

## Email Etiquette Policy

You should feel able to contact colleagues and clients for information, advice, or to arrange a face-to-face meeting. However, it is important that you get the tone right. The etiquette “rules” that apply to such email also apply to other work contexts, so it is important to learn how to get it right.

Writing emails in professional contexts requires a different tone to that used when emailing or messaging friends or family. If your email leaves a good impression, you may be more likely to get a quicker, more thorough response.

<b>Starting your message</b>	
<b>DO</b> pay attention to the recipient’s name and title (including the spelling of names). At university, these include Prof, Dr, Mr, Miss, Ms, Mrs. These details are easy to check	<b>DON’T</b> address someone by their first name unless you are on familiar terms with them - if in doubt opt for formality. If someone signs off their email to you with just their first name, then they are probably inviting you to call them by their first name
<b>DO</b> open with a polite address (e.g., “Dear Dr Evil”)	<b>DON’T</b> begin messages with overly familiar openers (e.g., “Yo, Blair”)
<b>Tone and Manner</b>	
<b>DO</b> be polite and respectful	<b>DON’T</b> send e-mails that sound curt, abusive, or demanding
<b>DO</b> be patient and allow time for a response. If the matter is urgent, it may be best to make a phone call	<b>DON’T</b> bombard your addressee with messages (especially at weekends)
<b>DO</b> think about the content of your message before you send it. Read it out loud before sending it.	<b>DON’T</b> send a message with no structure: this makes it difficult to follow. If your message is longer than a few paragraphs, then it may be best to briefly outline the key issue and ask for a face-to-face meeting
<b>DO</b> ensure that the content of the message is clear in the subject line, and that the person you are sending it to is the appropriate recipient	<b>DON’T</b> send off an e-mail to the first staff member who comes into your head: they may not be the best person to contact for the most appropriate response
<b>DO</b> check punctuation and spelling, and always reread your message before pressing ‘send’	<b>DON’T</b> use Emoticons (smiley faces or such images) in business email – these are not appropriate
<b>DO</b> try to break down sentences, use short paragraphs and / or bullet points to get your message across – this makes it easier for the	<b>DON’T</b> use all capitals – this is considered shouting at your reader

<p>reader to understand you</p>	
<b>Attachments</b>	
<p><b>DO</b> consider the size of attachments being sent – some email inboxes are limited to a certain file size – check with the recipient first.</p>	<p><b>DON'T</b> send inappropriate attachments – this is in breach of the IT &amp; Communications policy.</p>
<b>Flags and Read Receipts</b>	
<p><b>DO</b> use a flag to highlight the importance or content of a message</p>	<p><b>DON'T</b> use them all the time. They may be considered annoying</p>
<p><b>DO</b> use a read receipts if you wish to know that your message has been opened and/or read.</p>	<p><b>DON'T</b> use them all the time. Use receipts only when necessary, usually only to confirm the most important of emails. Similarly, if your email system requests a receipt from you it is polite to send one, even if you find it annoying. It is better to ask someone to not use the receipts rather than not sending them.</p>
<b>Signing Off</b>	
<p><b>DO</b> always use the full company email signature, including the disclaimer, when making contact for the first time. When replying to a message the addition of the email signature is not necessary</p>	<p><b>DON'T</b> sign off in an overly familiar way</p>
<b>Guidance Notes</b>	
<p>Email is like the post: you can't stop a letter until it gets to your door. Email is even easier and more available than the post, which means you can get a lot more emails arriving on your "doorstep". This section provides some guidance and etiquette on how to ask people to reduce the number of emails they send to you.</p>	
<p>Unfortunately, the only person that can effectively manage the number of emails you receive is yourself. No one else knows where they are coming from or what information will be important to you. If you find that you are receiving too many emails you are able to politely ask those sending you the emails to reduce the number they are sending. Be careful when requesting a reduction or complete stop of incoming emails because you may inadvertently make people cautious about sending any email to you at all. It is best to sort out a communication strategy, outlining what information you want to receive, what is appropriate for email or another communication method (i.e.: telephone), and how often or under what conditions you'd like to receive it. It is best to provide these instructions in writing to avoid confusion.</p>	
<p>It is highly impolite to ignore or delete emails without reading them. Ignoring or deleting a message is equal to burning letters without opening them or hanging up while having a conversation on the phone. Asides from the impoliteness it is not recommended to delete or ignore unread emails because you cannot be sure of what they contain. The person sending you the information sent it to you because they felt you should have it. The sender's duty is only to get the information to you, and if you don't read the email then the consequences are yours. At the very worst people may simply</p>	

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stop sending you emails, since they will assume that you are ignoring them. This is a risky strategy of reducing you email intake, as people will likely stop sending you important information as well.

Staying organised can help you reduce the burden of receiving emails. Most email programs have an automatic rules function that will sort emails into categories for you. Categorising your emails can make your inbox less daunting to tackle.

Remember that if you send lots of emails, you will most likely receive a lot of emails. If email does not need a reply then make this obvious.

Richard Bell

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'R Bell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Managing Director

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