

Here's what you should never write in a work email - and what you should



Ellen Manning

Yahoo News UK 10 August 2018

Follow



Minefield – what you write in a work email could make or break your reputation (Picture: Getty)

It might seem a tiny detail, but what you write in a work email could make all the difference.

Too casual could seem disrespectful, but too formal might make people think you're stuffy.

To help people navigate the minefield of the work email, experts have outlined the things you should NEVER write – and things that you should.

Business etiquette expert Barbara Pachter told Business Insider: “Many people have strong feelings about what you do to their names and how you address them. If you offend someone in the salutation, that person may not read any further. It may also affect that person’s opinion of you.”



Strong feelings – Barbara Pachter said people often have strong feelings about how their name is used (Picture: Getty)

So what shouldn't you write in an email?

Yours Sincerely

It might be fine in a letter, but workplace expert Karen Gately told Whimn said it could “strike people as being disconnected in its formality” when used in an email.

Yours Faithfully

Like ‘Yours sincerely’, it’s too formal and should be avoided except for very official messages, says Gately.

Using ‘x’

Kisses are definitely out for work emails, says Gately, and could lead to people jumping to conclusions about your relationship with the recipient.

“Remember if it does get shared with others, people could start to form an opinion about your relationship with that person.”

Thanks!

Seems innocent, right? But according to Gately, if you've given the person you're sending an email to an instruction or request and then sign off with 'thanks!', it can be seen as demanding.

Hey

It's fine to use with your friends, but 'hey' isn't professional, especially if you haven't actually met the person, says Barbara Pachter.

Will Schwalbe, who coauthored "Send: Why People Email So Badly and How to Do It Better" with David Shipley, also told Business Insider: "I can never get out of my head my grandmother's admonition 'Hey is for horses.'"

Hi [name]!!!!

Too many exclamation marks is a no-no, Pachter writes in 'The Essentials of Business Etiquette'.

"People sometimes get carried away and put a number of exclamation points at the end of their sentences. The result can appear too emotional or immature."

Her advice is that if you have to use an exclamation mark, stick to one.

Hey there!

According to Pachter, it tells the person, "I don't know your name, but if I try to sound cool and casual, maybe you won't notice."

Dear friend

Don't claim to be pals when you're probably not, warns Schwalbe. "If you don't know my name, or can't be bothered to use it, we probably aren't friends."

Hi [nickname], ...

Unless someone's introduced themselves with a nickname or uses it in their signature, don't take it upon yourself to shorten their name.



Offence – the way you word your work emails could upset someone (Picture: Getty)

So how is best to start your emails when you're at work?

Here are a few suggestions:

Hi [name]

This one can be made slightly more formal by using the person's surname, says Schwalbe, but either way, it's "friendly and innocuous".

Hi everyone

This one's good for a group of people, says Pachter.

'Greetings, ...'

For Pachter, this is a good backup to "Hi [name] ..." if you don't know the recipient's name.

But she suggests you should always try to find out the name if you can.

