**6 Powerful Emails**

How many emails do you get a day? Of these, how many do you delete without opening? How many do you open and then delete after reading a few words?

Do you want your emails to be ignored? In this podcast, I describe effective practices to greatly improve the chances of recipients opening and responding to the emails you send.

With this show, I begin a series of 4 shows on the style of your writing. I'm Pat Iyer, a ghostwriter, editor and book coach.

Headlines play a huge role in whether someone will open your email. While I’m focusing on individual emails, many of the principles also apply to mass emails. The special significance of individual emails is that you’re sending them to someone who’s a potential prospect or collaborator. These emails represent an important opportunity to grow your business.

Such emails require a great deal of focus. Archers want to hit the bullseye; that’s the kind of precision you want to achieve with a targeted message.

Once the prospect opens the email, you want to keep his or her attention. When carefully used, power words attract attention and interest. Words like “easy” and “thanks” may seem ordinary, but when put in the right context, they give power to your message.

And, whatever else you do, follow this slogan: “Truth in advertising.” Never promise what you can’t deliver. A message built on half-truths is like a house built of sand. It will crumble, and so will your business.

**Writing Effective Headers for Individual Emails**

When your potential customer or client opens their email, they will scan the email headers. Make sure yours attracts their attention.

Keep your header short (34 characters or under). I say 34 because most people look at email on their phones, and longer subject lines will trail off

Lead with the most important point. Don’t shout at people with all CAPS. Be specific.

You will typically write emails to request or offer a favor to someone you don’t know but with whom you’re interested in having a collaboration or partnership. These could also include job applications, emails to co-workers, and messages to businesses such as your accounting firm, lawyers, and those with whom you have other business relationships.

**The Initial Approach: Be Specific**

One of the most annoying approaches I see in email headlines is one that is vague.

A bad headline approach is “Hey, do you have a moment?” No, I don’t know you. I have 50 emails in my inbox, and if this is the best headline you can write, I only have the second it will take to delete your message.

Even worse is “Do you have a quick moment?” No, I have a slow one, but it’s already reserved.

“I have an interesting idea.” This is a good example of why “show” is much more powerful than “tell.” “Interesting” is not an interesting word.

“I would like to promote your book/business/website.” This is tricky, because lots of scammers say this in their email headers. However, this approach has a somewhat better chance of getting an email opened. Make sure that your offer gets spelled out clearly in the first sentence of the body of the email.

You will get even more opens if you write something like “I read your book and I loved it.” No author can resist. You can modify this approach by writing, “I spent a lot of time on your website.” If you prove it by mentioning specific details you liked, you can have an even better result.

**Make a Reference to a Mutual Acquaintance**

If Martin X, who likes your work (whatever it is) says, “Why don’t you email Maureen Z? I think you two could collaborate well,” you have an opening. If possible, you will want to ask him to email or call Maureen Z with the same message. If that’s not possible, use Martin’s name in your headline.

“Martin X suggested that I email you.” Spell out why in the first sentence of the body of the message.

**For a Job Application**

Be sure to put your name and the position for which you’re applying in the headline.

**The Cold Email**

This is analogous to the cold call to get business. Make it clear that this isn’t a mass emailing by specifying the name of the company and, if you have a referring name, use it. Also use a contact name from the company you’re calling if you have one.

“I can help ABL have an expanded reach in the small business community.”

“Jim V of DataReach suggested that I contact you.”

Occasionally, a headline like this may exceed the recommended 34-character length. In that event, get your most important information in at the beginning.

**The Follow-up Email**

If the email is a follow-up to a face-to-face or phone conversation you had, refer to this briefly in the headline.

“Regarding our meeting July 15”

“Information you requested about my business expenses”

“Operation Make a Date follow-up”

**For All Individualized Emails**

If the subject matter is time-sensitive, say so in the headline.

“Please reply by Friday, March 3.”

This doesn’t mean that they will, especially if they don’t know you, but if they do, you have a far better chance of jumping the email queue.

Don’t write an incomplete headline, like “Can You Answer This Question . . .”

And continue in the body of the email with “about best email practices?”

Don’t force people to open your email. They won’t like that for good reasons. You’re not showing respect for their time, and if you blow it with an email, they imagine what you must be like in real life.

Be sure to proofread your email. Typos can be quite embarrassing. And if you have a question to ask, put it at the end of the email where it won't get overlooked.

**Would A Phone Call Serve You Better?**

Always consider this possibility. We grow addicted to the ease and speed of email, but sometimes you have a better result if you pick up the phone and speak directly to the individual. This may not be appropriate with someone you don’t know, but if you do, you may find that the personal contact may serve you well.

When you want to reach a lot of people, though, email is one of the most effective media—if you do it right. If your headline has convinced someone to open your message, make sure you keep their attention by following suggestions.

I mention that “easy” is a power word. These ideas are easy to follow.

## Words That Give Your Emails Life

Keep your power words short and simple.

Three factors make certain words powerful.

1. Usually, they’re short. Consider words like “Buy,” “Now,” and “Sale.” Your audience can read them quickly.
2. They’re commonly used and therefore easy to understand. Your sale may not resemble other people’s sales, but the word has a message.
3. They’re specific. “Easy” promises that whatever the email is describing is simple to understand. The word offers reassurance.

## Thanks

Some people might think this word is overused, and they’re right. Any word loses its impact when it’s carelessly and frequently used. Don’t overlook it, though. Sending a customer who bought a product or service from you a thank-you note evokes a positive response. People want to know that their patronage of a business means something.

It’s also appropriate to thank subscribers for reading your newsletter or special report. These thanks should come towards the end of the message. However, some successful newsletter writers open each issue with a general thank you to readers for maintaining their subscription.

**Personalization**

This is important. The reader knows that you don’t know him or personally, but people have an almost-instinctive positive response to seeing their names. It captures their attention.

Using the words “you” or “your” has a similar effect of giving a message a personal feel. You lose your audience when you use the third person form instead. Compare these two sentences.

“People enjoy the warmth generated by this low-wattage space heater.”

You can lose your audience. “People” is impersonal. The reader might think, “Good for them. They’re not me.”

“You will enjoy the warmth generated by this low-wattage space heater.” Only two words are different, but in addition to the element of personalization, this sentence encourages the reader to imagine a warm, cozy room.

## Easy

This is an important word. Many people feel challenged and even threatened by technology, which can include considering whether to buy anything that needs assembly. The word “easy” can reassure them.

I recently published a book, *52 Writing Tips: Fast and Easy Ways to Polish Your Writing*. Putting “Easy” in the title was important, as I know how many people think it’s difficult to grasp grammar, punctuation, and other elements of writing.

However, I didn’t use the word “easy” lightly. The content *is* easy to grasp.

Keep power words on a list near you for when you write emails. I recommend a book by Meryl Runion called "Power Phrases: The perfect words to say it right and get the results you want". The book provides powerful expressions to get your point across clearly and confidently.

**Truth in Advertising**

This brings me to an important point. You can use all the power words recommended by experts in email marketing, but don’t use them carelessly. You’re giving your readers a promise. Make sure that you can deliver.

If you say it’s free, don’t introduce some little twist that will cost the reader money. For example, if shipping fees apply, say, “Pay only a $X.XX shipping charge.”

If an offer is only good for the next 24 hours, make sure that you don’t have it available for the following month.

Power words may draw your readers in, but to hold them, you need to fulfill your promises.

**Here are my top tips:**

Limit your email subject line to 34 characters.

Proofread your emails and put questions at the end.

Use power words in emails - keep a list near you so you can remember to include them.

In my next show, I 'll share tips on how to use lists to quickly convey content and capture your reader's attention.

And be sure to go to patiyer.com to order my book, 52 Writing Tips: Fast and Easy ways to Polish Your Writing. You’ll find it handy to use for all kinds of writing projects.