



Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

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Writing E-Mail

- E-mail is like a tattoo:

Both seem like a good idea at the time, but the bad ones may be costly to get rid of and almost always leave a mark.

– *Intercom*, December 2000



Writing E-Mail

- The writing process applies to all types of writing
- One form of writing that is extremely important at the company is e-mail
- How many e-mails are exchanged each day at the company?
 - ▶ 1,000,000

Writing E-Mail

- **Aspects of sending e-mail**
 - ▶ **Writing content**
 - ▶ **Using Outlook**
 - ▶ **Following company protocol**

Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

- **Preparing**
 - ▶ **Define the purpose**
 - ▶ **Define the audience**

Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

- **Define the audience:**
 - ▶ **Company employees, but everyone may not have the same knowledge**
 - ▶ **Often speak different languages**
 - ▶ **Are busy and usually managing several things at once**
 - ▶ **Need to know what affects them**
 - ▶ **Read the document online**

Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

- **Researching**
 - ▶ Most of this information comes from you
 - ▶ Be diligent to get all the information
- **Outlining**
 - ▶ Brainstorm to get a list of topics to include
 - ▶ Organize the information for greatest impact
 - Put the most important information first
 - Eliminate everything that is not absolutely necessary

Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

- **Writing**
 - ▶ **Begin with a first draft, working from the outline**
 - ▶ **Include all pertinent information**
 - ▶ **Limit content to one basic topic or idea**
 - ▶ **If the content is long, write a summary that can be included at the top**
 - ▶ **Always avoid sarcasm and humor**

Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

- **Revising**
 - ▶ **Be direct and to the point**
 - ▶ **Keep sentences and paragraphs short**
 - ▶ **Be diplomatic**
 - ▶ **Look for places to add bulleted or numbered lists**
 - ▶ **Include headings as necessary**
 - ▶ **Do one final proofread**

Applying the Writing Process to E-Mail

- **Finalizing**
 - ▶ **Add the subject line**
 - Be concise, but clear
 - Think of this as the document title
 - ▶ **Add recipients**

Tips for Writing E-Mail

- Shorter is generally better
- One topic per e-mail is a good idea
 - ▶ For more than one topic, include a summary at the top so people know to keep reading
- Include a link to another, longer document
 - ▶ Consider that people may not go to the link so include a summary of what they will find
- If the e-mail is a response to a conversation, reference the conversation at the beginning of the e-mail

Homework Assignment

- Write an e-mail in Outlook that describes one problem in your area
- Apply the writing process to the e-mail:
 - ▶ Complete the preparation worksheet
 - ▶ Create an outline
 - ▶ Write the first draft and revise that draft
 - ▶ Prepare and print the final copy