

Operations - Email Etiquette

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| WHY | <p><i>"There are four ways and only ways in which we have contact with the world. We are evaluated and classified by these four contacts. What we do, how we look, what we say and how we say it" - Dale Carnegie 1888-1955.</i></p> <p>This short course covers the basics of written communication, impacting how people we perceive you as well as your organisation.</p> |
| WHO | <p>Audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hospitality professionals of all levels - Anyone curious about communication <p>Facilitator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-learning - Managers of all levels |
| WHAT | <p>Content includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction - Friendly - Professional - Focused <p>Content length:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approximately 30 minutes |
| HOW | <p>1st Read content and select what you believe to be useful for you/your team</p> <p>2nd Decide what element you/your team will apply and make a plan</p> <p>3rd Set a deadline for application to be reviewed</p> <p>4th Review results, amend methods according to specific needs and apply again until satisfied</p> |

Operations - Email Etiquette

Just as with any other form of communication, how you communicate through emails says a about the company and also a lot about you. You want your emails to show you as:

1. Friendly, understanding and a pleasure to do business/work with
2. A credible professional
3. Solution focused.

It should become a habit to quickly sense check all emails you send, whether to external or internal customers, and see if they tick all the above boxes. If they don't, make changes until they do.

Friendly, understanding and a pleasure to do business/work with!

- Whether you want the emphasis to be more on 'friendly' or more on 'understanding' depends on your relationship with the customer or the colleague, but the email needs to be one or the other. Anger, irritation or annoyances are not appropriate emotions to express by email.
- Avoid caps lock in any email. It makes you seem ANGRY and very SHOUTY indeed.
- Minimise use of exclamation marks. It can make you appear lightweight and a little immature. (If you are the enthusiastic, bouncy type and feel bereft without the exclamation marks, then re-read and decide to keep one, and one only!)
- Remember, being a good relationship builder is crucial to being effective in a customer service business, whether you deal with internal or external or external customers. Re-read and sense check. Do you sound understanding and friendly?

A credible professional

- Pay attention to detail. Spelling, use of capital letters, punctuation and grammar in particular. Use standard fonts and avoid abbreviations.
- Respond promptly. If you need to do some investigating before you can give a considered response, contact the person who sent the email to let them know.
- The subject: Don't forget to pay attention to the title of the email. Keep it short, relevant, check for typos and don't use all caps or all small case.
- Beginning and ending the email: Formal or informal? Look at how the person you are responding to has begun and ended their email and uses as a guide (unless they have jumped right in and not bothered to sign off). If in doubt, err towards the formal. If you have spoken to the person on the phone, or already know them, then it's usually ok to be more informal and friendlier in the way you start and end your email.

- Don't copy in new people when replying unless you address them directly in the email. It's a good manners thing, and you need to make sure you don't come across as point scoring or accusatory by copying in someone else.
- Make sure you use reply all with caution. Think hard about what you are saying and who is going to read it.

Be solution focused

- This one's self-explanatory. If someone has highlighted a potential problem, try and help them find a solution. Don't bat back with excuses, blame or offer another problem in response.
- If you aren't able to help with a solution immediately, let the person know what steps you are taking, perhaps investigating further or connecting to someone who might be better placed to give support and keep them informed at all stages.
- If you offer a time frame, stick to it.
- Offer alternative solutions if at all possible.

NOTE: Remember that all of the above applies to emails to both external and internal customers. The 'you' that comes through in your emails to colleagues needs just as much thought as the 'you' that you present to paying customers.

Proof read, proof read, proof read.