

Is e-mail a formal or informal means of communication?

BACHNER

Is e-mail a formal or informal means of communication?

# **SO WHAT?** BACHNER **SO WHAT?** SO **PLENTY!** BACHNER E-MAIL **LASTS FOREVER!**

# E-mail is all about the speed of what?

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# E-mail is all about the speed of transmission

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Do not get caught in a speed trap. Proceed at that pace you believe will result in a high-quality professional communication.

# HASTE MAKES WASTE! --Mom

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#### GO TOO FAST AND...

At worst: You will make a mistake – or someone will allege you did – because you told yourself you did not have the time to proofread.

At best: You will create an image of being a professional who is in so much of a hurry, only luck prevents a mistake.

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# RULE 1 APPLICABLE TO ANY SPECIFIC E-MAIL



RU	L	Ε	1
IN GE	N	FR	ΔΙ

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# BE DELIBERATE

The quick and fast reply often is the most dangerous of all.

# **BE DELIBERATE**

Respect this fact:
Project risk is inversely
proportional to project size,
complexity, and fee.

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WHY?

APTOPERSON

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**BE DELIBERATE** 

# **BE DELIBERATE**

E-mail programs include a variety of features designed to make it

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# **BE DELIBERATE**

E-mail programs include a variety of features designed to make it easy to make haste.

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## SET UP YOUR ADDRESS BOOK EFFECTIVELY

Drilling Rig Repair/John Doe
Kohl, Apps Assoc./Pete Jones

# YOUR E-MAILS SHOULD SERVE AS EFFECTIVE DOCUMENTATION.

Make it easy for you or others to figure out who was who and what was what.

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# YOUR E-MAILS SHOULD SERVE AS EFFECTIVE DOCUMENTATION.

Make it easy for you or others to figure out who was who and what was what.

You will forget.

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To: Bidlow Constr./Joe Smith vs.

To: joe@gmail.com or To: "Joe Smith" <joe@gmail.com

**Leave These Blank** 

To: Cc: Bcc: Subject:

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Insert the Information at the Top of Your e-Mail Text

To: Cc: Bcc: Subject:

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

In that way you prevent accidental issuance.

In that way you prevent accidental issuance.
Insert the e-mail addresses and the subject only after you are certain everything is ready to go.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

But do append any attachments from the get-go, to help prevent forgetting them.

BUT...

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Open every attachment to ensure it's the right one (vs. the wrong one with the right name).



# ATTACHMENT VS. APPENDAGE

Consider using "appendage" instead of "attachment" (and "append" instead of "attach") because "appendage" and "append" are more accurate.

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# ATTACHMENT VS. APPENDAGE

YOU'RE IN THE ACCURACY BUSINESS

# ATTACHMENT VS. APPENDAGE

"But it sounds weird. Everyone says 'attach' and 'attachment.' I like being like everyone else. I don't want to stand out from the crowd.
There's comfort in being a commodity."

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**END DIGRESSION** 

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WHEN INITIATING
AN E-MAIL
LEAVE BCC: BLANK

LEAVE Bcc: BLANK
OR
INSERT YOUR OWN
ADDRESS IF YOU
WANT TO ISSUE
A Bcc

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Good morning, Bob. Below is the text of an e-mail I just sent to John Doe. I'm sending it to you in confidence. I wanted you to see it, but John is unaware that I've sent you a copy.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

At least for filing.

As a general rule...

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

ALL e-mails should be put into the project file electronically or by hard copy.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

It creates clutter, but only near-term.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

It creates clutter, but only near-term. Decide what's unimportant later, via 20/20 hindsight, while the project file is culled after project completion.

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

If your firm does not now have a protocol for this, it really needs to think hard about developing one.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

If your firm does not now have a protocol for this, it really needs to think hard about developing one.

And enforcing it.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

Also remember that many e-mails will be viewed on a small screen.

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

Also remember that many e-mails will be viewed on a small screen. Try to make your subject line effective using 20 or fewer characters.

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## WHEN INITIATING AN E-MAIL

Subject: IS IMPORTANT

Bypass spam filters by NOT using all caps and avoiding words that a filter might consider offensive, like



# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

Hit "Reply", "Reply to all", or "Forward" (depending on how you want to deal with any appendage), then...

**Cut the information from** 

To: Cc: Bcc:

Subject: and paste it into the top of

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the e-mail text, then...

# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

CHANGE WHATEVER YOU NEED TO CHANGE!

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

USE YOUR
ADDRESS BOOK
WHEN COMPLETING
To: and Cc:

GET THE SUBJECT RIGHT IN TERMS OF THE PROJECT NAME OR YOUR PROJECT NUMBER

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

ESPECIALLY BECAUSE YOU
MAY BE WORKING ON FIVE
PROJECTS,
WHILE THE SENDER IS
CONCERNED
ONLY ABOUT ONE.

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

**Subject: The Project** 

vs.

Subject: Baxter House 041268

GET THE SUBJECT RIGHT TO CORRECTLY SUMMARIZE OR CHARACTERIZE WHAT THE SUBJECT HAS MORPHED INTO.

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

**Subject: Baxter House 041268** 

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

Subject: Baxter House 041268 vs.

**Subject: Baxter House 041268** 

vs.

**Subject: Halloween Party** 

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

REVIEW THE ENTIRE THREAD; ASSUME NOTHING.

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# WHEN REPLYING TO AN E-MAIL

REVIEW THE ENTIRE THREAD; ASSUME NOTHING. WRITE NOTHING UNTIL YOUR THREAD REVIEW IS 100% THOROUGH

REVIEW THE ENTIRE
THREAD; ASSUME NOTHING.
WRITE NOTHING UNTIL
YOUR THREAD
REVIEW IS 100% THOROUGH
AND
100% COMPLETE.

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# WHEN INITIATING OR REPLYING

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Realize that e-mail can be sterile. It conveys none of the body language we interpret face-to-face, in person or via Skype.

Realize that e-mail can be sterile. It conveys none of the body	
language we interpret face-to-face, in person or via Skype. It conveys none of the voice inflection we get	
from the telephone.	
aaci-neg	
Realize that e-mail can be sterile. It conveys none of the body language we interpret face-to-face,	
in person or via Skype. It conveys none of the voice inflection we get	
from the telephone. Even a handwritten letter conveys more	
humanity; something the recipient can use to build a person.	
aaci-Ne <b>r</b>	
Your e-mail message arrives via a man/machine interface that can	
reduce what you write to pure thought – or just words – with no	
humanity.	
aaci-iner(	

Your e-mail message arrives via a man/machine interface that can reduce what you write to pure thought – or just words – with no	
humanity. No sound.	
	1
Your e-mail message arrives via a man/machine interface that can	
reduce what you write to pure thought – or just words – with no humanity. No sound. No sight.	
BACHNER STATE AND	
	•
Your e-mail message arrives via a man/machine interface that can	
reduce what you write to pure thought – or just words – with no	
humanity. No sound. No sight. It could be anybody writing.	
BACHNER	

	_
E-Mail creates a HUGE potential for	
misinterpretation.	-
to Protesta Security	
BECHNER BESMEN BONDWICK FORD, MI	
E-Mail creates a HUGE potential for misinterpretation. Readers can	
misunderstand what you write and mischaracterize your attitude or	
intent.	
BACHNER BURNER B	
BE ESPECIALLY CAREFUL	
WHEN IT COMES TO HUM®k.	
Consider using emoticons	
to make your intention clear.	
intention clear.	
BACHNER	

# **REMEMBER**

REALITY IS WHAT THE READER PERCEIVES IT TO BE.

Whisin beophetatawa ise meadless excless patients.

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# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

BACHNER

# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

Basic writing rules apply: Use short, simple, declarative sentences.

# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

Begin each sentence with a subject,

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# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

Begin each sentence with a subject, followed by a verb

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# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

Begin each sentence with a subject, followed by a verb, followed by an object or prepositional phrase.

# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

You are writing to communicate unambiguously, not to demonstrate how clever you are or how many "big words" you know.

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# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

**DUMP THE PASSIVE VOICE** 

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Mr. Smith should be informed about the schedule delay.

Mr. Smith should be informed	
about the schedule delay.	
Who does the informing?	
aaci-iner(	
Mr. Smith should be informed	
about the schedule delay.	
BETTER	
aaci-Ner	
Mr. Smith should be informed	
about the schedule delay.  Inform Mr. Smith about the	
schedule delay.	
aaci-iner <b>.</b>	

Mr. Smith should be informed about the schedule delay. **BEST** BACHNER Mr. Smith should be informed about the schedule delay. Call Mr. Smith now. Tell him about the schedule delay. BACHNER **KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE** SIMPLE. Remember: The final authority on what you really meant is not Noah Webster; BACHNER

# KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE.

Remember: The final authority on what you *really* meant is not Noah Webster; it's a trier of fact, and that's usually a jury.

BACHNER

# **BE BRIEF**

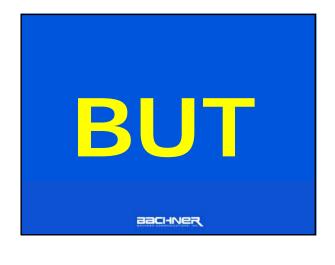
**USE APPENDAGES** 

BACHNER

# **BE BRIEF**

**USE APPENDAGES** 

Hi, John. I'm writing to ask the company to invest in a new Whizbang 480. As my team and I discuss in the appended memo, the 480 should generate a phenomenal payback. Call me with any questions.



Don't use an appendage to justify lazy writing.

BACHNER

Don't use an appendage to justify lazy writing. Edit.

Don't use an appendage	
to justify lazy writing. Edit. Become succinct.	
aaci-NeR	
Don't use an appendage	-
to justify lazy writing. Edit. Become succinct.	
Get to the point quickly.	
aaci-ine <b>z</b>	
BE BRIEF	
USAFRAFIRENIOAGES	
Hi, John. I'm writing to ask the company to	
invest in a new Whizbang 480. As my team and I discuss in the appended memo, the	
480 should generate a phenomenal payback. Call me with any questions.	
	-
BACHNER MANAGE BOUNDER AND MAN	

## **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John. I'm writing to ask the company to invest in a new Whizbang 480. As my team and I discuss in the appended memo, the 480 should generate a phenomenal payback. Call me with any questions.

BACHNER

# **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John.

As my team
and I discuss in the appended memo, the
480 should generate a phenomenal payback.
Call me with any questions.

BACHNER

# **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John. Let's invest in a new Whizbang 480. As my team and I discuss in the appended memo, the 480 should generate a phenomenal payback. Call me with any questions.

# BEBRIEF WRITETIGHT Hi, John. Let's time to ask the company to invest in a new Whizbang 480. As my team and I discuss in the appended memorified 480 should generate a phenomenal payback Call me with any questions.

# **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John. Let's higher ask the company to invest in a new Whizbang 480. It will generate a phenomenal payback. Call me with any questions.

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# **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John. Let's invest in a new Whizbang 480. It will generate a phenomenal payback.

# **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John. Let's invest in a new Whizbang 480. It will generate a phenomenal payback. See the appended memo.

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# **BE BRIEF**

#### **WRITE TIGHT**

Hi, John. Let's invest in a new Whizbang 480. It will generate a phenomenal payback. See the appended memo.

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# BEGIN WITH A GRACIOUS SALUTATION

John. I write to...

# Is not gracious. IT'S RUDE!

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Dear John. I write to...

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Dear John. I write to...

# UNSETTLING!

Hello, John. I write to... Greetings, John. I write to... Good afternoon, John. I write to... I enjoyed speaking with you, John. I write to... Thanks so much for getting in touch, John. I can tell you... BACHNER BE SUCCINCT, **EXPLANATORY** Hi, John. I'm responding to your e-mail below. I checked with... BACHNER DON'T SHOUT. **EXCEPT TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE OR PRAISE** CONGRATULATIONS, Bill. You truly deserve the honor... Hi, Mr. Jones. THANK YOU SO MUCH for sending me the copy of the...

Hello, John. Your presentation was much TOO LONG. And I found it to be BORING, except when you NEEDLESSLY used OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE.

BACHNER

### DON'T SEND AN ANGRY E-MAIL

BACHNER

See if this is short enough, Bill: DROP DEAD.

Hello, John. Your presentation was much TOO LONG. And I found it to be BORING, except when you NEEDLESSLY used OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE.

### DON'T SEND A NASTY E-MAIL

BACHNER

I must say I'm surprised by your reaction, Bill. Given where your head is most of the time, I didn't know you could see. Or hear.

Hello, John. Your presentation was much TOO LONG. And I found it to be BORING, except when you NEEDLESSLY used OFFENSIVE LANGUAGE.

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ACT IN
HASTE,
REPENT AT
LEISURE. --Mom

### **RULE 1**

APPLICABLE TO ANY SPECIFIC E-MAIL

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## RULE 1 ASK THIS QUESTION:

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### SHOULD I EVEN USE E-MAIL?

### REMEMBER THESE KEY FACTS.

YOU ARE IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY.

YOU SERVE PEOPLE.

THEREFORE, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU DO IS

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# COMMUNICATE COMMUNICATE COMMUNICATE COMMUNICATE

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Especially in the case of client representatives, code officials, supervisors or other superiors within your own organization – among others – take the time to ask,

Especially in the case of client representatives, code officials,	
supervisors or other superiors within your own organization –	
among others - take the time to	
ask, "What communication methods do you prefer?"	
aaci-iner,	
Even if e-mail is preferred or just okay, is your topic	
appropriate for an e-mail?	
	-
aac+ner(	
	1
Even if e-mail is preferred or	-
just okay, is your topic	
appropriate for an e-mail?  If you are reporting on what	
you perceive to be others' poor behavior,	

Even if a mail is proferred or	
Even if e-mail is preferred or just okay, is your topic	
appropriate for an e-mail?	
If you are reporting on what	
you perceive to be others' poor	
behavior, DON'T CONVEY THAT	-
VIA E-MAIL	
aaciinea	
Even if e-mail is preferred or	
just okay, is your topic	
appropriate for an e-mail?	
If you are reporting on what	
you perceive to be others' poor behavior, DON'T CONVEY THAT	
VIA E-MAIL unless you want	
everyone to know your feelings.	
oronyene to know your reenings.	
aaci-inea	
	·
Hi, Larry. I just had a run-in with one of	
Bidlow's guys on site. What a total jerk! Plus that, he's as dishonest as they get.	
Who in their right mind hired these	
morons?	
aaci-wez	
BACHARIN COMMUNICATIONS, INC.	

Hi, Fred. Joe seems really upset with Bidlow. What's your take on this? By copy, I'm asking every human being in Europe and Asia to comment.

Hi, Larry. I just had a run in with one of Bidlow's guys on site. What a total jerk! Plus that, he's as dishonest as they get. Who in their right mind hired these morons?

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### RALPH PECK'S ONLY LAWSUIT.



WHY
E-MAIL
WHEN YOU
CAN CALL?

### "Because, if it isn't in writing, it didn't happen!"

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While that's true, it's also true that a lot of people prefer telephone talk over meeting face-to-face.

BACHNER

While that's true, it's also true that a lot of people prefer telephone talk over meeting face-to-face. And many of the same people prefer e-mail to the telephone, largely because they believe they are not gregarious "people persons."

E-Mail allows them to kind of communicate while actually hiding from their groundless fears and feelings of inadequacy.



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YOU ARE IN THE PEOPLE BUSINESS

Assuming it's OK with whomever you are communicating...

# CONTACT BY TELEPHONE AND CONFIRM BY E-MAIL.

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"Hi, Bill. It's John. If you have about three minutes I'd like to go over a couple of issues about the project."

"Sure."

"Say, a question though: How's your daughter doing? You said she'd broken her ankle on that ski trip."

"Thanks for asking, John. She's...."

BACHNER

Good afternoon, Bill. I enjoyed speaking with you. I was happy to learn about Margaret's recovery. I'm writing to get your sign-off on my recollection of our key discussion points....

# DO NOT HIT SEND UNTIL YOU PROOFREAD

BACHNER

WhILE this may BE UNDERSTANDable and spelled moSTly correctly it loOKS LIKE Crab and does little too enhance you're image as a PROFessionaL.

ALL-CAPS SUCKS, TOO.

BACHNER

PRINT
AND
PROOFREAD
(ASSUMING YOU KNOW HOW)

fi yuo cna raed tihs, yuo hvae a sgtrane mnid, too. Cna yuo raed tihs? Olny 55 plepoe tuo fo 100 anc.

i cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacity uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. Bceasue of the phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid, aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it dseno't mtaetr in waht oerdr the Itteres in a wrod are, the olny iproamtnt tihng is taht the frsit and Isat Itteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it whotuit a pboerlm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey Iteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Azanmig huh? yaeh and I awlyas tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt! if you can raed tihs forwrad it.

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**EITHER** 

PRINT
AND
PROOFREAD
(ASSUMING YOU KNOW HOW)

OR RELY ON A
PROOF BUDDY

BACHNER

NOW HIT SEND

Nothing happens.

### ONE LAST CHANCE TO CHECK!

BACHNER

Now insert the To:, Cc:, Bcc: [just you!], and Subject: lines and



Questions? E-Mail john@bachner.com

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