Writing a Good Email

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Being able to write a good email or message on LinkedIn, Slack, etc. can be the difference between getting a prompt response or getting ignored. Good emails follow a similar pattern, so once you identify the pattern you'll be able to adapt it to any situation. Once you get good at crafting emails, it will be easier and faster.

Good emails/messages are:

- **Personalized**: If you accidentally sent this to the wrong person, would it still make sense? It shouldn't. The person receiving the message should feel like it's personal to them, not a mass email or spam.
- **Professional**: Is your language too casual? Make sure your language is formal enough for the occasion/environment.
- **Short**: Can you make the same point using fewer words? You want your message to be clear and concise.
- **Structured**: Is there a way to rearrange the sentences or paragraphs to make it easier to skim? You don't want your message to look like a big block of text. This can be overwhelming. Line breaks, bullet points, bold words, and underline are your friends.
- **Actionable**: If someone read this quickly, would they know what they were supposed to do next?

Here are some examples you can adapt for different situations:

1. Get introduced to someone: Notice the specific subject line, personalized outreach, clear call to action, specific reason for the ask, attempt to make things easy for the recipient, and giving the recipient an out.

> *Subject: Seeking an introduction to Triston Francis*
>
> *Hi Nanako,*
>
> *Nice to see you the other day! How did your presentation go?*
>
> *I'm wondering if you might be close enough to Triston Francis to make an introduction.*
>
> *I'm working on a research project on ____ and noticed that he worked at ____ and you're connected on LinkedIn. I was hoping to get his perspective on ___.*
>
> *If you would be open to making an intro, I can send you a blurb about myself to pass along. If I caught you at a bad time, no pressure at all – let me know either way.*
>
> *Best,*
>
> *John*

2. Introduce two people: Notice the specific subject line, how it starts by introducing the first person, then the second person, and signs off professionally.

> *Subject: Triston Francis <> John Chen re: academic career*
>
> *John: Please meet Triston Francis, a mentor and current ____.*
>
> *Triston: Please meet John Chen, a colleague and current ___ who is interested in speaking with you about ____.*

Hope you all get a chance to connect!

Best,

Nanako

3. Schedule a meeting: Notice how this message responds to the original thread, thanks the person who made the introduction and moves them to Bcc, thanks the person who is being introduced, gives a clear request, lists the specific dates and times when you're available (in the other person's time zone), offers flexibility, and signs off professionally.

Subject: Re: Triston Francis <> John Chen re: academic career

Nanako: Thanks so much for the intro. Moving you to Bcc unless you'd like to remain looped in.

Triston: Nice to e-meet you. Appreciate your willingness to connect.

Might you be open to a phone or video call in the coming days?

My availability is as follows (all times in PST):

- *Tues 10/27: before 2 pm and after 3 pm*
- *Wed 10/28: anytime*
- *Thurs 10/29: before 2 pm and 3-4 pm*
- *Friday 10/30: anytime*

If the above times don't work, feel free to suggest alternatives that work for you.

Look forward to chatting,

John

4. Send a calendar invitation: Calendar invites are often sent through a calendar platform, but it's still important to be clear and precise with the information you send. Notice how the subject/meeting title is clear, that it makes it clear who will contact whom and how, and that the invite is at a specific time in the correct time zone.

Meeting name: Triston/Shuo call re: nonprofit experience

Location: Shuo to call Triston at (617)123-4567

Time: Wed 10/28, 2-3 pm ET

5. Thank others: Notice how this message replies to the original thread, gives a specific and personalized reason for why you're grateful, follows up on whatever you discussed including anything you promised to send, and signs off professionally.

Subject: Re: Triston Francis <> John Chen

Hi Triston,

Thanks so much for taking time out of your busy schedule to chat earlier. It was great hearing about your experiences

> *with ___. I especially appreciate your advice about ___ and will be sure to ____. Thanks also for your willingness to introduce me to your colleague ____.*
>
> *Here's a brief introduction you can feel free to send:*
>
> *John Chen is a _____ who is currently working on ____ and is interested in speaking with you about ____.*
>
> *Looking forward to staying in touch,*
>
> *John*

6. Share information: Notice the clear subject line, greeting, how the information is shared as briefly as possible and with a hyperlink where helpful, how it gives a personal and specific reason for reaching out, the clear call to action, the next steps and the option to say no, and the professional sign off.

> *Subject line: Potential opportunity advising a high school entrepreneurship competition*
>
> *Hi Triston,*
>
> *Hope you had a nice holiday and new year!*
>
> *A contact (Lily Newman) who is leading the Creators Challenge, a high school entrepreneurship competition funded by the Watson Family Foundation is looking for advisors who can serve on their judging panel next month.*
>
> *Naturally, I thought of you given our conversation last year about your desire to get more involved with youth entrepreneurship programs.*
>
> *Is this something you would be interested in?*
>
> *Let me know and I can introduce you via email and you can get more details about the opportunity. Completely understand if this isn't a good time or fit.*
>
> *Looking forward to hearing from you,*
>
> *John*

Note: Content is adapted from the book The Unspoken Rules: Secrets to Starting Your Career Off Right with permission from Gorick Ng.