

The Subject is the Subject Line

By Shawna Schuh

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The Subject is Subject Line

Getting too many emails? Spending exorbitant amounts of time doing replies, deletes, and filing? You are not alone! Today we address how to help people (and you) to be more effective with this techno touch - the Subject line!

First off and most important: Put something in the subject line. Some email programs won't let you send without filling the subject line in which just goes to show that even a machine thinks it's important.

So what do you put in the subject line? This is the question that makes you either effective or ineffective and also shows your professionalism and style.

If it's a new email ask yourself how you want to be perceived by the reader when they get your email. I recently spoke to a woman who gets more emails than she wants and feels capable of handling. She's in email overload like a lot of us. She spoke at length about how ineffective many people are in using subject lines. She is brutal in deleting anything without a subject line, with a subject line she doesn't think applies to her or that seems like an ad. She scans down that subject line and gets busy deleting first thing.

It occurred to me that she may be missing some things that may be of value that she possibly needs to see etc. but with over a hundred emails coming in each day she feels the risk is worth the wasted time. This is a decision that she has made and works for her but if people would use subject lines more effectively she won't have to worry because emails with valuable information will state that in the subject line. At least yours will after

reading this article!

If you want busy people to read or reply you MUST put in a relevant subject line.

Here are a few ideas on subject lines:

1. Be Specific and familiar

Subject: Here's the status xyz project

Subject: Completion of project xyz is on time

Subject: Please RSVP for Nov. administrator conference

Subject: Company picnic info

2. Be Concise

Subject: Your order is on its way

Subject: It arrived!

Subject: Deadline is March 1

Subject: Final outline

Subject: [Name of ezine]

To be more effective on email read the subject line first and if it states something you feel could be of value then glance at the sender and you either open it or delete it and others can do the same to you.

Be careful of sending real generic subjects or ones that may seem like an ad. Those are the first emails busy people delete and your important information may go in the trash without a glance. This could be why you don't get replies sometimes from people you send information to.

~~~~~An Aside~~~~~

Aside from the human spam deleter did you know that many servers have their own automated spam catchers? This is nice for you the recipient, but what if you are a legitimate marketer sending out a promotion to your customer list? How would you even know if your message is being blocked at the server? Here's a freeresource you can use to test your message for spaminess before sending it out:

( <http://www.adcook.com/spamcheck> )Spam Checker

I do realize that spammers are getting very clever with the subject lines they use which is why some of the icky stuff makes it past filters but with a little thought you can be a lot more effective by using subject lines specifically and concisely!

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Shawna Schuh, Certified Speaking Professional helps organizations attract more business, enhance credibility and develop deeper connections with people. Flying out of Portland, Oregon Shawna is available for speaking engagements that can help your organization!

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