

The 15 Worst Sales Email Writing Mistakes

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A Perspective 101 Series



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- **You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.** And when that first impression is made via email, it's even harder to come off the way you want to. Without the benefit of an in-person interaction, you can't exactly build rapport or pivot your strategy if something you're saying doesn't resonate.
- **So it's imperative that you get that first email right.** While you can't control whether your email garners a response, you can control everything else -- and you should.
- **If the core of your email is an insight or resource, think of your writing as the packaging.** Even if you're an expert, it'll be hard to build credibility if your online communication is riddled with spelling and formatting errors.

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Below are the **15 worst errors** a sales rep can make in an email. Beware!

1) Misusing “your” and “you’re”

- **They sound the same, but they certainly don’t mean the same thing.** It’s easy to slip up, but asking your prospect, “*Do you have any time on you’re calendar to chat tomorrow?*” makes you look sloppy and unprofessional.

2) Misusing “there,” “their,” and “they’re”

- **Another common grammar mistake** that makes it harder for you to be taken seriously.

The 15 Worst Sales Email Writing Mistakes

3) Misusing “its” and “it’s”

- The last member of the trio of **frequently confused homophones**.

4) Misspelling your prospect’s name or company

- **Maybe you were tired when you sent the email.** Maybe your eyes were blurry from staring at the screen for too long. Guess what? Your prospect won’t care -- they’ll think you haven’t done your research, are sloppy in your work, or flat out don’t care about accuracy. None of the above bode well for your ability to make the sale.

5) Misspelling your own company’s name

- **This isn’t nearly as insulting to a prospect** since you’ve fumbled your own company, not theirs, but it still gives the sense that you just don’t care that much.

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6) Mistyping your phone number

- **This is a mistake I made (and learned from) the hard way.** My email signature contained my phone number, but I'd mistyped one digit. I got a frustrated email from a client a few days into his project demanding to know why I never picked up the phone.
- **If you're going to provide a way for your prospects to get in touch, make sure it's correct.** If they actually take the initiative to call you, ensure it's not a waste of their time.

The 15 Worst Sales Email Writing Mistakes

7) Fumbling the date

- Scheduling a meeting over email is enough of a pain. Asking your prospect for a meeting on “Thursday, November 16th” when November 16th is actually a Wednesday creates confusion and necessitates an additional two or three emails to correct the mistake. Make sure you’re referencing a calendar when including dates in your emails.

8) Not using paragraphs

- If your email’s only two sentences long, this isn’t as much of a problem. But when you’re writing a long follow-up email or a recap of an important call, make sure you’re breaking the text up so it’s easy for your prospect to read.

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9) Using inline lists instead of bullet points

- To make your prospect's job even easier, break out lists into easily scannable bulleted lists. Would you rather be asked if a meeting on "Monday at 3:00 p.m., Tuesday at 12:00 p.m., Tuesday at 1:45 p.m., Wednesday at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday at 4 p.m., or Thursday at 12:20 p.m." works better for you, or receive this email:

Let me know if any of the below times work for you:

- *Monday at 3:00 p.m.*
- *Tuesday at 12:00 p.m.*
- *Tuesday at 1:45 p.m.*
- *Wednesday at 9:00 a.m.*
- *Wednesday at 4:00 p.m.*
- *Thursday at 12:30 p.m.*
- You prefer the second option? Yep, me too.

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10) Failing to format

- In a real conversation, you can use body language, voice tone, and gestures to accentuate important points. But **it's harder to convey tone in emails**, so if your email is longer than a paragraph and it contains information your prospect absolutely must read, bold or italicize it to make sure it catches their eye.
- One caveat: **Don't go too crazy**. An email where every other word is bolded or underlined is jarring to read and looks unprofessional.

The 15 Worst Sales Email Writing Mistakes

11) Including too much information

- **You can use #10 above to gut check this point.** If you've written 800 words, but only felt the need to bold one statement, take a moment to check whether you actually need to include everything you've written. Save your prospect as much time as possible by cutting right to the point -- they'll appreciate it.

12) Burying your ask

- Sometimes, though, you will need to write a longer email. **In this case, make sure to pull out your ask into its own line or paragraph** so it's not lost in the rest of the text.

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13) Not including an ask

- Whether it's asking for 10 minutes to discuss resources you've just sent over or offering a product demonstration, every action you take should be designed to advance a prospect through the sales process if it's a mutual good fit.

14) Asking too much

- Of course, **what you ask has to be reasonable**. If it's the first time you're speaking with a prospect, it's ridiculous to ask them what contract terms they'd be comfortable with. Tailor what you ask for to your prospect's stage of the buyer's journey.

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15) Including broken links

- Including a link or two in your sales emails is great when it's applicable. You're providing more content and an opportunity to click around your site and learn more about your product.
- Make sure those links are updated and work, especially if you're using a template -- if your prospect is actually interested enough to click through, make sure you're giving them a good experience.
- Just as importantly, you'll appear unprofessional and sloppy if you include links that don't work.

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Sales emails are an art and a science.

Different subject lines and strategies will work better for different prospects and industries.

But these are the building blocks of professional correspondence.

Get your writing rock-solid so you can focus on selling.

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This is a series of Training for your
Management, Sales & Office TEAM

Good Selling !



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