

## Happy Emailing Strike the Right Tone Video Transcript

- Most of our communication is non-verbal. When we speak to people face to face, we pay attention to their body language and tone of voice to get clues that help us decode their meaning. In e-mails, we have to search for clues that provide the subtext of the message. This is why written communication is tricky. Messages can easily be misunderstood and lead to distrust or frustration. So, how do you avoid this? By carefully drafting your e-mail messages and striking the right tone with your readers. First, unless you are certain your audience shares your sense of humor, avoid sarcasm and jokes. It's easy for these things to be misunderstood or taken out of context. And even if it's amongst colleagues, you can't control where your messages end up. If you wouldn't be comfortable reading your e-mail on the front page of a national newspaper, don't send it. It isn't worth the potential damage to your personal and professional reputation. Second, don't assume familiarity with your reader, especially if you're writing the person for the first time. Some individuals and organizations are hierarchical. The last thing you want to do is offend the recipient of your message by addressing them in a way that makes them feel disrespected. For example, many, but not all, physicians prefer to be addressed as doctor. If you send your message and include the title, the recipient will let you know if it's okay to call them by their first name. But if you assume familiarity and the person takes offense, it's hard to walk that back. You probably noticed a pretty casual greeting, hey, in my note as well. Wait to establish a working relationship before using informal greetings. Third. Don't assume the gender of your recipient. Exclude it from your greeting and simply include the person's whole name if you're unsure how to address them. Just because your recipient has a name that you associate with a specific gender, doesn't mean he or she identifies in that way. When you get this wrong, it's embarrassing and an unforced error. We're all going to make mistakes. We're human. But if you steer clear of these simple errors, you can be sure to strike the right tone in your business e-mails.