

TIPS ON EFFECTIVE EMAIL COMMUNICATION FOR JOB/INTERNSHIP SEARCH

Writing direct, professional and appropriate emails can be an important part of the job search process. Often this is your first introduction to a networking contact, human resources, hiring manager or alumnus/a at a targeted company. Every correspondence that you have with a potential employer helps them form an impression of you. So what can you do to make sure you are demonstrating good communication skills and to ensure that you are presenting your “best self”? These tips will focus on email etiquette for the job search process.

GENERAL STRATEGIES

Always be pleasant, concise and direct and use a clear email subject line. Read through all of your correspondence and make sure it sounds polite and free of grammatical/spelling errors before sending. In this digital age it is easy to fall back on texting type formats. Be mindful of no “emoji’s” and no slang or words/statements written in capital letters. Present yourself in an authentic way in writing – be yourself-but be professional. Good phrases include “I really appreciate your time” or “I know how busy you are, this means a lot to me”. Make sure all emails have a footer with your email address, LinkedIn profile hyperlink, phone number and, if appropriate, website or blog.

STRUCTURE OF EMAIL REQUESTS

- Identify yourself and show when and how you may be connected, (e.g. mutual contact, professor, alumni event).
- Disclose your purpose “I am writing you because you are working as a Financial Analyst, an area I am interested in” , or “As a fellow alumni involved in the Hofstra Investment Club and a recent graduate of the Zarb Business School, I am looking for advice and information” . Another example might be, “I would be interested in asking a few questions about your area of expertise to understand more about career paths in your industry”.
- Describe the action you want or what you need, “Can we plan a 20-25 minute informational meeting either on the phone or in person?”
- Show appreciation and indicate how you will follow up

COLD EMAILS

This is the term used when you are reaching out to someone that you do not know or where you do not have a mutual connection.

- Be sure to include a reference to a common interest, e.g. “I have been following your website/blog or your profile on Linked In”
- Keep email concise
- Think about what you have to offer *them* (e.g. information, introductions, contacts)

- Make a request - “Would you be willing to provide advice or information through a phone call or in person meeting?”
- Make sure you know the appropriate title to use when addressing a person in a cold email. If you are not sure, ask someone, like that person’s assistant or a co-worker, or contact in the company.

FOLLOW UP EMAILS

Follow Up emails can be as a result of a “request for additional information” from an employer or after an interview/networking meeting. In these situations, the general strategies apply, with a few additional ones:

- If you don’t understand what the individual is asking of you, use your reply to ask clarifying questions; see your reply as an opportunity to get more information.
- After an informational meeting or interview, write a short email within the next 24 hours to thank someone for their time and mention something that you learned or gained from the meeting/interaction. Communicate what you did after you spoke to a person in a networking meeting that was based on their advice
- Provide an article, business project or contact as a follow up that relates to your conversation in a networking meeting or an interview. If you promise additional information, make sure you provide it within a couple of days
- If you reach out for a networking/information meeting and you do not receive a response, it is appropriate to send one follow up email with the same information no sooner than one week.
- Stay in touch after an interview by sending a “thank you” email within 24 – 48 hours.
- Remember all written communications are a reflection of your professionalism and enthusiasm. Recruiters, hiring managers and alumni receive a lot of emails every day. These are just a few tips on email etiquette that can greatly affect your chances of getting that meeting, interview or first job.