

Professional Job Search Email Etiquette

Professional email is very different from casual email or instant messenger. As email becomes increasingly popular in the job application process, you need to take time to think through the content of your email and the message you might be sending to employers. Remember: it is easier to be ruled out than ruled in for a position. Here are some rules to consider when writing an email in which you are job prospecting or applying:

Mind Your Manners: Think of the basic rules you learned growing up, like saying please and thank you. Address people you do not know as Mr., Ms., or Dr., only address someone by first name if they imply it is okay to do so.

- Always introduce yourself the same way you would in a cover letter.

Dear Mr./Ms. So and So:

Please accept this letter as an application for the XYZ position at ABC Company.

- In the subject line, make it obvious why you are writing: "Application for XYZ position."
- If you are sending multiple email, make sure you change the contact name and content according to the person (s)/company to whom you are sending the message. This is especially important if you are sending multiple thank you notes.
- If you are responding to an email, include the original message in the reply, so the receiver can put your email into the correct context.
- Name your document "your name, resume." Employers receive hundreds of resumes via email. If you follow-up by asking recruiters if they received your email, they will not have to look through 300 attachments called "resume."
- If you are attaching your resume, ask the receiver if they would prefer that you send it in a different format, ie: Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format, or as a .PDF.

Watch Your Tone: It is very difficult to express tone in writing. You want to come across as respectful, friendly, and approachable. You do not want to sound curt or demanding.

- Never use all capital letters. Employers may think that you are screaming, it can also be difficult to read.
- Do not assume that if an employer is informal that you should be.

Be Concise: Get to the point of your email as quickly as possible, but do not leave out important details that will help your recipient answer your query.

Be Professional: This means, stay away from abbreviations and do not use emoticons (smiley faces). Also, make sure the email address you use for business communication is professional. Remember, your UW-L email account expires three months after you graduate.

- Think about the message your email address sends. Keep your address simple, and avoid unprofessional sounding names like "studmuffin" or "partygirl."
- Do not use slang.

Use Correct Spelling and Proper Grammar: Do not just use spell check, as it will not catch words that are spelled correctly but are misused within the context of the sentence. Have someone else proofread your message before you send it. It may be easier to find errors if you print and review your e-mail.

Wait to Fill in the "TO" Email Address: This will keep you from accidentally sending an email prematurely. It is easy to accidentally click the send icon, when you really meant to click on the attachment icon.

Email Examples

Your email can be a brief introduction:

To: xyzperson@abccompany.org

From: cap@psued.edu

Subject: XYZ Job Application

Dear Ms. Clark,

This email is in response to the ad posted in the Wisconsin State Journal for the XYZ position at ABC Company (Job Posting #123). Please accept the attached letter and resume as my application for this position. My skills and experience closely fit the posted job description, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you,

Jane Student

(715) 425-5555

jane.student@yahoo.com

Or your email can be your cover letter:

To: xyzperson@abccompany.org

From: cap@psued.edu

Subject: XYZ Job Application

Dear Ms. Clark,

This email is in response to the ad posted on the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Eagle Opportunities for XYZ position at ABC Company (Job #123). Please accept the attached resume as an application for this position. My educational background and two years of banking experience fit the posted job description, and I am excited to apply.

As a Business Administration student at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, I have taken advantage of numerous internship opportunities to gain relevant banking and customer service experience. For the past two years I have worked as a Bank Teller at Wells Fargo, where I was responsible for serving customers, balancing my drawer and mentoring new tellers. In addition, I have served as the treasurer of the Business Association on campus for the past two years, studied abroad in Scotland, and completed a financial management internship this summer. These experiences helped enhance my leadership, teamwork, customer service and time-management skills, which can be useful at ABC company.

The opportunity to become a contributing member of ABC Company, and continuing the tradition of friendly and accurate service excites me. A meeting to learn more about your needs and how I can contribute would be greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Joe Student
(715) 426-4444
Joe.student@gmail.com

Source: JobWeb.com—Career development and job-search advice for new college graduates. National Association of Colleges and Employers, Bethlehem, PA

Career Services ♦ 608.785.8514 ♦ career@uwlax.edu ♦ www.uwlax.edu/careerservices