



Faculty of Engineering  
and Applied Science

## COMPOSING PROFESSIONAL E-MAILS: THE CLOSING/SIGNATURE

It is common for people to struggle more with closing an e-mail than they did with writing the actual content. This document gives some insight into how to end e-mails in a way that matches your intended purpose. Additionally, there is guidance for how to sign an e-mail properly.

### SIGN-OFFS

This is the last word or phrase that comes before the name of the sender. There is much trepidation surrounding which word to use because they all have their own connotations. Grammarly has a useful guide on common sign-offs [1], which has been used to inform Table 1.

Table 1: Common Sign-Offs

| Sign-Off                   | Notes   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Regards                    | The most common sign-off; bland but versatile   |
| Best (or Best wishes)      | Less formal than regards, adding friendliness   |
| Cheers                     | Not overly formal; means thanks in the UK, but that meaning is secondary in North America, where the word is associated with the consumption of alcohol |
| Take care                  | Sounds friendly, but it could be misinterpreted in an e-mail with a negative tone, being taken to mean "watch one's back"                               |
| Sincerely                  | Very formal ending, and used only in formal e-mails   |
| Thanks (or Thank you)      | Common ending to express thanks   |
| Thanks in advance          | Can be considered overbearing as an expectation is now placed on the recipient to take action   |
| I appreciate your feedback | A good way to ask for help without placing onus on the recipient  |

Other sign-offs also exist. The punctuation can vary depending on the type of sign-off chosen [2]. While a comma is most common, an exclamation would work with phrases like *Good luck!* If the sign-off is, in fact, a sentence, then a period would work.

### NAME AND SIGNATURE

Below the sign-off comes the name of the person who sent the e-mail. There is disagreement about whether a space is needed between these two parts, so feel free to do whichever you think looks best. If you are using a digitally hand-written signature, which adds a personal touch to e-mails and is highly recommended in e-mails related to potential employment, remember to include a typed version of your name below the signed version.

How you sign your name reflects how you wish to be addressed in the future. If you use both names, you are telling the recipient you would prefer to not be called by your given name. If you use just your given name, you are indicating that you are open to being called by your given name. Using just an initial of one or both of your names should be reserved for e-mails between people with longstanding relationships. It is certainly not something that should be done in an initial contact with a person.

A branded signature can be added to your e-mails automatically. Typically, branded signatures contain a variety of information about the sender, including position, company, address, office number, telephone number, e-mail, and website. Because the branded signature contains your name, you do not need to include both your name and the branded signature. However, since a branded signature includes the full name of the sender, the given name is often included before the branded signature, giving a more cordial feeling to the e-mail, especially between colleagues.

An example of the Memorial University branded signature is shown below:

**JOE SMITH | EMPLOYEE**

Marketing and Communications  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
St. John's, Newfoundland  
T 709 123 4567

**[www.mun.ca](http://www.mun.ca)**

This is the short version; a longer version also exists. Both are available on from Memorial's Marketing and Communications Division. They can be found [here](#). If you are on a work term, your employer might have its own branded signature for you to use. Because these signatures go with all your e-mails, it is doubly important to verify that the information contained within them is correct.

## REFERENCES

- [1] K. Hertzberg, "How to End an Email: 9 Best and Worst Email Sign-Offs," Grammarly, 30 December 2020. [Online]. Available: <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/how-to-end-an-email/>. [Accessed 19 August 2021].
- [2] E. Wright, "Email and Letter Closings, Part 2," Erin Wright Writing, [Online]. Available: <https://erinwrightwriting.com/close-emails-letters-part-2/>. [Accessed 19 August 2021].