

EMAIL

THE BASICS

Email is an ever-growing form of communication, and as you progress in your career it is likely that your use of this communication vehicle will only increase. Whether it be to Team Members, Managers, your Supervisor, your Franchisee, Customers, Toppers HQ Team, or anyone else, it's important that leaders possess great communications skills, which includes email. There is plenty of information on this subject out there; whole books are written on this one subject. Below you will find some basics regarding the use of email and email etiquette.

EMAIL ADDRESS

Like it or not, your email address will tell other people something about you as a leader. It is recommended that Managers and above have email addresses that appear professional, rather than using a personal email address. This could be as simple as [your_name@gmail.com](#), or could include "toppers" in some way (e.g. [toppersmadisonMIT@gmail.com](#)). Just imagine if you received a business-type email from [lazydaze1605@hotmail.com](#). What would your initial thoughts of that "business person" be?

EMAIL/TEXT/PHONE

With so many ways to communicate, sometimes it can be difficult to choose the best method. Sometimes the method doesn't matter that much, but in other cases it matters immensely. Here are some guidelines to consider before choosing which method is right:

TEXT

Texting is about the most informal way to communicate. Therefore, it should only be used for informal communications. Texts should generally be positive and short. Stay away from text as a communication method if:

- The subject is, or could be viewed as negative by the recipient
- If the message is formal
- If you or the recipient are upset with each other in any way
- The message is professional in nature

EMAIL

Emails should be reserved for more formal communications. However, email should not be used to scold or reprimand someone. That type of situation involves a lot of emotion that is better reserved for an in-person or over the phone conversation. Email should also be used when you need to attach additional information, or if you want a record of a specific communication.

PHONE/IN-PERSON

These methods should be reserved for any communication that could be viewed negatively by the recipient, or when tensions are high or trust is low. In these situations, it is best that the people involved can hear the inflection of the other person's voice, see their body language, and react to each other in real time.

BUILDING A QUALITY EMAIL

TO/CC/BCC

The "To:" line should be reserved for the people to whom the email is directed, or the people who will take action regarding the content of the email.

The Carbon Copy ("CC:") line should be reserved for the stakeholders; people who you want to have the information within the email, but not necessarily the people who need to respond or take any action.

The Blind Carbon Copy ("BCC:") line can be a tricky line to use. When you put someone on this line, the other recipients won't know they are on it. This line should be used in mass emails in which the sender doesn't want all recipients to reply to all recipients because it would create a large amount of replies. In that case, it is recommended the sender write who the email is sent to at the bottom of the body of the email (e.g. this email is being sent to Franchisees and Supervisors). This line can be tricky when the sender wants someone to be BCC'd, but doesn't want the recipient and CC'd lines to know they are copied. When a sender does this, it can create negativity. Imagine if you sent an email to someone about their negative performance and BCC'd the Franchisee. How would that make the recipient feel? In these cases, it's best to either just put that person on the CC line, or forward them the message in a separate email.

SUBJECT

The subject line can tell the recipient a lot about the email when done well, and can be confusing when not done well. The subject line should be descriptive enough for the recipient to understand what the email is about. Let's say you are sending out an email to other Managers and your Supervisor regarding current LSM efforts and future plans:

- Bad email subject: “LSM”
- Good email subject: “LSM – Period 2 Recap/Period 3 Plans”

EMAIL BODY STRUCTURE

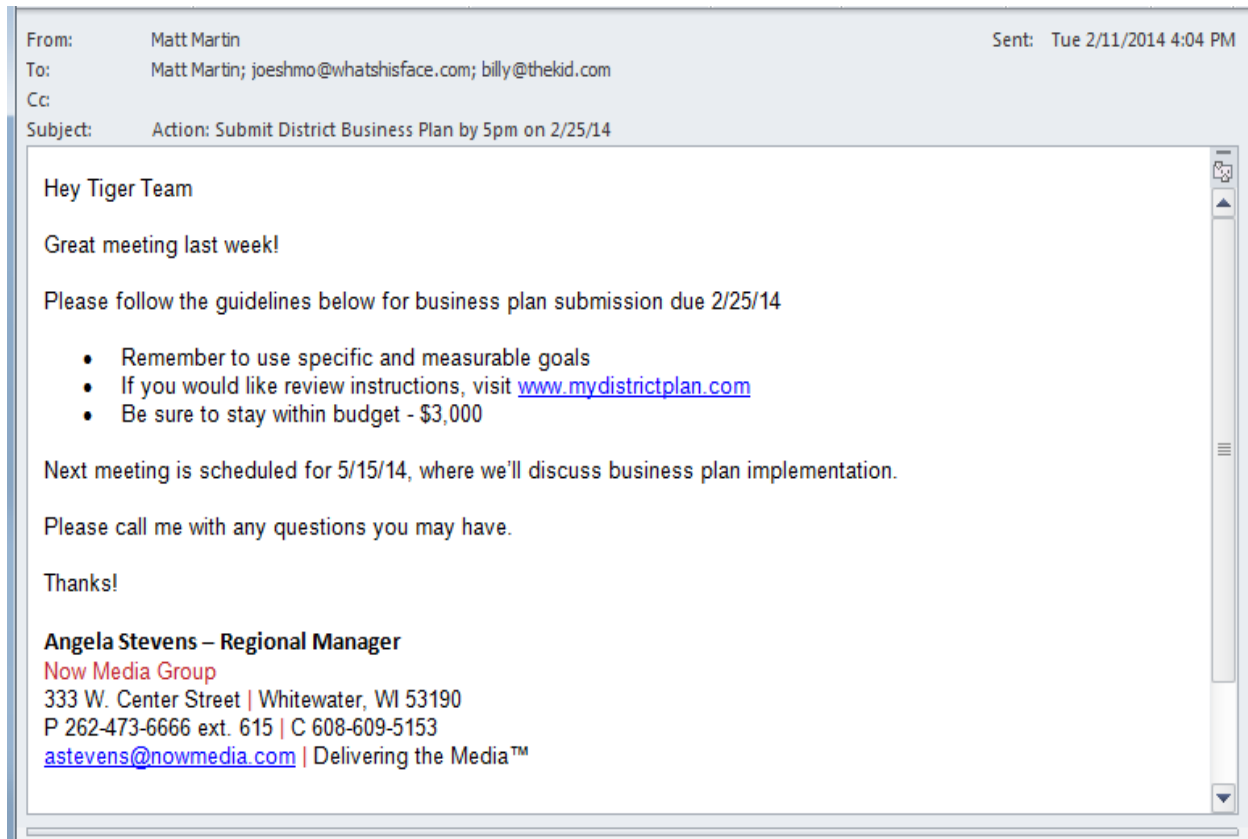
Be very brief in the greeting. Recipients want you to get to the point as quickly as possible. No wall of words to sift through.

- A – Action Summary
 - One sentence that summarizes the action and/or point of the email
- B – Background
 - Sort out and hone your ideas beforehand (especially with longer emails)
 - Use space to clearly separate different thoughts
 - Be judicious with the amount of words you use – Clear and concise
 - Use bullet points to call out major items
- C – Close
 - Keep extensive niceties at the end of the email
 - Next steps

Bad email body example:



Good email body example:



PROFESSIONALISM

How you communicate will have an impact on how people view you as a leader. There are many factors that go into sending professional emails. Below are some basics to keep in mind:

- Spelling
 - This day and age, technology makes it very easy to spell correctly. Be sure to have your spell-checker turned on in your email options. Also, keep common text message abbreviations in text messages rather than incorporating them into professional emails. Using “lol” and “bff” are not professional.
- Grammar
 - Not everyone is a grammar wizard. If this isn’t your strong point, you could spend some time refreshing on the basics of grammar by seeing what free or paid teaching tools are out there. Grammar can have a huge impact on how your recipient views you as a leader.

- Emotional Emails
 - Be careful of sending emails when your emotions are high. In these cases, sometimes it's best to wait a while (maybe even a couple days) to let your emotions cool down before hitting that "send" button.
- Re-Read Before Sending
 - It is a best practice to re-read your email message prior to sending it. It is very common to misspell something, leave a word out of a sentence, or even forget to put a vital piece of information in the email. When you re-read, also try to read it from the recipient's perspective. Think about how they could interpret your message, and adjust it as needed before sending it out. Not re-reading can save you a few minutes here and there, but it will likely end up costing you more time in the long run in verifying information when recipients have questions, or resending follow up emails with information that should have been sent the first time around.