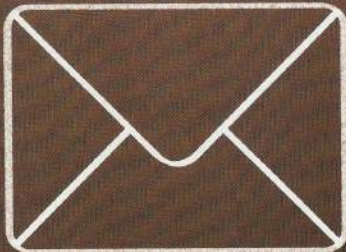


Business email Etiquette

By Maria Pantalone



As an exercise professional, your ability to communicate effectively enhances your expert image. It also enables you to assist your clients in achieving their fitness goals, promote healthy living and can also provide a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

Email is fast, inexpensive and easy to use. However emails are just as important as any other form of business correspondence so the same standards of etiquette and professionalism should apply to your writing.

HERE ARE 10 BUSINESS EMAIL ETIQUETTE POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN WRITING YOUR NEXT EMAIL

1. Is an email appropriate?

Think about your message and its purpose. Consider an alternative to email when your message is personal or confidential, if you require an immediate response, or if you're concerned that your message might not be clearly understood.

2. Write an informative subject line

When you send an email you want to ensure that it's opened, read and acted upon. The subject line of each email message needs to say precisely what the email is about.

3. Structure your message

When writing an email think about:

- Purpose: Why are you sending it?
- Desired outcome: What do you want the reader to do?
- Your reader: How will they feel or react in response to your email?

4. Be concise

A computer monitor only shows about half of what you see on the hard copy of an email. Most people don't like scrolling down a screen, so use short paragraphs and leave blank lines between them.

5. Know your audience

Every time you write something you should have a particular reader or audience in mind.

- Are you writing to a new client for the first time?
 - Are you writing to potential clients highlighting your gym's facilities and programs?
- Knowing your audience can help determine the appropriate language, content and tone.

6. Make your message readable

As in any form of written communication, respect common grammar and spelling conventions by using standard capitalisation and spelling; and spacing out information so the message is easy to read. You can also personalise the message by using a conversational tone of voice.

7. Personalise your email and include a sign-off

When you write an email, you're writing to a person, so be polite and acknowledge them. Address them by name and include a sign-off. This promotes a professional and courteous image, and also makes your email more pleasant to receive. Including a signature with contact details enables the reader to contact you if needed and doesn't require you to include these details in the body of your email.

8. Think before you click Send

Email is so quick that it's often tempting to reply without thinking through the implications. If you find yourself writing with strong feelings about an issue, draft your response and don't send it immediately. Have a break, and then check it later to see whether it's still what you want to say.

9. Check attachments

If you've referred to an attachment in your email, such as an exercise program that you've developed for a client, check that you've actually attached the document... and the correct one at that!

10. Check what you've written

It's important to check your message before you send it and correct any errors. Check that the message covers exactly what you wanted to convey, and that the key information is contained within the first few sentences. Give it a quick proofread for spelling mistakes and grammatical errors too.

BY FOLLOWING THESE POINTS, YOUR EMAILS WILL MORE LIKELY BE OPENED, READ AND ACTED UPON.

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