

**REAL
PARALEGAL
HEROES**



Chief Master Sergeant Lee A. Upright, United States Airforce

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KNOW Etiquette

By Stayce Wagner

Question: What do you do if your boss isn't responding to your emails?

We've all been there. You send an email to your boss and



then wait. And wait. And wait for a response that never comes. You start wondering if the network is down, just as you receive an email from someone else. So what is the problem? Well, it could be in a "can't believe my luck kind of way," that your boss is one of those rare and wonderful corporate creatures who prefer in-person communication with staff. If so, by all means, go talk to her. But, if you know her preferred way of communicating is via email it is very likely that your email writing technique is the culprit. Yes, it's you. But don't despair. It's an easy fix.

First of all, the big picture:

Most professionals have become scanners instead of readers of email. Our inboxes have become so inundated with email that we scan the subject line to decide whether to continue reading. So, you've got to make your subject line meaningful to get your boss's attention. Subject lines that say "per your request" or "status update" are not compelling and will get passed over.

At a minimum, tell her which case, client or project the email is regarding. Also, think about the future – four months from now, do you want to wade through hundreds of emails with the title "per your request" when your boss asks you to forward the revised 2014 Annual Report to her again?

Next, they skip to the last sentence or two to see if there is something they need to do: call you back, approve a vendor's bid, etc. These sentences, known as a call to action, should never be put in the middle of the email.

These two tips should improve your email response rate. Now for some finer points:

1. Do I need to tell you to proof your emails and check your grammar? I hope not. Sending your boss (or anyone for that matter) an email containing unforgiveable grammar mistakes (confusing their/there/they're, your/you're and its/it's) makes the email harder to understand, hence, another reason for it landing in the "maybe I'll deal with it later" stack.
2. Include everyone who needs to be included on the email string and not one person more. The general rule for internal communication is that everyone addressed in the email should be copied. Many people don't read emails that are addressed to multitudes because these emails create the feeling that there isn't anything of relevance directed to them.

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