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You Didn't Read My Email?

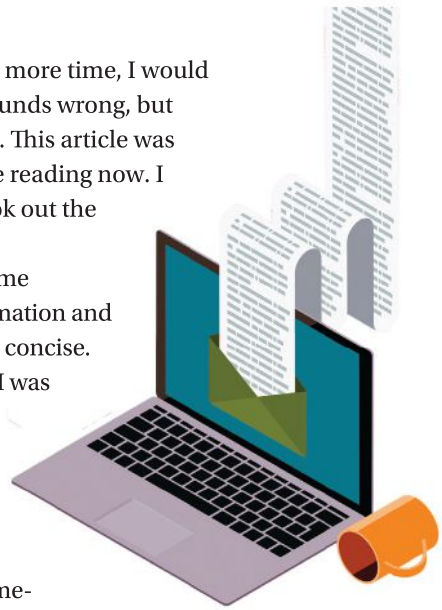
Communication between customers, co-workers and vendors needs to be clear and concise.

So many emails and so little time. At PMPA, email is our primary form of communication and I'm sure that is true for many companies. You can get a message to one or 100 people and they can read it on their time. But are they reading it?

Readable Emails

My mother used to say, "If I had more time, I would have written a shorter letter." Sounds wrong, but it's not. Writing is part of my job. This article was a lot longer than the one you are reading now. I wrote it, then went back and took out the unnecessary words/thoughts.

Email messaging needs the same treatment. An email relays information and the message should be clear and concise. For example, instead of saying, "I was sitting at my desk thinking that you and I need to talk about such and such. If we don't talk about it soon, it may be too late to do anything about it," you can say "Such and such is time-sensitive. Can you meet today at 1 p.m.?" You have included the neccesary information and a call-to-action to get things moving.



We live in a bite-size world. Our news is in clips, our online entertainment lasts as long as a TikTok video and we get notifcations about everything. And we are notified *on* everything — our desktop, laptop, smartphones and smart watches. There is a lot of information heading everyone's way everyday, so you need to make sure your message is bite-size, informative and includes a call-to-action, if necessary, to ensure it gets the attention it deserves.

Take the Time to Write a Shorter Letter

If you send me a long email, I'm not going to read it. It's nothing personal, but my brain sees all those paragraphs and I skim it for the gist. Want to send an easily consumable email? Here are a few tips:

- Think like a journalist. The first paragraph of a news story tells you who, what, where, when and why. The rest of the article expounds on that data.
- If you have a lot of information to share, then format it to make it consumable using bold and bullets.
- Bold the main sentences/phrases so if that is all they read, they get the info. If they want more info, they can read the rest.
- Don't underline. In email, it's a hyperlink.
- If the email is long, create sections for different topics.
    - Read your email after you write it and trim the excess. Sometimes, reading it aloud helps.

Let's not forget pleasantries. They are important and should be included. But keep it concise. Instead of "Last time we spoke, you were going on vacation to Maui and bringing the whole family. Did you have fun?" you can say "Did you and the family have fun in Maui?" Want it shorter? "How was Maui?" You can almost make it a game — how short can I get it?

You need to communicate and are taking the time to do it. Help the reader by making it easier to receive the message.

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