The Lovely Devil - Email - Part 2

[Bala Goparaju](#)

Program Director, Consultant, Advisor

April 7, 2023
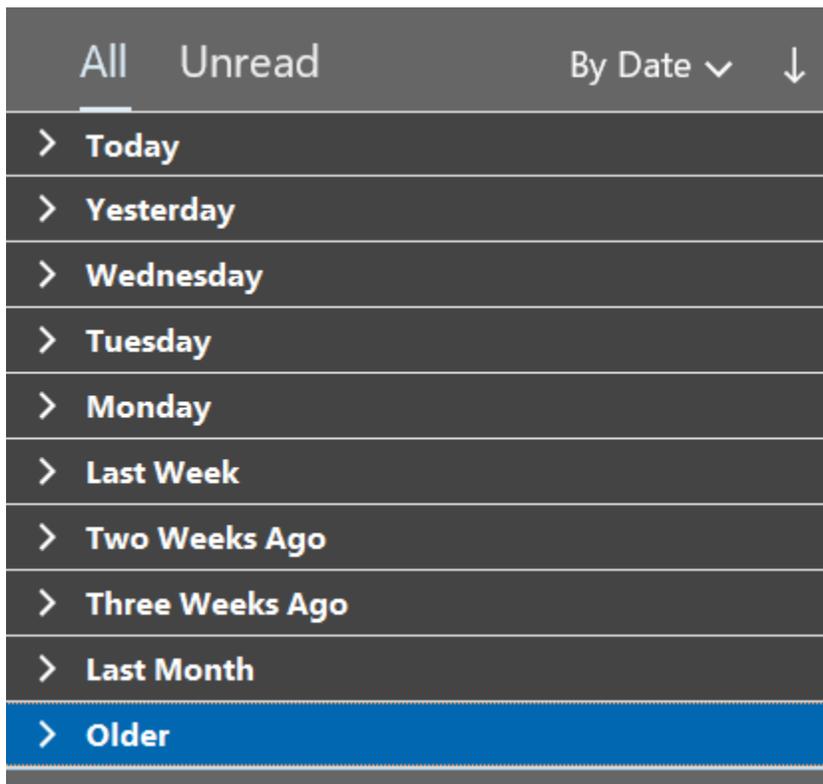
Now that we learn how to "[Avoid Unattended Emails](#)", let us focus on how to prioritize, and visualize them.

On any typical day of mine, my email, chat, and call distribution is like this as shown in the graph (provided by Microsoft Viva).

How connected are you throughout the day

A breakdown of your email, chat and call activity throughout the day.

Legend: Emails sent · Emails read · Chats and calls
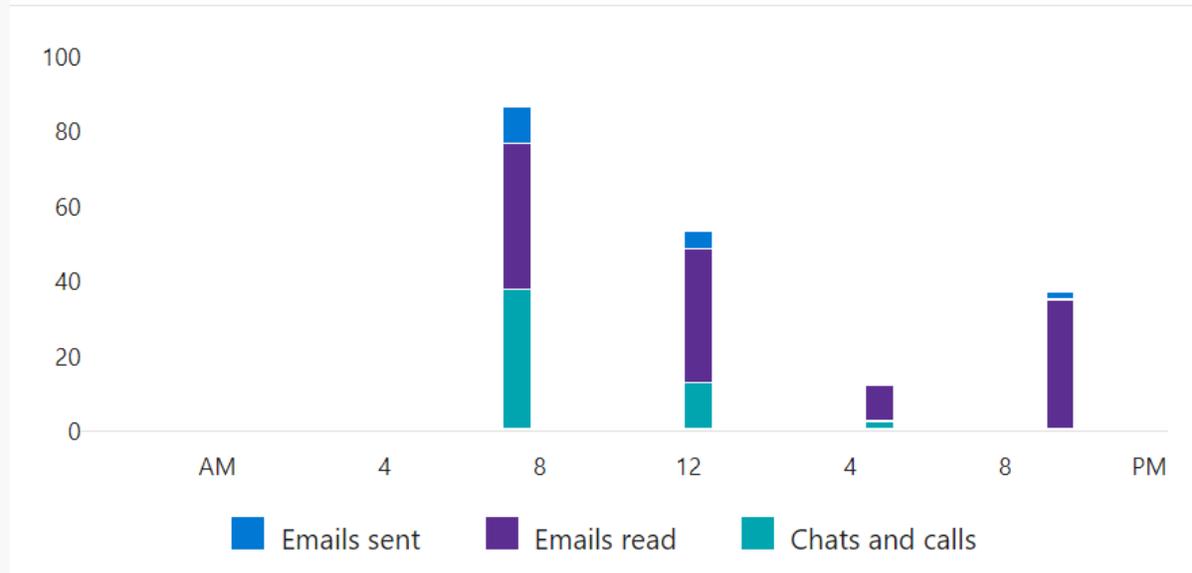
Typical Day of My Email, Chats, and Calls

If you look at the pattern, **the responses I gave are much lesser than the emails I read**. This shows, how difficult to trace the emails, which are expecting me to reply, while all other emails are either informatory emails or just announcements. I am not counting the junk email we get daily.

And if you look at the time pattern, I would be giving more replies in the morning, than in the evenings, and the level of chats I am doing reduce drastically by mid-day, allowing me to focus on my other work.

So, how do I classify my emails? Is there any automation possible to reduce my email workload? Let us check.

My first question to myself is ... what is the most important email for me. I chose, Email from any of my Team members. Surprised!

Yes. You read it correctly. My team members are seeking my help to resolve my customer issues and wrote emails to me. If I can help my team as quickly as possible, my customers would be happy. If my customers are happy, no escalations, and my boss would be happy.

So, I will filter out my emails, in the same order, and respond.

1. My Team Members

2. My Customers

3. My Managers and Peers

If you have a different opinion or experience, please post your comments below. If you see a value add to my thought, like it.

I don't follow Outlook rules to move my emails, as many of my colleagues do. I use SEARCH in Outlook, to show the emails in separate favorites. I will explain why am I doing that later, but let us focus, on how I make my favorites.

1. Right-click on Search below the Inbox on the left menu of Outlook
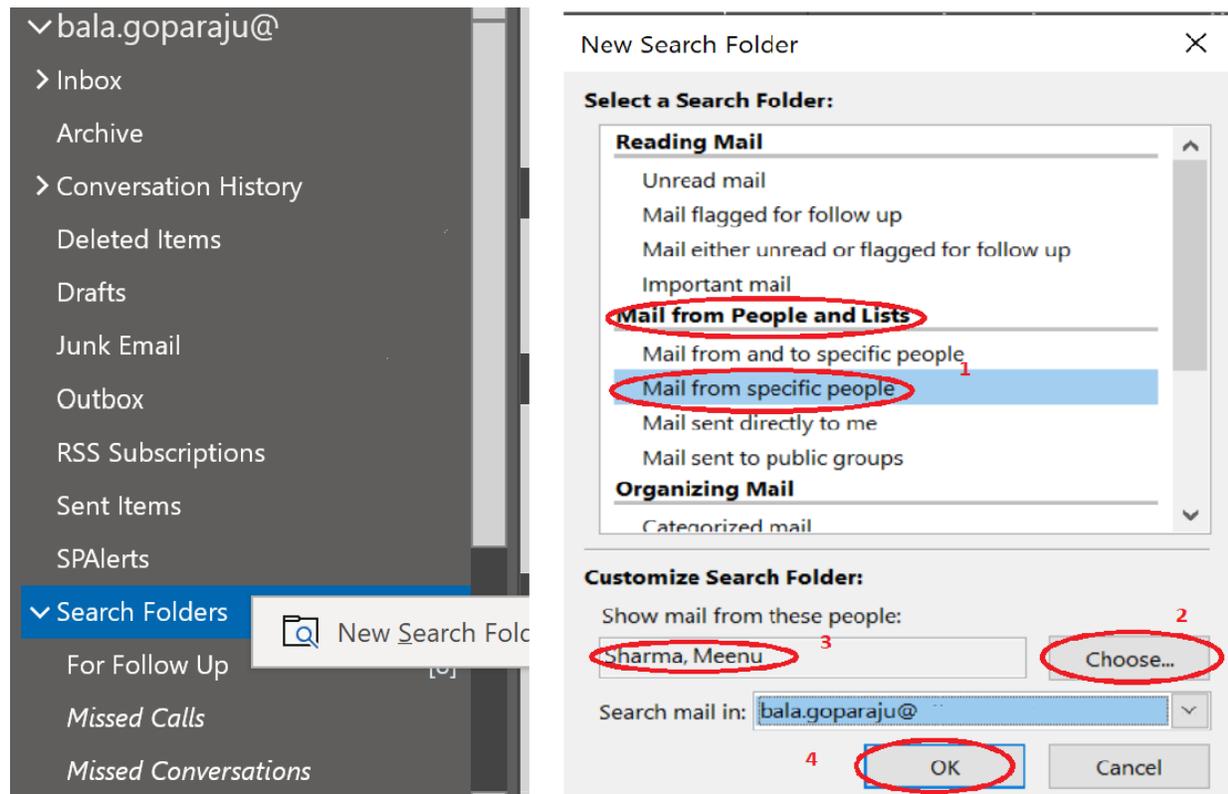
2. New Search Folder window will appear, and select Mail from specific people and choose your team member(s)

Remember, you can select all your team members, or each team member separately. Once you click on OK, a new search folder is created. Though it is called a folder, technically it is just a view, and no physical folder is created actually.

3. Right-click on the newly created folder, and select Add to Favorites
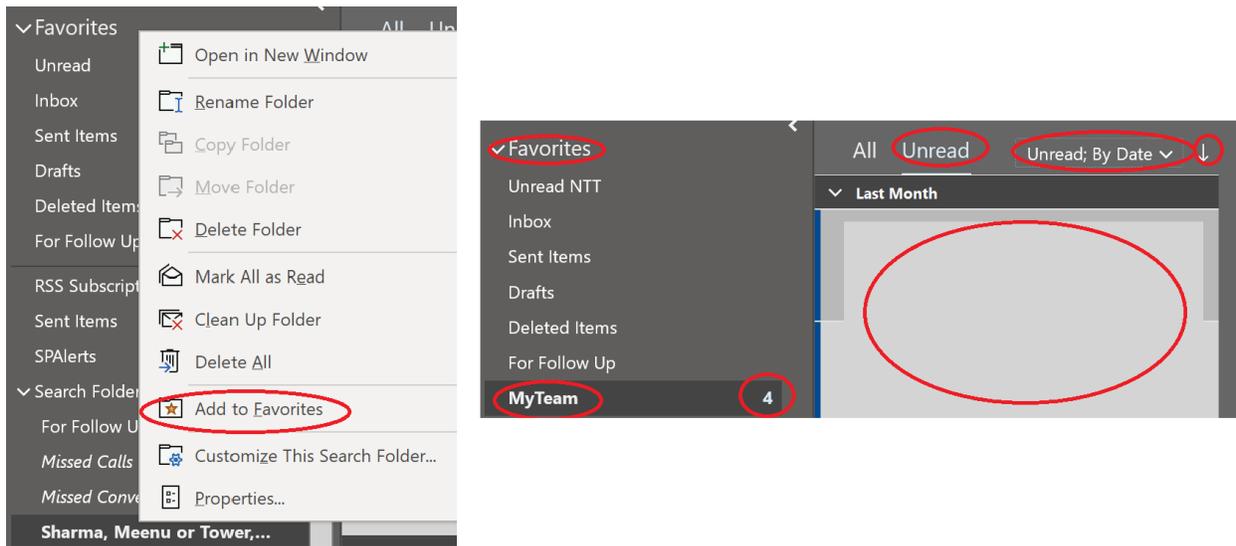
This will add a new item to the favorites, and you can rename it based on your need, either by people's name, or the group name of your choice.

The moment we click on the favorites, in this case, MyTeam … the right window shows ALL the emails from them automatically (I have removed my emails from screenshots below), while the number on the side of favorites shows UnRead Emails, which I have to focus on now. Click on the Unread link on the top menu shows Unread emails from my Team members.

4. Create separate search folders for your team, Customers, and Team, and pull them to the TOP of your favorites as shown in the picture.
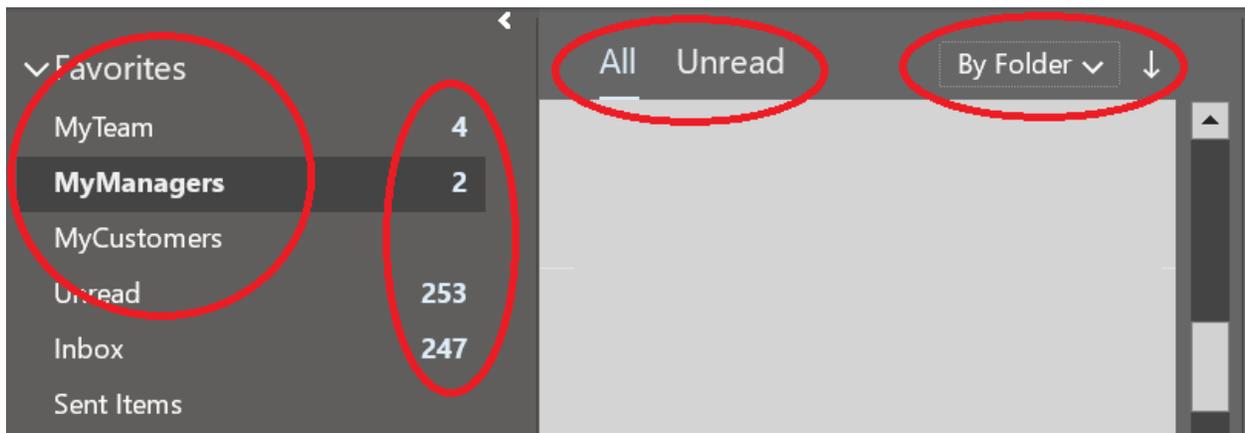
5. By default, Outlook sorting follows "By Folder". We may need to change it to sort by date conversation. Let us see how to get it. Click on "By Folder" on the menu, and select Date instead of Folder as shown in the picture.
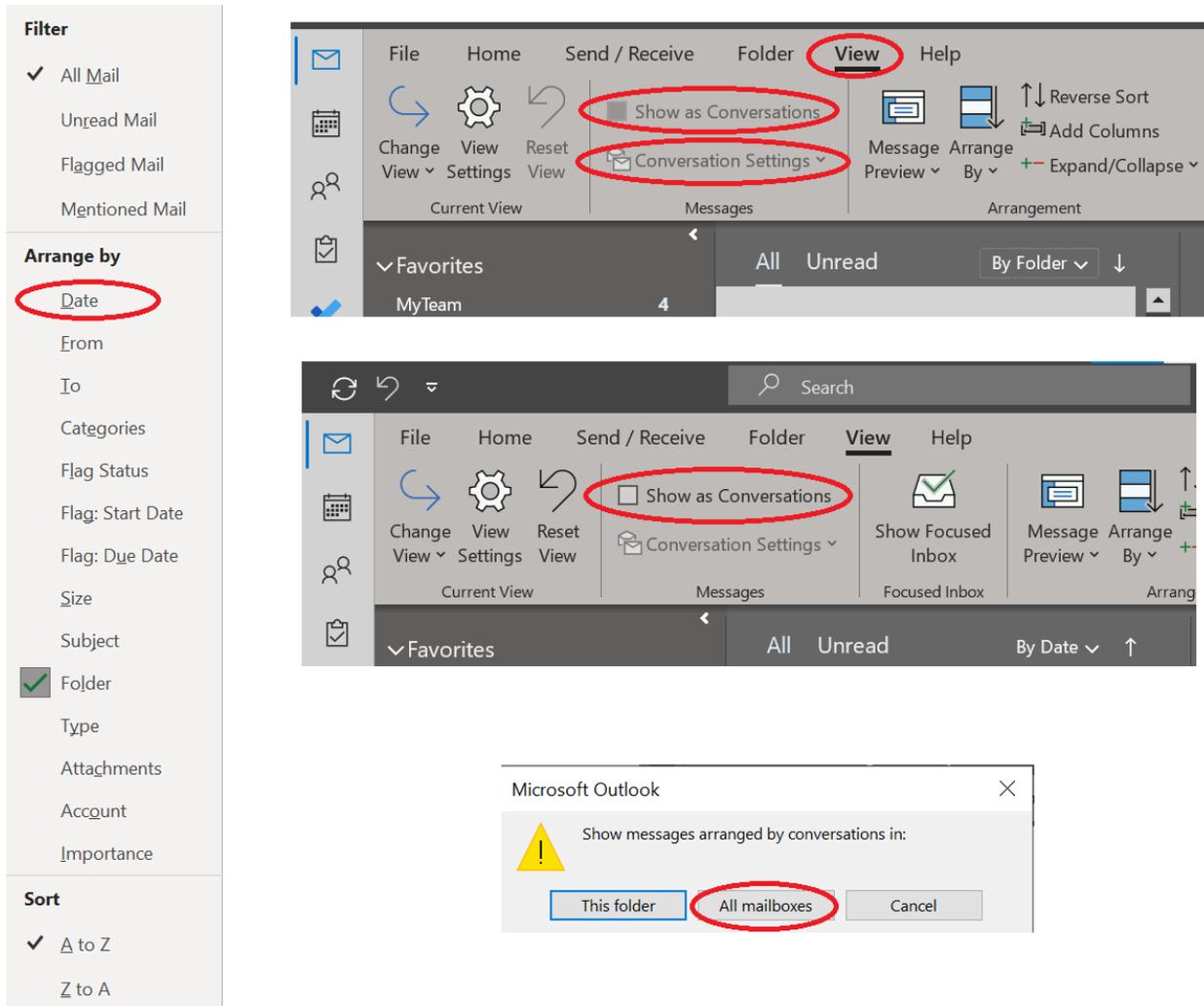
6. Look at the top menu under the View option. While you are in any search folder, the option to "Show as Conversation" may be grayed out. Click on Inbox, look at the View menu, and select "Show as Conversation"

7. Outlook shows a conversation prompt, where I suggest you select All Mailboxes. {This is more applicable when you have more accounts, say work account, customer account Personal account, etc... and applies to all accounts and all folders}. "This folder" applies to that one account only, which you have selected at that time. Don't get misled by the naming of Outlook screens. It is what they are.

8. With date sorting enables to you see the emails organized by days as shown in the picture. Now we can look at any mail, on any day, if we know when it came to us and clear it.
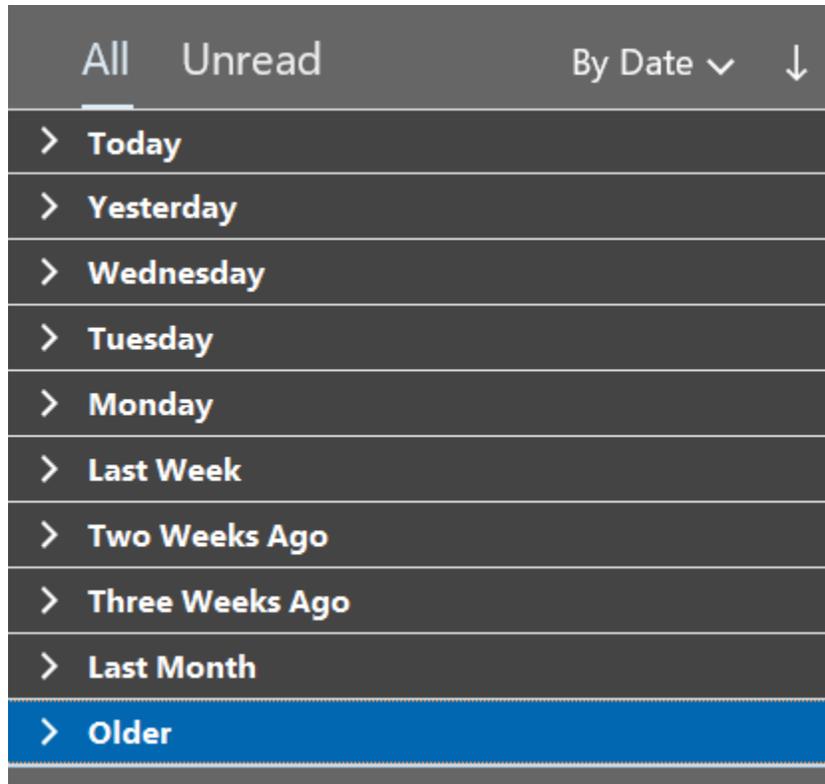
9. Now that we know, what to see, and where to see quickly, let us start clearing the mailbox. Look at the screens once again, as of this morning I have around 250 emails, which I have to look at.

I will explain, how to identify which email needs my attention or my action, which I can just read and know, and which I can ignore in my next blog. Until then, go ahead and make these configuration changes and see if these settings help you.

Remember to post your comments and suggestions, while you are following these tips. Let us be productive.

Published by

[Bala GoparajuBala Goparaju](#)
Program Director, Consultant, Advisor

This is part of the [hashtag#email](#) [hashtag#management](#) series I am [hashtag#planning](#) to [hashtag#help](#)