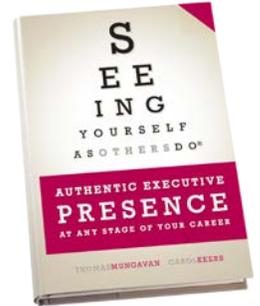




Emails That are More Effective



We have a love/hate relationship with email and text messages. It allows a level of efficiency and reach that was not available before. It provides many communication perils that provide new challenges. People have destroyed relationships, lost jobs or been publically embarrassed by improper emails.

Simple tips to remember:

1. Read what you wrote and ask yourself how it could be misunderstood before pushing [Send]. Say it out loud to yourself or read it out loud to hear what it will sound like to the receiver.
2. Make the “Subject” line clear and relevant. Many people never open email with missing or vague subjects. Words like “FYI”, “ACTION NEEDED” or “UPDATE” clarify.
3. Assume the email will be forwarded to others and ask yourself if this email is what you want to have broadcast.
4. **AVOID USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS** or **too many bold letters**. **PEOPLE FEEL LIKE YOU ARE YELLING!**
5. Written messages are easily misunderstood. Start with the person’s name. Give a single context sentence such “Thanks for the timely update”. Have a friendly email signature such as “Kind regards,” and your name. Optionally, include “Please assume positive intent.” in your signature – and then make sure your intent is positive.
6. Do not respond in anger. When receiving an email that makes you angry, consider the possible positive interpretations. It is easy to misunderstand the intent. The sender may have run through a long list of emails and fired off a response without thinking. It may not seem fair, but it is smart. Angry emails can be E-missiles that do a lot of damage to others and to you. Avoid them. Wait a day. Get help. Don’t hit SEND.
7. Be clear and concise. Open with clarity about the purpose of the email. Use only one to three bullet points, with plenty of white space, or many people won’t read the whole email. If you have more content, attach a document and note the key point in the email.
8. Avoid all sarcasm. Sarcasm and “one liners” do not travel well over the network. Jokes are misinterpreted over 50% of the time in emails.
9. Write an email as though you were sending a letter to your mother or a person you deeply respect - *even if you don’t respect the recipient*. Remember - email has a long shelf life, and can be used against you if you are or angry in the writing process.
10. Only use email for appropriate email subjects. Do not use email to deliver critical messages to the individual. Talk to them in-person or by phone. If there are more than three email exchanges ... consider picking up the phone.

