

# My Top 33 Email Tips (Part 1)



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I've probably sent and received more than 500,000 emails over the last 10+ years. And combined with my focus on the little things that matter, I have formed some strong views on the subject. In this two-part lesson you will learn 33 tips that will improve your

email communication.

As you review the list, you may feel these are picky little details that don't really matter. Don't allow yourself to think this way. Everything matters! Today's post will cover the first 16 and tomorrow's will outline the remaining 17.

1. **Take pride In your emails**—As I pointed out in [What's Your Email Brand?](#) every email you send makes an impression and plays a small role in defining your brand. If email is your primary form of communication, what you say and how you say it will play a significant role in how you are viewed.
2. **Write short paragraphs**—Keep your paragraphs short. They will be easier to read and will improve the likelihood of them being read. I generally limit my paragraphs to two sentences.
3. **Keep your sentences short**—Shorter sentences are preferred in the online copywriting world. The reason is simple. They are easier to read.
4. **Be careful what you forward**—Everything you forward is a reflection of your personal brand. Don't forward things unless you believe they will provide value, make someone smile or enrich their lives.
5. **Tell them why you are forwarding it**—When you forward an article, email or blog post, take an extra 15 seconds to explain why you are sending it. I hate guessing why someone sent me something.
6. **Select an email address that identifies you**—Select an email address that includes your first and last name. This will make it easier for people to identify you by your email and find your email address in their address book.

7. **Respond to your emails**—The number of people who don't return emails in a timely manner is on the rise. Maybe it's because they are over committed at work or perhaps they are struggling with balancing their career and family. Regardless of the reason, if you fall into that category, you will run the risk of destroying your reputation, losing your friends' respect and reducing your market value. Most people expect an email response within 24 hours. If you can't always return all your emails within 24 hours, make those times the exception and not the norm.

8. **Use "bcc" for multiple recipients**—If you want to send an email to a large group of people, put your name in the "To" field and put everyone else's in the "Bcc" field. This will allow you to keep your email addresses private and keep your email clean. It also prevents someone from pressing "reply all" and wasting everyone's time with a response that should only be directed to you.

9. **Select the right email provider**—I strongly suggest that you get an email address from a national company and not one from your local utility company or cable service provider. If you have an email address tied a local ISP or utility company, then if you move and/or change utility providers, you will likely lose your email address. Select long standing recognized companies with names that are easy to spell like gmail or yahoo and please, NO ads or jumping monkeys.

10. **Be friendly**—Your demeanor in your online communication should be similar to how you interact offline. If you value your relationships, take an extra 15 seconds to type something friendly at the beginning and/or at the end of the email. It could be simple one-liners such as "I hope you had a relaxing your weekend" or "Thanks for all you do."

11. **Be professional**—If you want to be viewed as a professional, then make sure you present yourself as one.

12. **Proof your emails**—Never send an email without proofing it at least once. If it is important, then read it 2 or 3 times to make sure you are proud. Look for missing words and misspellings that aren't necessarily picked up by the spell check function.

13. **Don't use text lingo**—These are emails not text messages. Spell things out.

14. **Use their name**—People love to hear and see their names. Take an extra 2 seconds to type out people's full name, rather than just the initial of their first name. I have a

friend by the name of Mark who said he is turned off when people don't put forth the effort to type three more characters after the "M". How many other people feel like Mark? I also recommend including "Hi" or "Hey" or "Good Morning" or something else before their name.

15. **Don't limit your communication to email**—Email is great way to efficiently communicate, but don't rely on it exclusively. Set a goal to talk to people at least one time for every 10 email exchanges. Relationships are best built in-person, second by phone calls, and third by the written word. Take full advantage of the first two if you want the relationship to grow.

16. **Return confirmation emails**—When you schedule a call or appointment with someone and they confirm the time with you, take the extra 5 seconds to return the email to say "Confirmed." People don't like wondering if the appointment is firm.

Review all of your email communication at the end of the day today. How many of the 16 tips did you incorporate? How did you measure up? And don't forget to tune in tomorrow for the remaining 17 email strategies.

**Every email you send makes an impression; therefore every email plays a role in defining your personal brand.**

*About the Author: [Todd Smith](#) is a successful entrepreneur of 30 years and founder of [Little Things Matter](#). To receive Todd's daily lessons, [subscribe here](#). All Todd's lessons are also available on iTunes as [downloadable podcasts](#). (Todd's podcasts are ranked #27 in [America's top 100 podcasts](#) and #1 in the personal and development field.)*

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The same is true with email. Every impression we make on others is how we are branding ourselves in their minds. It's our choice what impression we make.

In Part One, I shared with you 16 of my top email tips and encouraged you to evaluate your email communication for the last 24 hours. How did you do?

Here are 17 more for you to chew on.

17. **Use the recipient's time zone**—When you are scheduling an appointment or a phone call, avoid confusion by using their time zone. This will keep them from trying to convert the time to their time zone and reduce potential misunderstandings.

18. **Type the email first**—When typing an important email, type the email first and then add the person's name. This will keep you from sending the email prematurely.

19. **Don't change your email address**—If you get a new email address, don't discontinue your old email account. Don't inconvenience your contacts by asking them to change your email address. Just start using the new one and people will slowly convert to using your new email address. I have five email addresses and they all come into ONE email inbox. Current functionality of most email programs offers for this simple organizational tool.

20. **Covering multiple topics**—If your email covers more than one topic, separate the topics using numbers or bullets. This allows you to logically convey your thoughts

and makes it easier for the reader to follow your topics and separately respond to each point. Your other option is to send separate emails for each topic or point you want to cover.

21. **Always put something in the subject line**—When I get emails from people with nothing in the subject line I think to myself “SLOPPY and LAZY.” Am I alone on this one? Take the time to summarize the subject of your email in a few short words.

22. **How to deal with spam**—Don’t complain about it. Just remove it. This is 2010. We all get tons of spam. When I hear people say that they are changing their email address because of all the spam they receive...well, I won’t tell you what I think.

23. **Be Clear and Concise**—Say what you need to say as clearly as you can say it using the fewest number of words possible. No one likes long or confusing emails that they have to read more than once.

24. **Turn off or down your spam filters**—Some email providers allow you to turn off the spam filtering process entirely and others give you the opportunity to lower the sensitivity level. I would rather take extra second to delete a spam message rather than miss an important email that ends up in my spam folder. This also saves me time from having to check my spam folders.

25. **Don’t use an email authentication program**—I sent an email to a lawyer I was looking to hire requesting an appointment. I received one of those email validation requests so that my email would be forwarded to him. I deleted the email and found a new attorney. I won’t complete those forms-not for anyone. They must be thinking that their time is more valuable than mine.

26. **Keep your inbox clean**—When it’s time for me to read my emails, I allocate enough time to read and respond. This is a time saver. I don’t have to come back to it and read it again in order to take action. It also allows me to move through my emails and keep my inbox clean.

27. **Always put your name at the end of your emails**—I can’t tell you how many people send me emails with email addresses that don’t identify themselves and don’t include their name at the end of the email. You can’t brand yourself much worse than that...well, I guess you could throw in some foul language.

28. **Use discretion when you copy people on emails**—Make sure you are only

copying people who need to be copied.

29. **Know when not to press “reply all”**—If your response to an email is only directed to the person who sent the email, then don’t press reply all. Show your respect to the other parties and don’t make them read and delete your email.

30. **Know when to schedule a call**—If your email is going to be long or complicated, just send a short email requesting a time to talk live.

31. **Know when to pick up the phone**—If there is something upsetting to you, pick up the phone and call the other person. Don’t send emotional emails that scar the relationship and cause you regret.

32. **Make sure your name is displayed properly.** Most email programs have name recognition software intended to be a time saver. Set up yours so that it’s displayed with your first name first and your last name last. There are several companies and individuals I communicate with where their names are reversed. It’s aggravating because when I send them an email I have to start typing their last name first for my email program to recognize the person.

33. **Keep your signature files small.** People will see your signature file whether it is big and obnoxious or small and subtle. Do you want to be seen as classy or tasteless?

Email has become part and parcel of our every day routine. It has replaced the telephone as the preferred method of communication. This is why it is so important to take pride in your email communications.

I want to challenge you to start paying attention to the emails you send. Look for ways in which you can improve your email communication.

If you have any additional tips, please share them with me in the comment section below. I would love to add your tips to my list.

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