-face meeting, they are less likely to be distracted than if they're on the phone or communicating at their desk
CONS
1. Face-to-face meetings can be expensive or unrealistic based on travel expenses or time required to be present

2. Meetings are not always conducive to large groups
3. Scheduling can be difficult
4. Meetings may require more preparation than casual conversations
5. Many people consider face-to-face meetings outdated, inefficient

When is a Call or Face to Face Better Than an E-mail?	
1. When you want to apologize	An apology carries more weight when it's made in a conversation vs. an E-mail. If it makes you nervous, write down what you want to say before you dial the phone.
2. When you anticipate questions or are explaining something complicated	It's often much easier – and quicker – to have a brief conversation to discuss questions and solutions than go back and forth over E-mail. Remember to use and take notes to ensure all elements are covered.
3. When you've taken a long time to respond	If someone is awaiting your response, they will appreciate the personal attention, and you'll avoid your response getting lost in their inbox.
4. When you need to discuss something personal or confidential	It's impossible to assume that an E-mail is completely confidential. If you need to share or discuss something that is intended for a very particular audience, it's safer and smarter to pick up the phone.
5. When it's time sensitive	With the quantity of E-mails we have in our inboxes – and the number of meetings and commitments we have on any given day – you can never assume someone is in front of their computer when you need an answer. It's best to pick up the phone – and maybe follow up with any additional details in an E-mail.