10 Tips for Creating Effective Emails

1. **Define your purpose.**
   You should always have a clearly defined purpose for your emails so that you can keep your content focused on that purpose. If you don’t have a clearly defined purpose, you should probably revisit whether the email is necessary.

2. **Know your audience.**
   For starters, Gen Zers (categorized as 19 years of age and under) know how to educate themselves and find information. They’re driven workers who want to make a difference in the world, and they prefer to communicate with images. 
   For more info: [http://mashable.com/2014/08/20/generation-z-marketing/#m!1c71:eyJzIjoicCIsImkiOiJfNzV5a2djajk1NXVpM243byJ9](http://mashable.com/2014/08/20/generation-z-marketing/#m!1c71:eyJzIjoicCIsImkiOiJfNzV5a2djajk1NXVpM243byJ9)

3. **Consider your subject line.**
   Some writers overlook subject lines entirely, while others agonize over them. In truth, “boring,” straightforward subject lines have been proven to work best—so just briefly tell your readers what’s inside! 

4. **Think in terms of “snackable content.”**
   Keep your emails short and sweet, breaking up content to allow for easy scanning. Avoid lengthy paragraphs and utilize headings and lists when possible.

5. **Don’t forget, a picture’s worth 1,000 words.**
   Use images whenever possible to enhance content and increase visual engagement (this is especially important considering that Gen Z prefers to communicate in images; see tip #2!).

6. **Follow link protocol.**
   Often we send emails out to convince students to perform a certain action (e.g., sign up for an event). When a link is especially important, make sure it’s obvious. Also, consider both look (links should look like links) and phrasing (be specific and avoid “click here”).

7. **Include our opt-out message.**
   It’s required by law to include an opt-out message in every email you send. Following is the one we ask you to include at the bottom of your emails: 
   Unsubscribe[http://www.admissions.illinois.edu/getonourlist/optout.aspx](http://www.admissions.illinois.edu/getonourlist/optout.aspx) if you no longer prefer to receive emails or other materials from the University of Illinois Office of Undergraduate Admissions.
In addition, be aware that you’re more likely to get caught in spam filters if you use all caps, multiple exclamation points, bright red or green fonts, or keywords and phrases like “Free,” “Urgent,” “Click Now,” etc.
For more info: http://mailchimp.com/resources/guides/how-to-avoid-spam-filters/html/

8. Brand emails appropriately.
   Be sure to brand your emails and use a sender name specific to your college/unit. You don’t want to make your emails look like they’ve been sent from Admissions, since this will confuse students.

9. Expect open and click rates to be low.
   The average open rate for marketing and advertising emails is 18.81%, with an average click rate of 2.44%. We’re not sharing this statistic to discourage you, but we want you to know the facts so that you can create realistic open and click rate goals moving forward.
   For more info: http://mailchimp.com/resources/research/email-marketing-benchmarks/

10. Remember, less is more.
   Avoid sending out too many emails. Students are overwhelmed with the amount of information they receive from universities, so only send what you deem to be truly worthy.
   For proof: search #collegemail