

“ASAP” and “Urgent”: Trauma-Informed Strategies for Administrators

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In professional environments, administrators often use terms like “urgent” or “ASAP” in emails to prioritize tasks. While these words serve a functional purpose, their tone can inadvertently trigger anxiety, distress, or shutdown responses—especially among individuals with trauma histories. This abstract explores the importance of trauma-informed communication strategies in administrative practices. Administrators must recognize that urgency-based language may echo past experiences of crisis, pressure, or harm. A trauma informed approach offers a pathway to mitigate these effects.

Crucially, these principles are not limited to crisis situations, they can and should be applied across all email communication. By using specific deadlines instead of vague urgency, providing context to reduce ambiguity, and expressing empathy and flexibility, administrators can make all correspondence safer, calmer, and more supportive.

This reflective article not only explores why trauma-informed communication matters but also demonstrates how to apply these principles. Highlighting strategies of traditional vs. trauma-informed email language to better support staff well-being, foster trust, reduce harm, and maintain a responsive, respectful work culture.