

How to write an angry email professionally in 8 steps



A work-related issue pops up and leaves you seeing red. You hit reply on your email or open a new message and begin to write an angry email in response, typing the first thing that comes to mind. However, you remember it's crucial to maintain professionalism despite your emotions, but how?

That's when you turn to Google for answers. "How do you write an angry email professionally?" You're in good company, it's a question we've all asked ourselves at one point or another.

The next time you find yourself in this position, remember, you can still get your points across while doing so in a manner that won't end up with a reprimand from your boss or a meeting with HR. Any time you feel inclined to send an angry email, follow this simple process to check your mindset, evaluate the best form of communication, and craft an effective professional message.

Check your mindset before you write an angry email

Express your emotions

Anger is a healthy emotion, but bottling it up isn't.

You likely can't say everything you want to say in your email and avoid the negative repercussions. However, to

start, write an initial email that says everything you want to express. Let out all of your feelings, emotions, and insights, but do so in a Word Document. Then, when done, read it and delete it.

While not a long-term solution, doing so can be therapeutic. It gives you the sense of relief that you need in knowing that you were able to express your feelings in a safe space. It also helps you think through your thoughts more clearly before responding.

Alternatively, talking it out to yourself or a trusted friend or family member might be an excellent alternative to writing about it. Ultimately, you want to choose a method that works best for you, just don't bottle it all in.

Take a breath

Just like it's not best to send a text message or respond in an argument when angry, it's also not best to write an email when angry — especially at work. With emotions running on high, you're more likely to respond based on your initial feelings and say something you might later regret.

Before composing your message, give yourself some room to breathe. You may wish to get up from your desk and walk around for a few moments, complete a one-minute meditation, or simply distract yourself for a while. Just know that you don't have to respond right away when you start seeing red.

A delay of 30 minutes an hour, two hours, or more lets you reapproach the situation with a clear head. This can truly save you from sending a message that could leave a negative mark on your professional record and damage relationships with colleagues, clients, or stakeholders.

Reconsider the matter at hand

Sometimes a situation occurs, and your initial thought is — that's wrong!

But, if you take a second look, your insight might reveal that it's not what you initially thought. This is especially true in written communication, as it's easy to misinterpret someone's words or intentions. If you compose and send an email based on your initial feelings, before taking the time to consider the reality further, it's too late.

That's why if you feel you've been wronged or a situation leads to feelings of anger for whatever reason, think once, twice, and three times to ensure you're not overreacting or misinterpreting.

Evaluate your options

Determine the best communication method

If, after the above, you determine that your emotions are indeed warranted, consider whether communicating about the issue via email is the best approach.

Conversations that might bring about heightened emotions are often best had in person, by phone, or via a Zoom meeting. Communication via text-based platforms is notorious for miscommunication, misunderstanding, and often making the situation worse. This is the opposite of what you want. If your goal is communicating effectively and coming to a reasonable solution, communicate strategically.

Upon further thought, depending on the severity of the situation, you might even discover bringing in additional support to help resolve the problem before it escalates. This can sometimes work better than going at it alone.

Still, there are times when an email response may be necessary.

Remember emails live forever

One final tip before you choose to send an angry email is to remind yourself that emails live forever.

A good rule to remember is if you wouldn't want the message to be plastered on the newspaper's front page or be tagged on social media for all of your friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and community to see, don't write it.

It doesn't mean the conversation doesn't need to occur. However, the approach might be better suited for a spoken conversation. If not, then you'll want to maintain a high level of professionalism in your communication. You should always assume that emails you send, especially professionally, are not private.

Steps for writing an angry email professionally

If you've gone through all the above steps and still feel that an email is your best option, then there are some strategies you'll want to implement to do so effectively.

Keep it brief

When emotions are high, you're more likely to convey all of your thoughts and feelings regarding a situation to ensure you communicate your viewpoint. However, in truth, you should do the opposite and keep it brief.

The more concise you are, the less likely you are to incorporate something you might later regret.

Additionally, getting deep into the weeds can bog down your email and cloud the most important points you wish to convey.

Maintain formality

Sending an email when upset can lead to messaging you might later wish you could take back. So throughout your email, err on the side of formality.

Remember all of the basics of writing a proper work-related email like:

- Include proper greetings
- Address the purpose of the email early on
- Be straightforward
- Stick to the facts
- Include an appropriate salutation
- Maintain a positive and respectful tone of voice
- Make any requests or follow-up actions clear

Maintaining formality makes it easier to be professional, even when it's related to a touchy subject.

Read your message aloud

Sometimes you don't realize how a message sounds until it's read aloud.

If possible, write your email then read it aloud after breathing, considering the circumstances, and remembering that emails live on forever.

When reading the message aloud, try to do so from a neutral place and eliminate any words/phrases that might come across as rude. However, also watch out for words that seem timid.

Your goal shouldn't be to act as though nothing is wrong. Instead, you want to find a way to communicate regarding the circumstances while maintaining your professionalism. It's common to err on the side of timid or apologetic language in an attempt to offset feelings of anger. However, stuffing your feelings completely can make matters worse down the road and prevent you from reaching a resolution.

Additional Resources:

- [8 common grammar mistakes to avoid in business writing.](#)
- [How to edit your own writing before you hit send.](#)
- [20 professional words to use to elevate your writing.](#)