



E-mail Etiquette 101

Clarity, context, and communicating successfully

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We will discuss best practices for:

- Signature
- Subject lines
- Timing and sending
- Proofreading
- Attachments (images)
- Timing - pitfalls and tips of when to send
- Content
- Replying
- Don't just paste in a screen shot or message without context!
What do you want me to do with this email?

Your signature should contain contact information.

- Include the following details in your signature so we don't hunt you down in the Personnel directory 😊
 - Phone number
 - County/location
 - Role or position
 - Social media (if applicable)

Your MOBILE email signature should include the same information.

- It's even more important that your mobile signature include relevant contact information. If a person is on their phone it's harder to look you up in the directory.

Subject lines

Ideal subject lines explain what's in the email.

- The reader wants to know “what am I about to read?” so tell them!
- Do the work yourself so your reader doesn't have to guess.

Examples of terrible subject lines:

- Hey
- Question
- One more question
- Did you get my question?
- That file you wanted
- Idea!
- Can we talk?
- “ “

If an email thread changes topic, please CHANGE THE SUBJECT LINE.

- If your email thread evolves into a different conversation take control of the narrative and change the subject line to something relevant.

Never send an email without a subject line.

Missing subject lines impede the ability to search for relevant messages later.

Timing is key: emails are asynchronous

- Be patient! E-mails are not texts – people do not reply to them as quickly as an instant message.
- E-mail volume can build quickly. Be mindful and don't send an email when a Zoom chat would work better.
- Don't send email after hours and expect a reply. Not everyone is a workaholic 😊 If you need immediate assistance try a text or chat.

Sending and receiving

Inviting someone into your email conversation means adding context.

- If you loop someone into an email thread, tell everyone you did it and tell the person why you're including them.
- Imagine the email is like a party conversation. Would you randomly start including someone across the room without context?

“Reply All” – use it sparingly!

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BCC – Why you should be careful.

- If you BCC someone and the recipient “replies all” it reduces trust in the sender.
- It also raises unnecessary questions.
- It makes recipients question your motives.
- It also wastes time of the recipient “Why was I included on this?”

E-mail content best practices

Emails should be one or two topics max.

Avoid cognitive overload. Sending a long email with 3+ topics increases the chances of your reader deleting or not responding at all.

Keep email messages between 20-200 words.

“Data suggests the ideal length of an email is between 50 and 125 words. Emails this length had a response rate above 50%. A similar study found emails with approximately 20 lines of text, or about 200 words, had the highest clickthrough rates.

“When in doubt, keep emails short and under 200 words.”

Attachments can bog down inboxes.

- Not all attachments are necessary. Use Box or OneDrive to share files and send a link to the file instead of an attachment.
- Don't use email as a storage cabinet for content.

Proofreading is essential for professional communication.

- People judge poor grammar and tyops. ;)
- Do a quick review of your message before you hit “send”.

Questions?

Thank you!

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