
CRITICALLY EVALUATING PROFESSIONAL EMAILS USING COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

Email is a powerful tool in the professional world. It connects teams, clients, and organizations instantly, but it must be used with care. Poor email etiquette can harm relationships and affect how others perceive us. In this assignment, I examined two examples of email, one excellent and one problematic. I use communication principles to evaluate each one in terms of clarity, professionalism, tone, efficiency, and structure. I also offer recommendations for improvement and explain why email etiquette matters in any professional setting.

Strong Example: Professional and Effective

The first email is a follow-up after a job interview. It is concise, respectful, and well-structured.

Subject: Follow-Up on Marketing Assistant Application – ABC

To: hiringmanager@example.com

From: abc@email.com

Date: March 5, 2025

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Thank you once again for the opportunity to interview for the Marketing Assistant position last week. I enjoyed learning more about your team and the exciting projects you're working on at BrightEdge Media.

I remain very enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to your company and believe my background in digital marketing and content creation would be a strong fit. I'm writing to follow up and see if there have been any updates regarding the next steps in the hiring process.

Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

Best regards,

ABC

abc@email.com

(123) 456-7890

Analysis

This email has a clear and specific subject line, which immediately tells the reader what to expect (Guffey & Loewy, 2018). The greeting uses a formal title, and the closing is polite and professional.

The tone is positive, respectful, and enthusiastic. It maintains a balance between confidence and humility, showing emotional intelligence (Locker & Kienzler, 2015). The message is also concise—no repetition or unnecessary detail. It gets to the point, focusing on appreciation and the next steps.

There are no grammar or spelling errors, and the formatting is clean and easy to read. The writer uses line spacing and a logical structure, which supports clear communication. There are no attachments or privacy concerns, and the timing (a week after the interview) is appropriate.

Weak Example: Poorly Structured and Unclear

The second email is a team update from a manager. It lacks clarity, professionalism, and respect for the audience.

Subject: Quick update

To: team@company.com

From: manager@email.com

Date: Sunday, March 2, 2025 – 11:48 PM

Hey team,

I changed the meeting time. We'll meet at 9 instead. Hope that works for everyone.

Thanks.

Analysis

This email fails on several levels. First, the subject line—“Quick update”—is vague. It doesn't prepare the reader for what the email contains. A more appropriate subject would be “Monday Staff Meeting Rescheduled to 9 AM” (Guffey & Loewy, 2018).

The greeting, “Hey team,” is too casual for workplace communication. The closing, “Thanks,” is brief and generic. These elements do not reflect professional respect or the manager's leadership role.

The tone is rushed and inconsiderate. It gives no context for the change and does not acknowledge how it might impact others. Instead of inviting feedback or explaining the reason, the sender just informs the team with minimal wording.

Grammar is also a problem. The sentence “Hope that works for everyone” is incomplete. It should be written as “I hope this change works for everyone.” Small grammatical errors like this effect clarity and make the email appear careless (Cardon, 2016).

Formatting is poor. The message is one unbroken paragraph, which reduces readability. Additionally, sending this email late at night shows poor timing. It doesn't give team members enough notice to adjust their plans.

A major issue is privacy. The manager used "To:" instead of "BCC:" when emailing the team. This reveals everyone's email addresses, which is inappropriate and violates basic email privacy practices.

Recommendations for Improvement

To fix the issues in the second email, I suggest rewriting it as follows:

Subject: Rescheduled: Monday Staff Meeting at 9 AM

Dear Team,

Please note that our weekly staff meeting on Monday has been rescheduled to 9:00 AM. We will still meet in Conference Room A.

I appreciate your understanding. If this change creates any conflict, please let me know as soon as possible.

Kind regards,

[Manager's Name]

This version uses a clear subject line and a respectful greeting and closing. It explains the change and acknowledges possible inconvenience. The tone is thoughtful and professional. The message is also better formatted, using paragraph breaks for easier reading. Most importantly, it should be sent during business hours and use BCC to maintain privacy.

Conclusion

These two email examples show how communication choices shape professionalism. The first email succeeds because it's clear, concise, respectful, and well-timed. The second email fails due to vague wording, casual tone, bad timing, and formatting issues. Professional emails should always use clear subject lines, correct grammar, polite tone, and considerate timing. These elements help build credibility and maintain strong relationships in any workplace.

Mastering email etiquette doesn't take much effort, but the impact is significant. Whether writing a simple update or a formal request, professionalism in email reflects our attitude, attention to detail, and respect for others. Clear communication is not just about what we say—it's how we say it that counts.

Wordcount: 862

References

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