

# Email Etiquette

---

Start with a salutation or greeting and the person's name. Depending on if the person is known, it may be most professional to use the surname.

Immediately state the purpose for the communication. The purpose or point of the email should be in the subject line. This should be stated in a concise manner, preferably one sentence.

- "I would like to clarify if there are restrictions on intravenous furosemide during the drug shortage period."
- "Thank you for bringing \_\_\_\_\_ to my attention yesterday."

Add any supporting information. Be brief. If it cannot be brief, it may be better to have a conversation.

Have a closing statement thanking the reader, wishing the reader a great day, or simply state "regards."

List your first name, which may be done in a bold, large font. The line below should include the sender's full name and credentials, followed by title, the organization name, address, department, phone and extension, and email address. Each of the above to be on a separate line or separated by a "|" mark. If replying, simply a signature with the first name is acceptable. Usually the corporation has a specific protocol for use of the company logo and elements of the signature on emails. Replies typically have a different signature, including just the name and title.

Many organizations will automatically insert a non-disclosure clause. This is to ensure that the reader does not use proprietary/confidential information and forward on to the public. Typically the risk management, information systems or legal department will be able to provide this information.

Be conscious of the tone of the email. One of the easiest things is to make sure not all letters are capitalized, unless the word is an acronym. Another is the connotation of the language used. Any words with a negative societal view would be best to avoid, such as drama, fat, and crazy. Exaggeration and sarcasm are as well best to circumvent. The reader cannot see the facial expression of the writer as they can during face-to-face communication, so the message can be misunderstood. Probably a common pearl to employ would be to not write an email if highly agitated.

Use the spelling and grammar check tool, if available. This will have many false positives, if drug names or disease states are included. Be sure to spell drug names and disease states correctly. Utilize the organization's online drug reference to check spelling, such as Facts and Comparisons®, Up to Date®, Micromedex®, or Lexicomp®. Finally, read the email to oneself and ensure that all is correct. This catches the false negatives from spell check.

If any attachments were referenced in the email, be sure that those attachments are truly attached to the email and open.

## Things to Avoid in Email

- Forwarding chain mail
- Replying to all senders when reply is “I agree” and there are several recipients
- Expressing strong emotion
- Using e-mail as a means to circumvent having a conversation on a difficult subject matter
- Requesting a read receipt on every e-mail
- Using all capital letters
- Non-standard fonts (not Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial)
- Spelling errors
- Sarcasm and jokes
- Forwarding messages that the sender would want to be kept private
- Claiming others’ ideas as one’s own
- Being extremely lengthy and redundant
- Forgetting to answer the original sender’s questions, if a reply
- Emoticons (i.e. 😊)
- Drifting off-topic

References:

<http://www.it.cornell.edu/services/guides/email/polite.cfm>

[http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505143\\_162-57411851/9-keys-to-email-etiquette](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505143_162-57411851/9-keys-to-email-etiquette)

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/694/1>

**Morell, Jason**

---

To: Smith, Elizabeth ([esmith@generalhospital.org](mailto:esmith@generalhospital.org))

Subject: Tobramycin Charge

Date: Thursday, September 28, 2012

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am writing to you to inquire about tobramycin charges on John Doe (DOB 1/1/1900). He had a hip arthroplasty yesterday, where you were the surgical nurse on the case. A 1.2 gram vial of tobramycin powder was sent for bone cement, but it was not signed off on the electronic MAR, so the hospital is missing the charge. The operative report states it was used as dictated by Dr. Lee. Unless I am missing something, may I kindly ask that it signed off on the electronic MAR Mr. Doe is charged? If there is any assistance needed for this, please let me know.

Thank you,

*Jason*

Jason Morell, C.Ph.T.

Pharmacy Buyer

General Hospital

Inpatient Pharmacy

20 Main St.

Chicago, IL 60612

(312) 541-2112 ext. 76116

[jmorell@generalhospital.org](mailto:jmorell@generalhospital.org)