

Rules for Writing Work Emails

People send and receive many emails each day. Sometimes they make embarrassing mistakes in their emails.

For example, you might make a spelling error while typing an email on your smartphone, or your language might sound too casual.

Here are the most important modern email etiquette rules:

1. Include a clear, direct subject line.

- "Meeting date changed"
- "Quick question about my schedule"
- "Ideas for the project"



2. Use a professional email address.

If you work for a company, you should use your company email address.

If you use a personal email account for work sometimes, you should be careful when choosing that address.

You should always have an email address that uses your name:

- AmandaGarcia5@...
- Peters.Jason@...
- M_Thornton@...

Never use email addresses that are not appropriate for the workplace, such as:

- babygirl@...
- beerlover@...
- PapiChulo77@...

3. Think before hitting "Reply All."

No one wants to read emails from 20 people that have nothing to do with them. Ignoring the emails can be difficult because many people get notifications of new messages on their smartphones or distracting pop-up messages on their computer screens. Don't "Reply All" unless you really think everyone on the list needs to receive the email.



4. Use professional salutations.

A **salutation** is a way of saying hello.

Don't use casual expressions like:

- "Hey you guys,"
- "Yo"
- "Hi folks."

Use *Hi* or *Hello* instead, with the person's name if the email is to one person.

- "Hi, Andrea,"
- "Hello, Jorge,"
- "Good morning, everyone,"

5. Use exclamation points sparingly.

You can use one exclamation point to show that you are excited. But more than one exclamation point can make you look immature or too emotional.

Yes:

- I'm looking forward to talking about this with you!

No:

- I'm super excited for this project!!!!!!

6. Be careful with humor.

The person who reads your email might not understand your joke without the right tone of voice or facial expressions. He or she might not know you are making a joke, or might not think it's funny. It could even be offensive. Jokes are better in person.

9. Proofread every message.

The person who reads your email may notice a mistake.

Read and re-read your email a few times, preferably aloud, before sending it.

"One supervisor wanted to write 'Sorry for the inconvenience.' But he relied on his spell-check and accidentally wrote 'Sorry for the incontinence.'"



10. Add the email address last.

This way, you won't accidentally send an email that isn't finished or hasn't been checked.

11. Double-check that you've added the correct email address.

Pay careful attention when typing a name from your address book on the email's "To" line. You could choose the wrong name and send the email to the wrong person. It might be embarrassing!

12. Know when to use email and when to talk in person.

Some conversations are okay over email, but some are better in person.

Email:

- Set a meeting
- Ask for supplies
- Ask for time off
- Report a problem with your equipment

In person:

- Talk about your feelings
- Discuss a problem with a co-worker
- Talk about something that's bothering you
- Have a very long conversation

11. Use correct punctuation and capitalization.

Yes:

- "Thank you for your email. I would love to talk about this more."

No:

"THANK YOU FOR YOUR EMAIL I WOULD LOVE TO talk about this more"

