



Email Etiquette

KEEPING IT PROFESSIONAL: EMAIL IN THE WORKPLACE

Email is now a major component of business communication. As with other forms of communication, there are general rules of etiquette that you should follow. These are sometimes referred to as “netiquette”.

Professional communication is very important when applying for employment. Dawn Rosenberg McKay reminds us of the following points when writing emails to employers:

Manners

Use basic good manners. Address people formally if you do not know them. Use the recipient’s title (e.g. Mr, Ms or Dr) and their second name, unless you already know that it is acceptable to address them by their first name. Add ‘please’ to a request and acknowledge your appreciation when you have received assistance.

Tone

It is important to be aware of the informal impressions that your email can create. A professional, friendly tone is preferable to an aggressive or demanding tone. Write confidently and sincerely. Avoid using emotive sentences like “I am upset that you have not replied to me”. Instead you could write “I have not yet received confirmation regarding the time of my interview. Can you please let me know at your earliest convenience so that I am can arrange time off work to attend? Thank you.”

Concise Communication

Draft your email carefully. Be as clear and concise as you can. Edit out all non-essential content and ensure that you have included all the necessary information. Think of the recipient processing many queries in a short time.

Professional Style

Avoid slang, acronyms, abbreviations and contractions. Do not use emoticons. Use formal English and choose your words carefully. For example, if you would like to communicate your excitement about being shortlisted for an interview, you could write “I am excited about the opportunity to talk with you further about my application;” rather than “I think it’s going to be a fun experience :)”.

Spelling And Grammar

Check your spelling and grammar before you send the email (including the recipient’s name). It might help to read your email out loud to pick up grammatical errors. Be aware of the differences between Australian and American spelling conventions and be consistent.

Sending Attachments

Some email programs will not accept attachments from unknown sources because they may harbour computer viruses. Ask the recipient if it is okay to attach a document.

Addressing The Email

This should be the last thing you do when putting your email together. If you add the recipient's address after you have proofread the message and added the attachments, you are less likely to accidentally send the email before you have finished writing it.

Other Tips

- Avoid sending unnecessary emails
- Use a separate email account for professional correspondence so that there is less chance of accidentally sending personal emails to professional contacts
- Make sure your subject line is explanatory and contains all the relevant information. This ensures that the recipient will be able to quickly recognise what the email is about
- Respond to work-related emails quickly
- Allow time for the recipient to reply
- Avoid discriminatory comments or sexual references.

REFERENCE

D. R. McKay. (2009) *Email Etiquette: Tips For Professional Email*.

Retrieved from careerplanning.about.com/od/communication/a/email_tips.htm