

LECTURE -05

Writing Effective Emails

Course Instructors:

Dr Laiq Hasan

Engr Naina Said (TA)

Email Etiquettes

What are they?

- Etiquettes governing communication on the internet.
- Rules for how to communicate effectively, appropriately and respectfully online.
- When sending an email, the receiving party is not seeing you in person and so is only able to deduce things from what you have written in the email.
- It is therefore important to follow protocols for sending emails in a formal setting.

Email Etiquettes

Basic Rules

- Direct language can sound harsher in email than in person.
- Do not assume that the reader will get a “joke” or “sarcasm”.
- Be thoughtful and respectful in what you write.
- Choose your words carefully.
- Keep in mind who you are writing to and the relationship that you share with them.

Components of an Email

1. Addressing.
2. Subject line.
3. Message Text.
4. Attachments.
5. Signature.

I. Addressing

- The address of the recipient.
- Addresses can be part of one of the following
 - **The To.**
 - **The CC.**
 - **The BCC.**
- Maintain address book if frequent emails are sent to a large group.

The To Line

- Each individual on the **To** line of the email is responsible for taking the action or part of the action outlined on the subject line.
- The email relates directly to them.
- Response or action is needed by the recipients on the **To** line.

The CC Line

- No action or response is expected of individuals on the **Cc** line. The recipient needs only to read or file the message.
- The individuals whose work is indirectly affected by the communication should be included on the Cc line.

Suppose one of your teacher has mistakenly forwarded a wrong grade to the semester coordinator for a course you have taken with them. You have to report and carry out the communication via an email. Who would you address in the To and CC line in the email?

The BCC Line

- **BCC** stands for Blind Carbon Copy.
- It is used to protect the privacy of the recipients unless everyone knows each other.
- **BCC** should be used when absolutely necessary. There is always a chance that the individual on the BCC line could hit "Reply All" and unintentionally reveal that the matter was escalated.

You recently had an induction drive for a society that you are working for. You have to send an email to all the selected candidates as directed by the society president. Who should be addressed in the To, CC and BCC fields of your email?

2. Subject Line

- Precise headline for the message.
- Makes it easier to handle the emails.
- Should clearly summarize the intent of the email.
- Avoid sending e-mail with no subject.
- If your email is not relevant to the subject line at all, start a new thread with a fresh subject line instead of sending irrelevant emails under older threads.
- Using all caps for the entire subject line **MAKES IT LOOK LIKE YOU'RE SHOUTING.**

Ineffective Subject Lines

- Hi..
- One more thing..
- Meeting.
- Questions.
- Some thoughts.

Bad Examples from Students Emails

- No subject line at all!
- Writing the entire email in subject line.
- Aoa Madam.
- Please accept assignment.
- Lab report.
- Assignment etc.

Effective Subject Lines

- Party planning meeting rescheduled for 3pm.
- Help: I can't find the draft for the Smith Paper.
- Reminder: peer-review articles due tomorrow (3/30).
- Questions about Sociology 210 project.
- Congratulations to Jennifer for winning Nobel Prize.

Suppose one of your teacher has mistakenly forwarded a wrong grade to the semester coordinator for a course you have taken. You have to carry out the communication via an email. What do you think could be an appropriate subject line for this scenario?

3. The Message Text

- Keep the message focused and readable.
- Keep it short.
- The message must be aligned with the subject line.
- If long message, break into paragraphs.
- Avoid fancy fonts.
- Quote back using context.
- Write in standard professional English with capitalization and correct spelling.
(Use Grammarly extension)
- Do not use **texting language** in emails.

Bad Message Text Example

To: john.doe@somecompany.com

CC:

Subject: Hey...wazzup?

Attachment: Picture of Me

Hey,

So waz UR job like??????? I'm kinda interested in mrktg but I'm not sure. How often are u board at work? I'm board ALL THE TIME at skool ☺ !!! Since we both like baseball, we should go to a Twins game together next season, what do u think? Here's my personal email since this one will shut off after this thing: imawesome@myemail.com or if you wanna call me, my cell number is (612)555-9876. U should totally drop me a line and we'll hang out.

Oh yeah....I'm sposed to send u a question....what skool did you go to after high skool?

C ya

Good Message Text Example

To: john.doe@somecompany.com
CC: myteacher@somechool.org
Subject: eMentors Topic: College Experience
Attachment:

Hello John,

In response to your question last week, I am involved in the Student Senate and the Varsity Volleyball team. Do you have any interesting hobbies?

I was curious if you went to college after graduating from high school and, if so, which one did you attend? I'm interested in Business Management and was hoping you could give me any idea about which college to choose or an internship or job that may help me improve my college applications.

Thank you and I look forward to your next message,

Jenna Jones

4. Attachments

- Properly rename your attachments in a descriptive way.
- Cut and paste relevant parts of attachment into text of email.
- Compress large attachments and send attachments only when they are absolutely necessary.
- Have a good virus scanner in place. People will not be very happy with mails full of viruses.

5. Signature

- Use an appropriate signature.
- Must be informative.
- Provide all contact information.
- Do not include pictures, quotes, animations.
- Whenever a piece of contact information changes, make sure your signature is updated accordingly.

What do you think could be an appropriate signature for a student email?

Before Sending

- Check your email thoroughly for any grammatical or other mistakes.
- Read your email from a reader's perspective and analyze if you would be happy with the email if you were the recipient.
- Double check whether the attachment that you talked about in the email is actually attached.
- If your email does not get a reply after a reasonable amount of time, send a gentle reminder email.

Replying to Emails

- Respond swiftly preferably in 24 hours or during the same working day.
- If you can not reply immediately to the email, send a short email to the sender that you have read their email and you will get back to them shortly.
- Respond only to messages that require one. When replying, make sure that you are adding value to the conversation, truly moving it forward.

Some Common Email Types

- Complaints/Escalations.
- Saying No.
- Apology.
- Delivering Bad News.

Complaints/Escalations

- D-Describe.
- A-Acknowledge.
- S-Specify Alternative.
- R-Request Action.

I would like to bring to your notice that there has been frequent delay in the delivery of the consignment from the production department. We understand that the department has shortage of resources. However, we suggest the requisition form is sent one day earlier to ensure adequate time for the production team for packaging. This would avoid delays in future. We are hopeful that appropriate corrective action would be taken.

Saying No

- A- Apologize.
- E- Explain.
- A- Alternative.

I regret to let you know that we are not in a position to work on additional data at this point in time. This is because the entire team is currently working on an emergency assignment. However I can suggest a freelancer who can complete the task in 3 days.

Apology

- M- Message.
- D- Details.
- A- Action.
- E-Ending.

Please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in sending the report. Our Data bank had crashed yesterday. The service engineer who maintains the data bank was unable to rectify the issue on time due to the prolonged power shut down. We have installed additional back up to avoid such mishaps in future. We once again are sorry for the delay and assure that such shortfalls do not occur again.

Delivering Bad News

- M- Message.
- E- Empathize.
- A- Assure.
- T- Take Action.

It is with regret that we inform you that the transport vehicle that carries your consignment met with an accident on GST road last night. Unfortunately, the consignment caught fire and was charred completely. We understand the impact this delay is going to have on your deliverables to your client and the possible monetary loss. We assure our complete support in reducing the delay from our end. In fact, we have already allocated an additional resource to work on your case.

Assignment

- Write an email to the instructor of this course suggesting ways to improve the course for future batches. Keep the following things in mind.
 - Identify who should be in the To: and CC: field of your email.
 - Think of an appropriate subject line.
 - Properly structure your email.
 - Do not use fancy fonts.
 - No grammatical mistakes. Use grammarly extension for your browser.
 - Use appropriate signature in your email.
- The assignments must be submitted to google classroom before next week class.

Acknowledgement

The content presented in this lecture is inspired by miscellaneous sources.

- [Writing Effective Emails.](#)
- [best-practices-for-email-subject-lines](#)
- [Writing Professional Email and Memos.](#)