Guidelines for Emailing

Think of emails as tiered, or ranked, depending on who the communication is with.

Let’s call Tier 1 a good friend or colleague (someone you do work with often).

Tier 2 is someone you know as an acquaintance or someone of authority that you have a good relationship with.

Tier 3 is someone you don’t know or a person of authority that you don’t know well/get along with.

**You receive an email. When do you respond?**

Tier 1 – within the week, although since it is someone you have a close relationship with, you would likely respond sooner if they needed something from you

Tier 2 – within 24 hours is a good rule of thumb as you want to be prompt, but at the same time may need time to read, process, and write back

Tier 3 – during the same day, assuming the email is not sent late at night. Still take the time to read and process the email before writing back, but you may want someone else to read your reply before you send it, so that you don’t overlook anything

**Greeting:**

Tier 1 – John, [then hit enter twice] or no greeting

Tier 2 – Hello John, [then hit enter twice]

Tier 3 – Good afternoon Mr. Smith, [then hit enter twice]

**Body:**

Tier 1 – conversational style and, if not work related, then a quick review before hitting send

Tier 2 – short paragraphs, **bolded action items** (if necessary), and two read-throughs out loud before hitting send

Tier 3 – short paragraphs, short email overall, bullet points if you have 2 or 3 critical items, read-through twice out loud and then have someone with a critical eye read it before hitting send

**Signature**

Tier 1 – Bye, Later, Cya, or nothing at all (basically whatever you want that is appropriate to the relationship)

Tier 2 –

Regards,

John (add a last name if they don’t know you well)

\*you could also say Kind Regards, or Warm Regards, depending on the relationship

Tier 3 –

Respectfully,

John Smith

Title (if applicable)