

Writing Professional Emails

PROBLEMS OF INEFFECTIVE EMAILS

Ever wondered why you occasionally end up not receiving any reply to your emails? Well, one reason is because sometimes they are written in an ineffective way. Problems of ineffective emails include:

- Lack of respect and formality
- Lack of supporting details
- Lack of action items

HOW TO EFFECTIVELY COMPOSE A PROFESSIONAL EMAIL

1. Include a concise subject relevant to the email content.
2. Address the recipient properly.
3. Include a kind opening.
4. Introduce yourself.
5. Get to your main point early on.
6. Add supporting details: background, attachments, deadlines, options...
7. Include an action item.
8. Close the email by showing thankfulness.
9. Sign your full name.
10. Remember to be formal and concise throughout your email.

ANNOTATED EXAMPLE (adapted from the MIT BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING COMMUNICATION LAB)

Subject: Questions about undergraduate thesis¹

Dear Dr. Doe,²

I hope you are doing well.³ I am a junior studying biochemistry,⁴ and I kindly have a couple of questions regarding pursuing a senior thesis next year.⁵ Would it be possible to briefly meet with you to ask a few questions? If so, would you be able to meet today (Wednesday) between 2 and 4 pm, Thursday after 2 pm, or Friday after 11 am?⁶ If not, kindly let me know your time availability.⁷

Thank you very much for your time,

Best regards,⁸

John Smith⁹

the HUB THINK. WRITE. SPEAK.