

# STANDING UP FOR YOURSELF IN WRITING?

## Read this before you hit send. Please



COME  
BACK  
TOMORROW

### OPENERS AND CLOSERS ARE KEY

OPEN

Your opening line in an email sets the tone for the entire email. Similarly, how you wrap it up can leave the reader leaving on a high-note, or not so high-note.

We tend to be much more aggressive *and sometimes rude* in writing than we would otherwise be in person. Imagine calling someone on the phone and as soon as they pick up, starting right in with, "John in today's meeting, you . . ." without even saying hello first.

**We would almost never do that.**

*Yet we forget to put in a cheery opening line or closing line all the time.*

Ensure you create the personal emotional connection with a quick opening line, and tie it together with something of the same tone as you finish, and this alone will dramatically change the impression people have of your emails immediately.

CLOSED

### WORRY ABOUT FEELINGS, NOT FACTS

inspire

When we are upset or acting out, we want people to acknowledge and validate how upset we are

Instead of writing, "When you claimed that you never know when to expect to hear back from me," Something more like, "I understand you're frustrated/angry/confused about callback times, and wanted to address this with you right away," is more likely to get the recipient to open up, and any other reader to be more sympathetic to your case.

CONNECT

### REFERENCE "THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE"

All of the egos involved can be left intact by assuming the other person is--*and and always was--* being truthful, but might simply be basing their conclusions off information that's different from yours. Making sure you're both accessing the same source can often prevent misunderstandings and clear up misunderstandings without anyone having to "admit" they were wrong.

#### DANGER PHRASES

You said  
You claimed  
You admitted  
I'm sorry if  
You lied/  
you're wrong

- **The information I have appears to be different . . .**
- **So that I can find where the breakdown occurred, if you wouldn't mind sharing the information you have . . .**
- **I bet we're getting our information from conflicting sources . . .**

#### POWER PHRASES

I heard  
I understood  
You acknowledged  
I apologize for  
I have  
conflicting/different  
information . . .

### USE THE PASSIVE VOICE TO AVOID BLAME

#### ACTIVE

You turned in your reports late, and I can't do anything about that now.

If you're simply dealing in facts and information, it's much easier to state what was done rather than what someone did, or what can be done now rather than what you can do now.

Remember the trick is that with the active voice, the subject acts, and with the passive voice the subject receives action.

For example, active voice: I kicked the ball. Passive voice: The ball was kicked (and you can leave off the part about who did the kicking).

#### PASSIVE

The reports were delivered late, and there's nothing that can be done about that now.

HOT TIP

#### REMEMBER YOUR BENEFIT STATEMENTS

PART OF DELIVERING SUPERIOR CUSTOMER SERVICE IS REMEMBERING TO ARTICULATE WHAT THE BENEFIT IS FOR THE CUSTOMER. ADDITIONALLY, ANY TIME WE MAKE A REQUEST FROM A CUSTOMER WE MUST PREFACE THE REQUEST WITH A BENEFIT STATEMENT FOR THE CUSTOMER.

HOT TIP

#### SERVE SERVE SERVE

IF WE ALWAYS MAINTAIN OUR SERVICE-FIRST ATTITUDE, IT SHOWS OTHERS WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE BEHAVE EVEN WHEN NOBODY'S WATCHING. REVIEW EVERY SENTENCE AND ASK IF IT WAS WRITTEN WITH AN ATTITUDE TO SERVE.

HOT TIP

#### MY WORK SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

INSTEAD OF DEFENDING YOURSELF, WHICH ONLY SERVES TO EXPOSE OUR OWN INSECURITIES AND WEAKNESSES, TRY SIMPLY SAYING, "I'LL LET MY WORK SPEAK FOR ITSELF." I MEAN, IT DOES ANYWAY, AND PROJECTS MUCH MORE CONFIDENCE.

For more, go to [DanOConnorTraining.com](http://DanOConnorTraining.com), or

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