

Writing a Professional Email

Parts of an email

Subject Line

Always fill in the subject line with a topic that means something to your reader. Not "Decals" or "Important!" but "Deadline for New Parking Decals."

Address

Good morning/Good afternoon/Hello ...

Greeting

I hope you are well.

It was great to see you last Tuesday at the ...

Thank you for agreeing to assist with ...

(COVID-19 edition) I hope you are staying safe and healthy.

Body – what do you want to say

Be brief and to the point. If you need to add extra information that is helpful but not immediately pertinent, add it at the end. (ex. "Below you will find driving instructions and a list of attendees")

Closing

Warm regards/Sincerely/ Thank you, *your name*

Signature

Include your name, current job title (or school) and relevant contact information

Tips

- Put your main point in the opening sentence.
- Never begin a message with a vague "This"—as in "This needs to be done by 5:00." Always specify what you're writing about.
- Don't use ALL CAPITALS
- PLZ avoid text speak
- Be brief *and* polite. If your message runs longer than two or three short paragraphs, consider (a) reducing the message or (b) providing an attachment
- Remember to say "please" and "thank you." And mean it.
- Edit and proofread
- Reply promptly to serious messages. If you need more than 24 hours to collect information or make a decision, send a brief response explaining the delay.

Standing your ground in an email

- Avoid phrases that discredit your statement: "just", "could you", "if you wouldn't mind"
- Get straight to the point and ask for or state exactly what you want/expect
- If necessary, explain your reasoning – but do not overthink it.

Professional Signature Example

Jane Doe
Intern - Employer Relations, Career Services
978.542.6406

Salem State University
352 Lafayette Street, Salem, MA 01970
salemstate.edu

Student Signature Example

Jane Doe
Psychology Student, Salem State University
Member of Psi Chi
Mobile: 555-555-5555
Email: JDoe@salemstate.edu

Signature Tips

- Provide all contact information you are comfortable sharing.
- Do not clutter the signature block with a quotation or unnecessary artwork.