

I love English Can you read these right the first time?

*The bandage was wound
around the wound.*

*The dump was so full that it
had to refuse refuse.*

*The soldier decided to desert
his dessert in the desert.*

*Since there is no time like
the present, he thought it
was time to present the
present.*

*I did not object to the
object.*

*They were too close to the
door to close it.*

*I had to subject the subject
to a series of tests.*

Remember, even if a reader receives your message and opens it, **75% of the time**, s/he is only scanning it. This means that there is a high chance of miscommunication.

It is your responsibility to follow up with the person, either by email or preferably by telephone to ensure you get your job done effectively.



www.businesswriting.biz
info@businesswriting.biz

Write EVERY email as a 'sales pitch' ...and your message will be received-loud and clear!

Do any of the following statements sound familiar to you?

'My email messages are not even opened!'

'I'm not getting responses to my polite requests!'

'My attachments don't get read, so I include everything in the email message!'

'The readers are idiots – they continually misread my message – if they read it at all!'

'I've done my "bit", and sent the message - and I have the evidence to PROVE it!'

All the above are the symptoms, not the problems with email. Here are some of the main problems.

PROBLEM 1: Your emails are too long and boring

PROBLEM 2: Your emails don't have a complete introduction

PROBLEM 3: Your email's subject headings are too vague

PROBLEM 4: Your attitude is irresponsible and unproductive

You can overcome most problems by thinking of every email message you write as a *sales pitch*. I can hear it already. People all over the country saying, *'That's crazy – I'm not a salesperson – never have been, and never will be'*. Well, I say to all of you (in the nicest possible way) – you just don't have a choice any more! Let's consider the statistics.

- ◆ Since the advent of electronic mail, we are writing four to five times more than ever before.
- ◆ Workers who have never had to write now find it is an important part of their job.

But these two points are not even the main issue. **The main issue is that 75% of readers only scan documents** – they don't read them from beginning to end. And this makes the probability of miscommunication enormous, and the price of this miscommunication can run into millions of dollars.

So how can you get the reader to *receive* your message – loud and clear.

SOLUTION 1: Keep emails short and interesting

The best salespeople always keep their marketing and sales

material short to avoid boring their readers. I know that keeping email messages short is not easy. Let's begin by answering the question, 'How long is too long?' I suggest that one printed page is the maximum length. And many people would say that's even too long.

If possible, divide and conquer. If your email contains two or more main issues, send more than one email, and the possibility of the reader missing or misunderstanding your main point will be greatly reduced.

Use the email to 'sell' an attachment, but be sure to make the email short.

Provide a brief introduction to each issue covered in the attachment, introduce it, and include the *one or two most important issues* covered in the attachment.

Make the email message about the reader by always answering the questions: *'Why is this issue important to the reader?'* and *'Specifically, how will the reader benefit personally?'* Avoid making general comments about the benefits. Write about their issues, complaints or problems, not only about the solutions. This is how you bring in the 'emotion' salespeople talk about.

Consider making all email messages (even purely informational ones) polite requests that require some kind of action from the reader. To be a good salesperson, you will need to explain why you need the response.

SOLUTION 2: Ensure all email messages have a complete introduction

Let's consider an example that contains three issues.

Below, I have confirmed details about our consulting services, summarised the information I need you to send before installation, and provided a consulting suggestion that you may want to consider.

SOLUTION 3: Write descriptive headings

Write headings that reflect the purpose of the email. Use words that describe your purpose like 'request' and 'update'. If you need information urgently, put in the time it's needed.

SOLUTION 4: Stop blaming others for your poor follow-up

You can't relinquish all responsibility. To ensure you do your job, you need to follow through to completion.