

ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS

The “Subject:” line

We all know that the “SUBJECT:” line must capture interest. But it must also perform a service critical to your reader: it must enable the reader to gauge instantly *the relative priority of the message*.

Basic “Subject:” line template

There are two essential components, and their sequence is important:

SUBJECT: [topic] + [purpose]
 [example] Social media plan -- Review draft by 6/4



Three suggested formulas

Each of the formulas below relies on the above template and is also keyed to the purpose of the message:

PURPOSE OF THE MESSAGE	EXAMPLES (topic + purpose)
1) Seeking action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the words ACTION REQUESTED or ACTION REQUIRED (<i>enables readers to easily distinguish such messages from dozens of others sitting in their inbox</i>). Include the timeframe (<i>enables readers to gauge the relative priority of the message</i>). 	SUBJECT: Division logo image -- ACTION REQUESTED: Submit by 8/4 SUBJECT: New policy -- ACTION REQUESTED: Review by 7/29
2) Responding to a request <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the words The [blank] you requested. 	SUBJECT: Division logo image -- Input you requested SUBJECT: Bryant Commission -- Report you requested
3) Conveying information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use FYI or the words No action required. 	SUBJECT: BGT: New procedure released -- FYI (no action required) SUBJECT: LDP curriculum finalized -- No action required