

Emailing a Potential Employer

To be, or not to be professional: that is the question.

The answer is: YES

It is always a good idea to apply in person whenever you have the chance, but there are times when email is necessary or specified in the job advertisement. Email is quick, easy and convenient; a natural candidate of communication for both job seekers and employers alike. However, it does not replace what human interaction can convey in a few short gestures. Email does not smile, offer a handshake or make eye contact with your potential employer. The employer does not have the opportunity to see your qualities or character face to face. For this reason, it is crucial to make every effort to ensure that your email application is professional and makes a memorable first impression.

Follow these guidelines for every email application you submit:

1. Ensure you have the **job title or reference number** in the subject line of the email. Unless you know for sure that you are sending the email to the hiring manager, your application may end up being unintentionally discarded.
2. Include **your full name in the file name** of your resume and cover letter. Make it easier for an employer to quickly find it amongst many other applicants. They may need to refer back to it.
3. Submit a **Word** version as well as a **plain text** version of your resume. Unlike Word documents, plain text files have no formatting and are readable by all computers. Whether or not an employer can open your file is not something you will know for sure and if the employer cannot view your resume, chances are they will continue on to the next applicant.

To create a plain text copy of your resume:

1. Open your resume in Word
 2. Save the file and select "Plain Text" in the "Save as type" field at the bottom
4. Always **write a brief message**. Address the intended recipient. Ideally, try to find out the name of the person hiring. Otherwise, "To whom it may concern" or "Dear sir/madam" would suffice. Specify the reason for your email and direct the recipient to your attached resume and cover letter. Thank the employer and include your name and contact information at the end. Another option is to copy and paste your cover letter into the body of the email instead.
 5. **Test your email**. Send it to yourself first to get an idea on what the employer will see. Open files you have attached and make sure they look presentable. Verify all spelling and content.

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