

7 Tips for Effective E-Mail

By Mike Morgan

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E-mail is quickly becoming the dominant form of communication in the workplace. However, because it allows speedy composition, less thought is given to the message than when pen and paper, or even a typewriter, was used in the office.

Poorly-composed messages reflect negatively upon both you personally and you as the representative of your business. If you run your own business, a poor first impression, even from something as innocent as an e-mail message, can kill your chances of winning a client.

Fortunately, there are a few things you can do to ensure that your e-mail message is both professional and effective.

1. Let It Simmer - Never send a message as soon as you are finished typing it. Do something else for at least ten minutes -- let it sit overnight, if possible -- then come back to reread and edit the message. Looking at it again with a "fresh eye", you will be more likely to spot errors.
2. Read It Aloud - Reading your message aloud allows you to catch more subtle errors, such as awkward phrasing and sounds.
3. Read Slowly, even one word at a time - This will help you catch double-keyed words and habitual misspellings. For example, I frequently leave off the "r" in "your".
4. Clean Up Your Language - Always assume that every e-mail, no matter how confidential, will be forwarded, and eventually land on your boss's desk!

Strike any off-color, sexist, profane, or otherwise objectionable language. Unless you are quoting someone, there is never a good reason for this in any business communication.
5. Cut fluff - Replace phrases such as "In the event that ..." with "If ...".
6. Give clichés the ax.
7. Run the Spellchecker - but remember that a spellchecker will not catch words that are spelled correctly, but used incorrectly, such as the use of "your" instead of "you're".

Follow these tips and you'll consistently produce effective professional emails of a professional nature.

About the Author:

Mike Morgan runs several businesses from his home in Las Cruces, New Mexico. His latest project, "The Local E-Mail Goldmine", shows how anyone, anywhere, of any age can start a home business that is profitable the first month! Visit <http://homebusinesshelper.com>

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