

# **Professional Emails**

Email is a primary form of communication for businesses and other professional groups. Knowing when and how to write effective emails is critical because email often provides the first impression of you and your communication skills.

#### Before and while you write . . .

Make sure every component of your message is correct, concise, and clear. Consider the following:

**Audience:** Who are you writing to? What is their relationship to you or the email's subject?

**Purpose:** Why are you writing? What do you want recipients to know/do after they read the email?

Context: What situation is prompting you to write? Is the recipient familiar with it? What more do you need to explain?

#### **Recipients**

Always doublecheck the recipient bar for accuracy. Some email programs default to *Reply All*, so make sure your message goes only to the intended individual(s). Be aware, however, that your message may be forwarded to others.

## **Subject Line**

Your subject line should state your purpose clearly, provide essential information about the message's content, and include logical, searchable keywords for future reference.

Example: Request for Meeting-Sturgis Owl, COMM 2000/13 OR Seeking a PR Internship—Sturgis T. Owl

## **Opening**

- Begin with a greeting followed by the recipient's title and name and a comma. Depending on context, salutations can range from less formal to more formal: Hello Good morning Dear To whom it may concern. *Example: Hello Professor Audubon, OR Dear Ms. Petersen,*
- Identify yourself if there is a possibility that the recipient will not automatically recognize your name.
- State your purpose and explain any necessary context within the first paragraph.

  Example: I am in my final year as Public Relations major at Kennesaw State University and would like to speak with you regarding internship possibilities in your Predator Bird Awareness Division.

## **Body**

- The shorter the email, the more likely the recipient will read the entire message. Use concise wording and short paragraphs (2-4 sentences).
- Consider using bullets and numbering in longer emails to improve readability and highlight your main points.

#### Closing

- Conclude the email by respectfully suggesting possible outcomes or next steps, if appropriate. Example: I look forward to hearing from you soon so that we can set up a meeting at your earliest convenience.
- Include a closing of suitable formality (Thank you Sincerely Regards), followed by a comma and your name.

Example: Thank you, Sturgis Owl OR Sincerely, Sturgis T. Owl

#### Dos and Don'ts for Effective Emails

| DO  | DON'T  |
|---|--|
| address (i.e., no silly usernames)  • Use complete sentences and standard English | <ul> <li>Discuss sensitive or confidential topics</li> <li>Ask anything urgent</li> <li>Rant or complain</li> <li>Use all CAPS, emotic@ns, or excessive punctuation (i.e., !! or ???)</li> </ul> |