Five Easy Ways to Appear More Professional
--College student addition--

1. Create an Email Signature.

One easy way to appear more professional when communicating with professors, recruiters, business professionals, etc. is by using a signature at the end of your email. *You can set a signature to be included in all emails in your email account settings*

While any signature is better than none, I particularly like the one I use from the website called Newoldstamp, because it includes interactive social media buttons for easy network building and connecting. Newoldstamp offers a signature template that is easy to use and takes less than 30 minutes to build. *An alternative option would be to simply include a signature with your name, phone number, and major*

2. Proofread your emails carefully.

Nothing is worse than taking the time to write an email and not catching a simple spelling error. Remember, it is important to present yourself well, even through email, to remain professional. I use the Grammarly extension in my browser (tip: you can also add it as an extension for Microsoft Word to proofread resumes, papers, etc.), that automatically checks grammar in my emails.

3. Perfect your elevator pitch.

An elevator pitch is a short description of who you are, what you do, and what you are looking to do. Elevator pitches are often used to introduce yourself to recruiters, interviewers, and etc. It is important to get this pitch as "perfect" as possible to appear confident and professional in the case that you are asked to tell someone about yourself. I recommend practicing it before any business event, because you never know when you have to use it!

4. Obtain Business Cards.

Business cards are a great networking tool to connect with professionals at events. If you attend a university, chances are you can get business cards printed for free. I suggest carrying them with you to business events so that you can easily share your information (such as your phone number and your LinkedIn link).

5. Timing is key.

Last but not least, somebody told me once that it is important to respond to emails and phone calls within 24 hours. Being punctual and responsive is important to show that you are organized (and have it together). Personally, I always try to respond to emails within 12 hours.

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