



Getting the most out of your Emails



Email is the most common form of communication in the business world. Just think about how many emails you send or receive each week and how many different signatures you see in the emails you receive. How many of those signatures are difficult to understand? Do they have pictures that won't load, or leave you asking, "What does that mean?" These are common problems that disrupt the flow of communication by causing confusion, and they only take a few minutes to correct.



Since there are different browsers, devices, and operating systems, the formatting of your signature should stick to these guidelines:

- Separate your signature from the end of the email with two lines (--) (*see examples below*)
- Use plain text, with a font that is selectable in your toolbar.
- Keep it to a maximum of five lines of text – each with a maximum of 80 characters.
- Use pipes (|) to separate fields within each line of text.

For your **new outgoing** messages, the format should be as follows:

- Name, Credentials | Working Title
- Organization | Department(s)
- Address (USPS address for external messages, Campus address for internal messages)
- Phone(s) | Email
- Your department's *Ask Us* link

Example (External, with USPS address):

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Kori Wetsel, MPA | Manager: Travel, FBS Training & Policy Coordination
University of Utah | Financial & Business Services
201 South Presidents Circle, Rm 416 | Salt Lake City, UT 84112
P: 801-581-4149 | F: 801-581-6086 | kori.wetsel@admin.utah.edu

Send questions using our [Ask Us](#) feature on www.travel.utah.edu

Example (Internal, with campus address):

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Kori Wetsel, MPA | Manager: Travel, FBS Training & Policy Coordination
University of Utah | Financial & Business Services, 416 Park Building
P: 801-581-4149 | F: 801-581-6086 | kori.wetsel@admin.utah.edu

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For **replies and forwards**, the information should be more condensed since the recipient has already seen it once before. This allows for quick reference and less scrolling through. Keep it to your name, phone, and email information. You can set this up in your *Outlook Settings*. (See instructions below)

Example:

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Kori Wetsel | 801-581-4149 | kori.wetsel@admin.utah.edu

Consistency in FBS signature presentation will promote a professional and cohesive image.

Current Email Signature Trends and Strategies

Things to avoid:

- HTML
- “Save a tree, don’t print this email”
- Disclaimers
- Embedded images (logos, signature images, etc.)
- “Sent from my [device]”

Helpful Microsoft Outlook tips:

- Turn on Spell Check – File > Options > Mail > “Always check spelling before sending”
- Set up an Out of Office Reply – File > Info > Automatic Replies > Send Auto Replies > Set up message and dates accordingly. Be as direct and informative as possible. “I will be out of the office until Monday, January 30th – I will get back to you as soon as I can” Is all you need.
- Set up a different signature for replies and forwards – File > Options > Mail > Create or Modify Signatures for Messages > Create new, and save accordingly.

Getting the most out of Subject Lines

Add efficiency by using precise and value added subject lines. Busy people scan the inbox, looking for something worth opening or something that grabs your attention – and if the key point(s) of your message are displayed in the subject line, it is less likely to get passed over.

Examples:

“Meeting Next Tuesday” or, “Next Staff Meeting” does not hold nearly as much value as “2/13 Staff Meeting; Customer testimonials needed. Bring three ideas.”

“Read last two proposal paragraphs; approve or change by 2/18” is a lot better than “Proposal Feedback.”

Getting precise issues of a message in the subject line makes the recipient aware of what the message contains, catches their interest, and prevents back and forth questions about details.

Do whatever you can do to save time and get appropriate attention to your subject matter. If you want recipients to take the time to read your message, take the time to make it worth reading.



If we all work together and follow these guidelines, both internal and external FBS communication will become more effective.