

Administration and Finance Email Standards

In order to enhance the uniformity and professionalism of the Administration and Finance Division email communication, specific email standards have been established.

The specific standards for all Administration and Finance email is:

- ✓ Arial, 11 point
- ✓ Black text color
- ✓ Plain white background, no colors or patterns
- ✓ No UH logo incorporated
- ✓ Emoticons are not allowed
- ✓ No signature quotations permitted

The format for email signatures is as follows:

First Name Last Name
Title
Department/ Dept mail code
Business Address
Business phone
Business Fax
Business email address
Departmental web address

The format for reply email signatures is as follows:

First Name Last Name
Business telephone number

Out of the office?

- Please utilize the Out of Office Assistant tool in Outlook to notify customers of your absence from the office in the following format:

I will be out of the office from day, date through day date. I will return to the office on day, date. If you need immediate assistance, please contact Name at extension or contact by email at email address.

Thanks,
Your name

- Filter automatic responses to any listserve you may be subscribed to

Business operations standards:

- Do not email any SSN, Bank account information or credit card information
- Email responses are expected within 24 business hours
- Turn on automatic spell check so that all documents are checked before sending
- Avoid using company email for personal use

Training

A required email training course will be given to assist all A&F employees including technical assistance and discussion regarding the purpose and execution of these standards.

Email Etiquette Tips

1. STOP SHOUTING! Writing in all caps is like screaming. If you are angry or want to reiterate a point, pick up the phone or meet in person. Remember that email correspondence lacks all of the normal visual and auditory clues that are present in face to face communication. This makes it very easy for people to misinterpret what you're trying to say.
2. It is very easy to be blunt or even rude to someone via email because you don't have to look at them in the eyes while you do it. This relative safety, combined with how easy it is to quickly fire off an email, make it easier to say something you will later regret. If you need to say something a little unpleasant to someone (let's hope that's not very often), you should try some of these suggestions:
 - Don't email angry
 - draft an email, but then wait 24 hours before re-reading it and sending it. You'll often change your mind about what to say after you've calmed down a bit
 - do it by telephone instead
 - do it face to face instead
 - try to use facts and figures, rather than emotional arguments
 - Praise in public, criticize in private
3. Don't use smiley faces :-) or other symbols to try and communicate a mood. In fact, any kind of symbol (the exclamation mark!!!) can be misinterpreted. Other kinds of things that can be misunderstood are attempts at humor, and sarcasm.
4. If all you have to say is "thank you" don't send the email. Your co-workers understand that you appreciate their work, but if you still want to thank them for their efforts, be sure to include more than just those two words.
5. Use caution with the "CC" and "reply-all" feature. Ask yourself if everyone on the distribution list really needs the information you are about to send. Limit the email to only those that truly need to be addressed.
6. With all of the tools available at our fingertips, you would be surprised at how many spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors are sent. Spell check was invented for a reason - set the default to run before all messages are sent.
7. Choose a meaningful subject line and never leave it blank.

8. If your email thread has reached 3 or 4 levels, consider creating a new email. Email threads that stretch on for miles will be ignored by most readers. Consider what pieces are most important and delete the rest, especially long signature lines and duplicate confidentiality notices that clutter the space.
9. Use caution when flagging a message as “high importance.” The recipients may feel you are crying wolf if it is over used.
10. Use “read receipts” only when absolutely necessary (i.e. for legal documentation or a human resource incident). Not only is it irritating to receive these time and time again, the recipient can take this as a sign of mistrust.
11. Avoid inappropriate humor. Have you heard the one about...? Just don't go there. You're nearest and dearest may find your humor highly entertaining, but it will probably be lost on your customer or co-worker or worse offensive.
12. Do not send large attachments. You can't assume the recipients of your email will all have a high-speed Internet connection and can easily receive your 10Mb attachment. People today are more likely to be receiving their email via a mobile device on the way to the airport.
13. Be concise and get to the point. Email management is now a major headache for most people today that it can be very annoying when we receive pages of tightly packed copy that just ramble on and never get to the point.
14. Take a second look at your email before hitting send. Re-reading an email can help save the headache and embarrassment of an unintended message.