5 words that could make you sound rude in emails
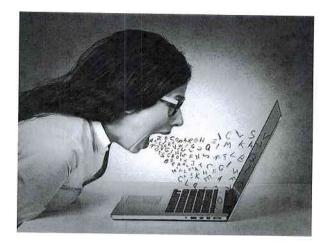
"Apparently" it's easy to misinterpret a sender's tone and emotion—and "obviously" this can cause problems at work.

Elana Lyn Gross, Monster contributor

You're clearing out your email inbox when you stumble upon a rude email. You reread it and incredulously ask yourself: Did she *really* just write that?

As anyone who has ever written an email knows, it is easier to convey tone and emotion when you are speaking to someone in-person as opposed to online. The words, phrases and tone that you use with your friends might make you come off sounding like a jerk in a professional email.

Monster spoke to career experts to find out some of the most commonly used words and phrases that make you sound rude in emails, so you won't make those mistakes at your next job.

"Obviously"

Example: "Obviously we should move forward with the marketing plan based on the outcome of the board meeting."

Why it doesn't work: "It sounds as though the writer is pointing out that the information that follows should be obvious, but you, the reader, are not smart enough to grasp it," says Dianna Booher, founder and CEO of Dallas-based communication firm Booher Research Institute . Use "obviously," and you run a high risk of coming off condescending—and being branded the Miranda Priestly of the office.

Use this instead: "We should move forward with the marketing plan based on the outcome of the board meeting."

"Actually"

Example: "I actually think it would be better if we publish the article in advance of the book's release date."

Why it doesn't work: "'Actually' is a word best saved for conversation," says Melissa Bessey, founder and president of the Toronto-based public relations firm Media Allure. "Any text using 'actually' can too easily sound hostile or make you sound like a know-it-all—either one will be perceived as rude."

Use this instead: "Let's publish the article in advance of the book's publication date."

"Apparently"

Example: "Apparently, the presentation is too long, and we should be more concise."

Why it doesn't work: Unless you work in law enforcement, words such as "apparently," "allegedly" and "evidently" can sound like you are contradicting or questioning someone's judgment or portrayal of events. "It sounds as though the person may have been sneaky, previously hiding something from you that you've had to deduce for yourself and then point out in the email," says Booher.

Use this instead: "We received feedback that the presentation is too long. We should edit it to be more concise."

"Fine"

Example: "Thanks for sending the press release to me for approval. It's fine."

Why it doesn't work: "The word 'fine' is often used in conversation as a form of compliance. It can have a negative or positive tone, but it is mostly perceived as rude and dismissive," says Bessey. "It is best to err on the side of caution and replace 'fine' with 'good.' When something is *not* fine, be direct enough to let the reader know what is not okay so they are not left wondering."

Use this instead: "Thanks for sending the press release to me for approval. It's approved. Great work."

"No"

Example: "The answer to your request is no."

Why it doesn't work: "'No' comes across harshly in an email. It's best to soften your language and provide context," says Nancy Halpern, an executive at the New York-based executive coaching firm KNH Associates.

Use this instead: "I won't be able to publish the article on Monday because I have three time-sensitive articles to publish, but I will publish it the following Monday."

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