

Email in the workplace essay sample



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Email is a very fast way of sending and receiving information, and it certainly does make things easier in the workplace as well as in other areas of life.

The internet has revolutionised the way we communicate. An important business decision might be made at long-distance via email within minutes, and at absolutely no cost. However, research has shown that face-to-face communication is a necessary factor in promoting healthy business relationships. Email does not allow for this kind of communication; therefore, though fast and easy, it is inadequate as a replacement for the formal (or even informal) business meeting.

Several levels of communication exist, and verbal communication is only one of them. Non-verbal is as important as verbal communication in assessing another's reaction to one's ideas and assertions. According to a study done by Gary Deziel at the University of Vermont Extension, it was found that "many people communicate emotions through facial expressions or tone of voice rather than in their words" (2004)

The lack of non-verbal communication inherent in email can promote several levels of misunderstanding if relied upon too heavily. Although fast, email cannot provide the energy and interaction that is present at business meetings, nor can it provide as immediate a response to questions as a face to face interview might.

As was further pointed out, "while a supervisor may think he or she has communicated a directive clearly, the subordinate may be carrying out orders that were never intended or doing something quite different than the supervisor requested" (Deziel, 2004). This is not just a problem where

relationships are concerned, but such misunderstandings might end up costing a company a lot of money, as problems might be generated that are difficult to fix.

Email can serve a company very well, but it does not serve it in every situation, and should not be made to be the work horse of communication when it cannot carry the entire load. Different people communicate in different ways, and while some are comfortable with the limited personal contact of email, other members of staff might require a more personal touch. Therefore, email should not replace business meetings or other types of person-to-person interaction in a company.

References

Deziel, Gary. (2004, June). E-mail Use and Communication Perceptions of University of Vermont Extension Employees. Journal of Extension. [Online], 42(3). Available: <http://www.joe.org/joe/2004june/rb3.shtml>