

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS TIPS

PURPOSE

Professional communication encompasses all elements of how you present yourself both digitally and in person. Regardless of where you are in your professional career, the way that you present yourself and communicate with others is important, and impacts how a potential employer or contact sees you.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Be sure to use a professional email address. A professional email address should include your first and last name in some combination.

When crafting an email to a potential employer or professional contact, it is important to remember that the communication can be seen by anyone within the organization. Writing an email is similar to writing a short letter—it is a formal correspondence, and should follow proper grammar and style. Keep your tone simple, clear, and professional. The email should begin with a greeting and include a focused message that clearly articulates who you are. A professional email should not include shorthand (like text speak) or emojis, and should use exaggerated punctuation (ex. !) sparingly, if at all.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Over 90% of employers screen candidate's social media profiles, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Often, your social media will come up as one of the first Google searches for your name and common phrases associated with you, like to the name of your school.

It is important to monitor the content that you are posting online, and to check your privacy settings on all social media platforms so that you know who is able to see the content you are posting. Nearly 70% of employers have stated that they have rejected a potential candidate based on their social media activity.

TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

Answering your phone by stating your name helps employers to ensure they are speaking to the correct person. A greeting such as "Hello, this is [Name]," is an appropriate way to answer the phone when expecting a call from a professional contact or preparing for a phone interview. If you are preparing in advance for the call, be sure that you are in a quiet area with good service to ensure the conversation is able to be heard clearly.

When conducting an informational or job interview over the phone, remember that you should be as prepared as you would be if you were conducting the conversation in person. Prepare by doing your research and noting a few questions, ideas, or topics you would like to cover throughout the course of the conversation.

If you are leaving a voicemail, be sure to identify yourself, include your contact information, and clearly state the purpose of the message. Prepare by jotting down a few notes so that your message is clear and concise.

TEXTING ETIQUETTE

On the rare occasions that you may need to text a future employer or professional contact, be sure to still use proper grammar and style. The message should be brief and contain your name, contact information, and information about why you are contacting them. If given the opportunity to contact someone in an alternate manner, calling or emailing is always preferable. Do not text a professional contact unless they have encouraged you to do so.

IN PERSON COMMUNICATIONS

ELEVATOR PITCH

An elevator pitch is a succinct speech that summarizes your interests, goals, and achievements for a networking contact or potential employer. With practice, you should be able to quickly and easily answer when a potential employer asks you, "tell me about yourself".

CONVERSATION

It is important to effectively communicate in all settings, whether it be an interview, a networking event, or an informational discussion. If it is a scheduled conversation, be sure to do your research and prepare beforehand. Regardless of the setting, it is important to express yourself clearly and professionally, and practice active listening skills when conversing with others.