

Principles for effective email correspondence

In this file, you will learn the principles of an effective email correspondence.

If the person you are trying to email to is a busy person, it is a good idea to use the WRITE method. WRITE stands for:

W – to whom it is written

R – real meat of the message

I – information on background

T – take these steps

E – end it

This method mainly helps you in knowing and understanding your audience, it helps you to focus on the main idea of your message and in providing the right background information.

The rule of three's can be applied to the WRITE method during email correspondence. The rule of three's is a writing principle that suggests that things that come in three are inherently interesting, more enjoyable and more memorable than other numbers. The rule of three recognises a pattern, is more likely to consume information and gives us a structure to work with.

It is no accident that the number three is pervasive in well-known stories such as the three little pigs, three musketeers and the three wise men.

Pattern recognition is a necessary skill and three is the shortest pattern possible. It is also easy to remember. Hence the rule of three can be applied to the WRITE method when corresponding emails with busy people as it makes it easier for them to remember the content of your email.

More information on the rule of three's can be found in the following websites. They provide examples and explain how it works. <http://www.quickanddirtytips.com/business-career/public-speaking/how-to-communicate-better-using-the-rule-of-three> and

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/carminegallos/2012/07/02/thomas-jefferson-steve-jobs-and-the-rule-of-3/>

More tips on writing effective emails

- 1) Know your audience. Who is your audience? How often does your audience use e-mail to communicate? How comfortable is your audience with using electronic communication?
- 2) Think about your message before you write it.
- 3) Reflect on the tone of your message.
- 4) Strive for clarity and brevity in your writing.
- 5) Format your message so that it is easy to read.
- 6) Proofread

Questions to ask before sending your email

- * What is my purpose for sending this e-mail? Will the message seem important to the receiver or just a waste of time?
- * How many e-mails does the reader usually receive, and what will make him/her read this message?
- * Do the formality and style of my writing fit the expectations of my audience?
- * How will my message look when it reaches the receiver?

Is it easy to read?

Have I used correct grammar and punctuation?

Have I divided my thoughts into discrete paragraphs?

Have I provided enough context for my audience to easily understand or follow the thread of the message?