



ACHIEVE
CENTRE FOR LEADERSHIP

PowerPoint Slides for
On-Demand Webinar

How to Use Email Effectively

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WE BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE SHOULD BE ABLE TO LIKE WHERE THEY WORK.

EMAIL IN THE WORKPLACE

- There are 3.9 billion active email users worldwide
- The average employee receives 121 emails per day
- Daily email traffic increases by 5% each year
- About half of our emails are opened on our phones
- 82% of employees check email outside of work hours

GOALS FOR TODAY

- Understand the ways in which our emails can be misunderstood
- Learn how to craft clear and effective emails
- Shift how and when we use email
- Know that shift is necessary to save time, confusion, and unnecessary headaches

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Our message is received in the way we intended:

- We get what we wanted
- We are understood from our point of view
- The other person seems to be fine with the exchange

CONTEXT MATTERS

Effective communication can be disrupted by:

- The situation
- Communication styles
- Cultural context
- Power dynamics

PROS AND CONS OF EMAIL

Pros:

- Fast and convenient
- Can convey lots of information with relative ease
- Provides a record of what was said and agreed upon

Cons:

- It means we're always reachable
- We can end up included in threads unnecessarily
- Most likely to be misunderstood
- Devoid of body language and nonverbal cues

THE ROOTS OF MISCOMMUNICATION

01 | MOOD

- The way your email is read is informed by the mood of the recipient
- If I'm dealing with outside pressures and stressors, I may interpret your meaning negatively
- Be mindful of your tone – be neutral or positive to avoid misinterpretation

02 | MENTAL MODELS

- Your colleagues have different lived experiences
- Our interpretation of situations is based on our past experiences
- Expand your perspective and learn to communicate with your recipient in mind and consider the outcome you'd like to *avoid* (the Inversion Mental Model)
- “Avoiding stupidity is easier than seeking brilliance”
 - Shane Parrish

EMAIL VS. F2F

- A face-to-face request is 34 times more effective than an email request
- Nonverbal cues make all the difference in how people view the legitimacy of your request
- You'd need to ask six people f2f to equal the power of a 200-person email blast
- People tend to overestimate their persuasiveness via email

Vanessa Bohns, "A Face-to-Face Request is 34 Times More Successful than Email,"
Harvard Business Review, 2017

8 STEPS TO A BETTER EMAIL

STEP 01 | THE “WHY”

- What is your message? What outcome do you want? Be *clear*.
- Does this need to be an email, or would another mode of communication be more effective?
 - Do you need an urgent answer? Pick up the phone.
 - Are you sharing background information or documents? Email is best.
 - Are you clarifying details? Can you instant message instead?

STEP 02 | THE “WHO”

- Who is the best person to answer your questions or share this information with?
- Email allows you to include multiple people in one thread, but do they *truly need this information to do their jobs?*
- Reply all, CC, and BCC should be used sparingly.

STEP 03 | THE SUBJECT LINE

- Your subject line should make the main message of the email clear.
- If the email is the book, the subject line is the title (and it's not a mystery novel!).
- Make your ask clear in the subject line:
 - Deadline extended to March 1
 - Submission required by Friday
 - Project X background information as requested

STEP 04 | THE GREETING

- Keeping your tone neutral or positive is easiest when you start off on the right foot.
- Be friendly, professional, and brief:
 - Hi Jessica,
 - Good morning team,
 - Dear Dr. Allan,
- Overused niceties lose their meaning, so dispense with the “I hope this email finds you well” cliches.

STEP 05 | THE BOTTOM LINE

- Start with the key message so you don't lose the message in a wall of text:

Good morning team,

Project X deadline extended to Monday

At our last client meeting, we were granted an extension on the project deadline due to upcoming holidays. We'd like to keep our momentum and use this extra time to meet as a team on Thursday to go over final steps. Final team meeting invite to come. If you have any questions, please stop by my office.

Jessica

STEP 06 | THE TONE

- Be neutral! Write with your recipient in mind.
- Jokes and humour often do not land via text communication, unless you are close with the recipient.
- Before you hit send, ask yourself, “Could this come across in the wrong way?”

Terse: *This report is insufficient and poorly written.*

Neutral: *This report needs a bit more work before we move forward. Let's meet to discuss.*

STEP 07 | THE SIGNOFF

- Short and sweet is the name of the game:
 - Thank you,
 - Thanks,
 - Best,
- Only include necessary info in your signature (title, company, contact info)
- Consider skipping the quotes, images, and LinkedIn URLs
- Make your signature work for you (estimated reply time, pronouns)

STEP 08 | FORMATTING, ATTACHMENTS, AND FOLLOW-UPS

- One font, one size, one colour.
- Only use emphasis to highlight important information, not emotion:
 - Use *italics* or **bold**, never ALL CAPS
- If you're attaching a document, make note of it and its purpose in the email itself.
- Give your recipient at least 48 hours before following up – if your message is urgent, you should call instead of email!

EXAMPLE: STARTING OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT

Subject: Abuse of Overtime

It has recently been brought to my attention that many of the people who are employed by this company have taken advantage of their positions by taking too much overtime. This is happening even when they should be able to get the work done in the time they already have.

Obviously, such practice is against company policy and will result in your dismissal. If there are any questions, please contact this office.

Jessica

WORDINESS

Subject: Abuse of Overtime

It has recently been brought to my attention that many of the people who are employed by this company have taken advantage of their positions by taking too much overtime. This is happening even when they should be able to get the work done in the time they already have.

Obviously, such practice is against company policy and will result in your dismissal. If there are any questions, please contact this office.

Jessica

TONE

Subject: Abuse of Overtime

It has recently been brought to my attention that many of the people who are employed by this company have **taken advantage of their positions** by taking too much overtime. This is happening even when they should be able to get the work done in the time they already have.

Obviously, such practice is against company policy and **will result in your dismissal**. If there are any questions, **please contact this office**.

Jessica

BE BRIEF, NEUTRAL, AND CLEAR

Subject: New overtime policy

Good morning team,

Due to an influx in overtime hours, we've decided to revamp our overtime policy. Effective immediately, each team member is required to get their supervisor's approval before working overtime hours. If you have any questions about this new policy, please feel free to email me or stop by my office.

Best,

Jessica

KEY TAKEAWAYS

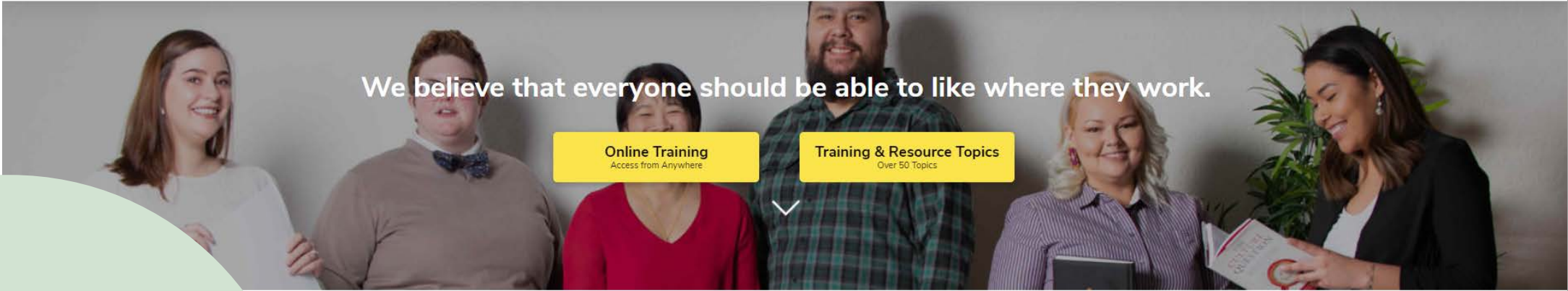
**Determine the best method
of communication for
each scenario.**

**Be clear on your purpose,
message, and recipient.**

**Be neutral and write with your
recipient in mind.**

**Include only what is
necessary.**

**Model the email etiquette
you want to see from others.**



Check out
our website for
additional
resources!

Our Free Resources



Free On-Demand Workshop
DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS – STRATEGIES
FOR CHALLENGING DISCUSSIONS

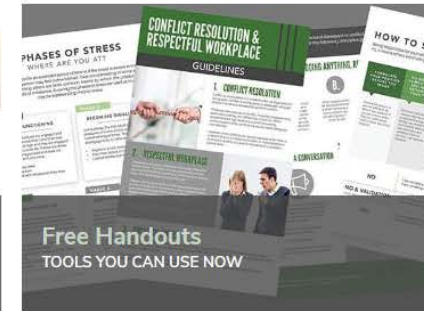


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Change Management
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CHANGE MANAGEMENT - A LEADER'S GUIDE

TRAINER: Wendy Lawson



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