

# 5 Tips to Make Sure Your Email Is Read and Gets Results

by Mike Mitchell

What captures your attention as you peruse your incoming email subject line? Do you ever judge the importance of an email by its readability? How quickly do you respond to a poorly written or confusing email? Your co-workers might be judging your emails the same way.

Follow these 5 tips to ensure your emails get read and deliver your desired results.

## **Include a descriptive subject line**

Emails should always have a descriptive subject line that literally invites the recipient to open the email and read your message. You are really using the subject line as a sales pitch to entice the recipient to dig into your email like opening a birthday gift to see what is inside.

Like a newspaper headline that creates a desire to read the article, your subject line should jump off the page and say, "open me first."

## **Be clear**

Consider your recipients when composing your email. If your wording is confusing, your logic is convoluted, or the information just doesn't make sense, the reader won't know what you're asking or how to respond.

Leave no doubt as to what you are saying – make your point in the first sentence. Use bullet points in the body of the email to provide clarity. If you want results, you must produce a clearly written email with defined questions, requests, or instructions.

## **Be concise**

It's been said of the famous southern author William Faulkner, "His sentences are long and hypnotic, sometimes he withholds important details, or refers to people or events that the reader will not learn about until much later." That's fine for writing novels but not for writing an email.

Short sentences, simple words, and limited topics are the best way to make sure your email is read, understood, and gets results.

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## **Ensure readability**

To make your email readable, use proper punctuation and grammar. A readable email should follow traditional writing standards with proper sentence structure, which helps the reader interpret the meaning of your message. Proofread all your emails before clicking the send button.

Chat room terminology and instant messaging abbreviations reduce the readability for those not familiar with them. Leave abbreviations, and emoticons, out of business emails.

## **Be relevant**

Include only relevant information in your email. As a member of many project teams, I have received off-topic emails that simply waste time for all recipients. If you don't have a pertinent comment or question related to a project or topic, don't send an email.

Useless words, irrelevant topics, and personal facts only add confusion.

If you're like me, you are inundated with emails everyday. And, so are your co-workers. Respect your co-workers by sending only clear, concise, readable and relevant emails with descriptive subject lines. Most people will appreciate the courtesy of a well-written on-topic email. They will read it and you will get the results you want.

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