

Write Right!

Seven tips to crafting emails that grab attention



By Brian Sullivan

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R U Amazed at the affect email and texting has had on the way we use grammar, and how we spell in our electronic communication? OMG, it ain't right that you and me have been slackin' off with our spellin' and such in emails.

Sentences with spelling and grammatical errors like the ones you just read are littering emails we send every day. For many, the speed of an email has become more important than the content and the grammatical correctness.

Your prospects and peers will judge your ability to serve them by the words you use. Every email you send that looks like the neighbor's first grade kid wrote it tells the recipient that accuracy is not important to you. It also says you DON'T pay attention to detail.

Every email

Are accuracy and attention to detail important qualities in a salesperson, an operations manager, or a sales leader? Of course! Every email you send is like a brochure that represents your ability to perform. Here are some email tips that will help you show others you are PRECISE:

- Use Spell Check with every email. It takes 20 seconds and will save you from looking unprofessional.
- Read your email back to yourself before pressing the send button. More than half the time you will make a correction.
- Make your point once. Use as few words as possible to convey your message. Not only will this minimize your chances of making a grammatical error, but it will also help your message "stick." (this works with voicemail as well)
- Take 15 seconds to think about the objective of the email before you write it. Email should be a tool for action. After the recipient reads your email, what do you want them to do? If the email isn't getting them to do something, perhaps it isn't necessary to send it.
- Be yourself. Your email should read as if the person feels like you are there in the room. Write the email in the same tone you would project verbally.
- Avoid corporate jargon. "*Dear recipient, our company's value proposition is one that is guaranteed to produce optimal outcomes.*" Who talks like that? Use "plain speak" instead. Your message will resonate more because they will know that you aren't a corporate stiff.
- Have fun (when it's appropriate). Consider going to Google Images and finding an image that would create an emotional reaction from the reader. For example, let's say your reader had a recent birthday. Go to Google Images, type in *Birthday Cake*, and watch how many fun images come up. Insert that image into your email and you will help take your reader out of their workday for just a minute...by making a human connection. Cheesy? Maybe. But if your emails look, read, feel and smell like everybody else's; it will be tough to get their full attention while they read.

So this week, get back to English (and Action) class. While it might not be necessary to start diagramming sentences, it could be time to be more PRECISE with one of our greatest sales and service weapons ... the written word. ■