



## Email commitment statement

At EBE, we care deeply about the **wellbeing and mental health** of both **our team and those we work with**.

Even when no action is required, we recognise the negative effect that emails and their associated alerts can have on wellbeing, particularly when they are frequent and disruptive to the flow of a working day. We always consider the impact of our emailing, on our self and on the recipient.

Unless they are particularly urgent, we have two key guidelines on when we expect to send and receive replies to emails:

We endeavour to reply to every email that requires a response within one working day.

We don't expect replies to our own emails as quickly as this, in general.

We understand that there is a difference between "process" and "discretionary" emails. The former are part of the normal organisational function (booking confirmations, invoices and the like), while the latter are where we have a choice to make about the mode and timing of communication. Process emails need, by their nature, to be timely and regular, so we are chiefly concerned with discretionary emails here.

## Discretionary emails, both internal and external

It is hard to ignore an email alert, even though we know it is very likely to be unimportant or not urgent, as our brain is hard-wired to seek out new information and receives a chemical reward when we do so successfully.

As such, we have a few simple guidelines and rules when it comes to communications, and we try to live by these where possible, whether we are emailing other EBE team members, or those external to the organisation:

**Choose the best method of communication for the purpose.** Email is often the "default" workplace method of communication, but it may not always be necessary, or the best method to achieve the desired purpose. As such, we encourage our staff to think carefully about the best and most effective method of communication, rather than simply sending an email by default.

**Use clear subject lines and formatting.** We try to help the recipient prioritise and read their emails by being clear in the subject line, and by formatting the message sensibly – for example, by using subheadings to break up text in a long email and to guide the reader. We are professional in our writing, and are careful to avoid assumptions, typos and errors.



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**Avoid (or limit) “out of hours” emails.** We are mindful of the recipient when considering sending “out of hours” emails, especially thinking about how it may impact on their personal life. While we don’t encourage staff to check or send emails out of hours in any case, we acknowledge that it is sometimes necessary. When this is the case, and when it isn’t urgent, we try to delay delivery so it is received during the recipient’s work day.

**Be mindful of time zones.** This is harder to ensure, given the international nature of our work, but we also try to be mindful of the recipient’s time zone when sending emails. At the very least, if we must send an email when the recipient won’t be working, we acknowledge the impact this may have on their work/life balance, and we don’t expect replies out of his/her normal working hours.

**Avoid unnecessary ccs and bccs.** Although when we hit send, we feel like we have only sent one email, if there are four others cc’d in, we have potentially sent a notification to five people and grabbed their attention away from what they were doing. Although ccs and bccs are sometimes necessary – to keep relevant people in the loop, for example – we only send emails to those who need to receive them.



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