Email Quick Guide

JOHNS HOPKINS
CAREY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Where business is taught with humanity in mind.

Email is the predominant form of communication in the global business world and knowing how to write clear subjects, appropriate greetings and closings as well as correct and concise content in the proper tone is expected.

The quality of your email is not only a reflection of *you* but also your institution. A poorly written email may leave a negative impression of you and your entire school/place of employment.

SUBJECT LINE

The subject line is the first thing the recipient sees and tells the reader if your email might be of importance.

Do:
- Always have a subject line
- Make it the main point of the email

Don't:
- Include a greeting (e.g. Hello)
- Include your name
- Use punctuation or all capital letters

GREETINGS

A proper greeting tells the recipient how much effort you put into writing the email and influences the reader's first impression of you. Choose a greeting based on how well you know the recipient and message type.

Do:
- Check spelling of the recipient's name
- Use the recipient's correct title (Dr., Mr., Ms.)
- Ensure you have the first & last names in the correct order

Examples
- Dear Ms. Smith, (formal)
- Hello/Hi Caitlin, (informal)

Don't:
- Call the recipient "officer"
- Misspell names
- Use "Hi guys", "Hi folks" or "hey"

TONE

Tone is not what is said, but how it is said. Without the proper tone, you can sound unprofessional or rude.

Do:
- Use modals, such as "could," "would," "may," or "might" in order to avoid making demands
- Consider your audience to make sure you have the appropriate level of formality

Don't:
- Use exclamation marks
- Use absolutes, such as "always" or "never"
- Use emoticons or texting abbreviations
- Send an email while upset or angry

CLOSING

The closing is just as important as the greeting and leaves the reader with a final impression. Refer to the list of acceptable and unacceptable closings below

Do:
- Best,
- Regards,
- Kind regards,
- Sincerely,

Don't:
- Love,
- Yours Truly,
- Yours,
- Best wishes,

FINAL NOTES

- Proofread email/attachments thoroughly before responding.
- Check sender's signature for correct spelling of their name.
- Make sure you have answered all questions.
- Did you hit "reply all" when only "reply" is necessary?