

Formatting Tips for Sending Professional Emails

Alison Doyle

When you're sending an inquiry about a job, applying for a job, or writing other professional correspondence, it's important to format your email as professionally as you would any other business letter.

After all, everyone—recruiters and hiring managers included—receives a lot of emails. Make sure that your emails stand out because of the content, and not because of sloppy mistakes, poor formatting, or overly casual language

Here's what to include when sending business-related correspondence and the email message format you should use to send professional email messages.

Note

Use a readable font in a 10- or 12-point size in your emails. Send job search-related emails from a professional email address. Ideally, your email address should include some combination of your first and last name or first initial and last name.

How to Format an Email Message

Your email message should be formatted like a typical business letter, with spaces between paragraphs and no typos or grammatical errors.

- Don't mistake length for quality—keep your email brief and to the point.
- Avoid overly complicated or long sentences.
- Make it easy for email recipients to quickly scan through your email and know why you're emailing.
- Proofread it, just like you would any other correspondence.
- If you're really concerned about typos, consider printing out the email draft. Often, it's easier to catch typos and grammatical errors on a hard copy than while reviewing on a screen.

Review the email message template and sample email message below to see what your message should look like.

Subject Line

Don't forget to include a [subject line](#) in your email.

If you forget to include one, your message probably isn't even going to get opened. Use the subject line to summarize why you're emailing. Some examples of strong subject lines:

- Application for Marketing Associate - Jane Smith
- Informational Interview Request
- Thank You - Marketing Associate Interview

- Referred by [Person's Name] for [Informational Interview, Discuss XYZ, etc.]

Salutation or Greeting

If you have a contact person, address your email to Dear Mr./Ms. LastName. If possible, find out the hiring manager's name. This information is sometimes included in the job listing. If it's not, use sites like LinkedIn to determine the contact person, or check the company's website for information.

If there is a contact number, you can also call the company's front desk and see if the receptionist can provide information. Check your own network too: Do you know anyone who works at the company and might be able to share more information?

Note

If you do not have the contact person's name, simply address your email to Dear Hiring Manager. Another option is to not include a salutation and to simply start with the first paragraph of your message.

The Body of the Message

When you write your message, include a few short paragraphs:

- Introduction (who you are) (first paragraph)
- The reason you're writing (second and optional third paragraph)
- Thanks for the consideration

If you're applying for a job, copy and paste your cover letter into the email message or write your cover letter in the body of an email message. If the job posting asks you to send your resume as an attachment, send your resume as a PDF or a Word document.

When you're inquiring about available positions or networking, be clear about why you are writing and the purpose of your email message.

Closing

Include a formal closing, such as sincerely or regards, when you send your message. Here's a list of [closing examples](#) to choose from.

Include an Email Signature

It's important to create an email signature and to include your signature with every message you send.

Include your full name, your email address, and your phone number in your email signature, so the hiring manager can see, at a glance, how to contact you. You can also include a link to your LinkedIn profile page or website so that recruiters and hiring managers can easily find out more information about you.

Don't Forget Attachments

Sending a job search email often involves attaching files, a resume, a portfolio, or other sample work. Make sure to double-check that you have attached all the files mentioned in your email before hitting the "send" button.

Email Message Template

The following email message template lists the information you need to include in the email messages you send when job searching. Use the template as a guideline to create customized email messages to send to employers and connections.

Template for a Professional Email

Subject Line of Email Message: Store Manager Position - Your Name

Salutation: Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name or Dear Hiring Manager:

First Paragraph:

The first paragraph of your letter should include information on why you are writing. Be clear and direct—if you are applying for a job, mention the job title. If you want an informational interview, state that in your opening sentences.

Middle Paragraph:

The next section of your email message should describe what you have to offer the employer or if you're writing to ask for help, what type of assistance you are seeking.

Final Paragraph:

Conclude your cover letter by thanking the employer for considering you for the position or your connection for helping with your job search.

Closing:

Sincerely,

Your Name

Email Signature:

FirstName LastName

Email address

Phone

LinkedIn profile URL (optional)

Professional Email Message Example

Sample Email Message

Subject: Adjunct Faculty Position Search - Brianna Clumber

Dear Dr. Reginald,

I am writing today to inquire about the possibility of applying for a position as a teaching assistant at your university. This summer, I will be moving to your area. I was given your name by Dr. Nelson who was one of my professors at the University of Northern Realms.

I have a master's degree in Indigenous Studies from the University of Northern Realms, and I assisted with several classes while finishing my degree.

In addition, I am interested in learning more about your Ph.D. program in North American History. Perhaps we can schedule a meeting so that I can learn more about the program.

I've attached my resume for your perusal. Thank you for your time, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Brianna Clumber

Brianna Clumber
brianna.clumber@email.com
555-123-4567
[linkedin.com/in/briannaclumber](https://www.linkedin.com/in/briannaclumber)

Key Takeaways

- Take as much care with professional email messages as you would any other business correspondence.
- Choose a font size and type that are both readable, watch out for typos, and format your message so that it is easy to understand.
- Use a subject line that clearly states the topic of your message, e.g., "John Smith - Administrative Assistant Position."
- Include an email signature containing your full name, email address, and phone number.