

Business Email Etiquette –Is your Correspondence Dressed for Success?

Do you have the basic components necessary in your email messages before you press the send button? Email is often the first impression a client or business may get from you or your business. If it has misspelled words, incomplete contact information or a weak subject line, you may appear unprofessional and lose potential business. Often times email is looked at as a casual source of correspondence, but you can make it much more powerful than that.

Before sending an email to a new or existing customer, think in terms of meeting them for the first time and striving to make that great “first impression.” Of course, you will want to keep up appearances after you gain the business, but that is expected in all business correspondence. To knock the socks off clientele, follow these seven tips for getting your email message across successfully and professionally.

- Power of the subject line – Watch bolded words, italics or character keys, these subject lines may fall prey to email filters and be labeled spam. Your customer may never know you ever tried to reach them. Your subject line should be concise and spark interest.
- Preparing for that first meeting – Know your contact’s name and position within the company. Give a brief overview explaining who referred you to them or how you came to hear of them. Adding a complimentary statement of their achievements never hurts either. Don’t start an email with Dear Friend or Colleague - it shows a lack of interest and that you didn’t do your homework.
- Dress appropriately – Make sure your email message is clear, neat and clean. Rambling sentences, misspelled words and abbreviated words or phrases such as “Meet u at 4” come across as sloppy.
- Introduce yourself with a firm handshake – Catch your customer’s attention with your opening sentence in the email. Your first statement must immediately grab their attention so they will want to read the rest of your message and not hit the delete key.
- Body of Message – Briefly explain who you or your company is. Clearly state your company’s strong points. Tell them what is unique about yourself or your company over the competition.
- Offer – If emailing a new customer, make a strong “call to action” such as giving a discount for trying your product or service. The goal is to get the customer to respond to your email.
- Closing your email – *Please* include all contact information. This means your business name, contact name, title, address, phone, and web address if applicable. This should be included in EVERY email. Don’t get too comfortable with businesses or clients and start signing you emails as “With regards – Joe.” Make it easy on a customer to contact you with your full information in every email.

Email can be a powerful tool if used correctly. All correspondence is a reflection on your business and can make or break a sale. Be professional, courteous and apply the etiquette

rules above to make your email stand out from the deluge of inbound email messages received every day in inboxes.

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