

Praise for *Wait, How Do I Write This Email?*

“Danny Rubin’s no-nonsense guide to effective writing is sure to make anyone a better communicator. If you’ve ever wondered, ‘How should I phrase that?’, this is your go-to source.”

— JENNA GOUDREAU, DEPUTY EDITOR OF BUSINESS INSIDER

“Take one look at the table of contents, and you’ll understand how much these templates could boost your career and help you build relationships. Read Danny’s book—you’re going to need it.”

— DAN SCHAWBEL, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
PROMOTE YOURSELF AND ME 2.0

“*Wait, How Do I Write This Email?* gives the average job seeker a fighting chance in today’s job search landscape. Danny addresses some of the most intimidating aspects of a person’s career and provides simple how-to guides for the reader to put into practice.”

— CASIDY LEMONS, TALENT ACQUISITION AT
GENERAL MOTORS COMPANY

“There are some books you keep by your desk, others you keep by your nightstand and a few you take on vacation. *Wait, How Do I Write This Email?* qualifies as all three and will make you better from the minute you open it.”

— JONATHAN JACKSON, PROGRAM MANAGER FOR
CONSUMER CONTENT AT LINKEDIN

“Millennials are passionate about finding the career path that makes them happy. With each email template, Danny helps you take action steps to build the career you want and attain a work/life balance. Great resource!”

— CHELSEA KROST, MILLENNIAL EXPERT AND CO-FOUNDER
OF THE MPULSE, A DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY

“Wow! What Danny Rubin has created should be THE required career manual for every college graduate, young professional, savvy professional, and basically anyone who communicates. In any fashion. Danny Rubin is the guru of 21st century

communication. This book is bursting with so much practical and actionable wisdom that following just one of Danny's deep insights will not only pay for the price of the book, it might just save your career."

— PAUL ANGONE, AUTHOR OF *101 SECRETS FOR YOUR TWENTIES* AND *ALL GROAN UP: SEARCHING FOR SELF, FAITH, AND A FREAKING JOB!*

"Most job seekers do not have the training or resources to know how to formulate a concise, impactful email to an employer to help them land a job. Danny's book will guide job seekers in writing the most appropriate email to that employer."

— SHIRA ITZHAK, OWNER OF REMEDY INTELLIGENT STAFFING

"The most recurring complaint academics hear from employers focuses squarely on poor writing skills of young professionals. Danny's book will become an important resource for corporations and universities seeking to improve written communications of employees and students."

— RON CULP, PROFESSIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE GRADUATE PUBLIC RELATIONS & ADVERTISING PROGRAM AT DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

"Danny's book is a perfect resource for workforce development centers and youth service providers across the country. There are so many people who are unemployed or underemployed who would rely on a guide that teaches effective writing skills in the job market."

— LISA WORNOM-ZAHRALDDIN, MS, CWDP, PROGRAM MANAGER FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS

"*Wait, How Do I Write This Email?* is your new career glossary. You will find any template or quick idea to connect your career aspirations to a real person in a real, effective way. Don't wait. Use it now!"

— JON MERTZ, AUTHOR AND FOUNDER OF THIN DIFFERENCE

"Danny's focus on practical writing skills is a much-needed complement to the work we do helping young people align their passion with purpose in the job market."

— ADAM SMILEY POSWOLSKY, AUTHOR OF *THE QUARTER-LIFE BREAKTHROUGH*

Wait, How Do I Write This Email?

**Game-Changing Templates
for Networking
and the Job Search**

Danny Rubin

WAIT, HOW DO I WRITE THIS EMAIL? Copyright © 2015 by Danny Rubin.
All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any
means — electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or
otherwise — without prior written permission from the publisher,
except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

For information about this title or to order books and/or electronic
media, contact the publisher at www.newstoliveby.net.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015906817

ISBN: 978-0-9963499-0-1 (Print)
978-0-9963499-1-8 (Ebook)

Printed in the United States of America

Cover design: Paul McCarthy

Interior design: 1106 Design

Publisher's Cataloging-In-Publication Data

TO ANYONE WITH A GREAT STORY TO TELL.
THAT MEANS YOU.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	XIII
AUTHOR'S NOTES	XV

≡ Chapter 1: How to Write Everything Better 1

How to be Brief 1

The one question every great communicator asks 2

How to improve everything you write in three minutes 3

“Filler” words to cut out and why 4

How to remove big sections of text 6

Why you shouldn't use adverbs 12

Quit the fancy talk 13

Bring all the lessons together 15

The best way to do a final edit 17

How to be Interesting 19

Quantify quantify quantify 19

Always go one layer deeper 20

The power of a wrinkle 22

Be a name dropper 24

Four sneaky words that diminish our work 24

≡ Chapter 2: How to Send Emails like a Pro 27

The Guides 27

How to address people properly 27

Make your point at the beginning 30

Careful with acronyms 32

Let the words breathe 33

Seven words you should not capitalize 34

How to craft an effective email signature 37

Assume the person might forward your email 42

Finish out every conversation 43

Next-Level Techniques	45
When to use exclamation points in work emails	45
Why you don't add the email address until you're ready to send	50
Why you need a #personalhashtag	50
Chart: How long to wait before a follow-up email	52

≡ Chapter 3: Networking Templates **55**

General Networking **55**

How to set up a networking meeting	55
How to send a thank-you note after a networking meeting	57
How to inquire about freelance opportunities	59
How to congratulate someone on a job well done	60
How to tell your network you're looking for new opportunities	61
How to reconnect with a friend or colleague	63

⚡ *QUICK TIP* — “Ten Commandments” of networking emails 64

Networking Events/Groups. **65**

How to write someone from a networking event about a job.	65
How to write someone from a networking event about new business	67
How to follow up if a person handed you a business card	68
How to join networking groups in your community.	70

⚡ *QUICK TIP* — *The secret to a strong networking subject line* 72

Relationship Building **73**

How to network with alumni from your school	73
How to connect two people who should know each other.	74
How to ask for a conversation with a professional in your field.	75
How to ask a person to help you in a mentor capacity	77
How to ask someone for career advice or direction	78
How to ask someone you respect to review your work	80
How to make someone aware of you as a subject matter expert	82
How to ask if you can guest post on a blog or website	84
How to thank the person for allowing you to guest post	86

⚡ *QUICK TIP* — *Six most powerful words in networking* 87

Tricky Situations **89**

How to respond to an awkward email	89
How to tell people you changed jobs	90

How to follow up if someone said he/she would pass along your resume . . .	92
How to ask for a reply if a person doesn't answer in a timely manner . . .	93
How to write a friend of a friend about a potential job opening	94
How to ask someone to make an introduction on your behalf	95
How to network during the busy holiday season	97
How to fill out "Contact Us" boxes	98
⚡ <i>QUICK TIP</i> — Follow up if you don't receive a response.	100
Thank-You Notes	101
How to thank a co-worker or client who went above and beyond	101
How to thank someone for connecting you to another person	102
How to thank an employee at an internship or a new job	103
How to thank someone for a referral that led to a business deal	104
How to thank someone for a referral that led to a new job.	105
⚡ <i>QUICK TIP</i> — The "I can email you my questions" strategy	106

≡ **Chapter 4: Job Search Templates** **107**

Job Search Overview	107
⚡ <i>QUICK TIP</i> — "Ten Commandments" of job search emails	108
How to apply for a job and attach a resume/cover letter	108
How to apply for a job at the same place where you've been turned down	110
How to ask about internships or an internship application	111
How to ask about job opportunities as a recent grad.	112
How to apply even if the company has no openings at the time	114
How to email a friend/acquaintance at the company before an interview	116
How to thank someone after a job interview	119
⚡ <i>QUICK TIP</i> — The secret to a strong job search subject line.	121
Response Emails	122
How to reply when you don't land the job/internship	122
How to tell people who helped you network that you landed the job. . .	123
How to tell people who helped you network that you didn't land the job. .	124
How to turn down an internship	126
How to turn down a job offer	127
How to make sure the company received your job application	128

How to reply when the employer writes, “We have your application, thanks”	129
How to reply when the employer writes, “Your interview is scheduled for...”	130
⚡ <i>QUICK TIP</i> — Use the right words to defeat resume-scanning robots	131
Making Connections	132
How to ask for a letter of recommendation	132
How to follow up with an employer you met at a job fair.	134
How to network with someone you met at a job fair	135
How to ask someone you know for help with the job search	137
How to ask someone you don’t know for help with the job search	138
How to ask someone you worked under to be a reference.	140
How to ask someone you didn’t work under to be a reference	141
⚡ <i>QUICK TIP</i> — How to title documents like resumes and cover letters	142
Informational Interviews	143
How to ask as a recent grad with no connection at the company	143
How to ask as a recent grad with a connection at the company	145
How to ask if you’re unemployed with no connection at the company	146
How to ask if you’re unemployed with a connection at the company	148
How to thank someone after an informational interview	150
Engage with Recruiters.	151
How to tell a recruiter you’re interested in a job	151
How to thank a recruiter after an interview or initial screen	153
How to follow up on a hiring decision	154
How to respond to a rejection	155

≡ **Chapter 5: LinkedIn Templates** **157**

Grow Your Network	157
How to send effective LinkedIn invites	158
How to write a networking message	159
How to network with someone who sent you a connection	160
How to network with someone after he/she accepts your connection	161
How to ask someone to give you a recommendation.	163
How to write someone you met through a LinkedIn group.	164

LinkedIn Profile	165
How to write a strong profile summary	165
Profile summaries for college students, recent grads and the unemployed	167
How to write about your work experience	170
How to ask a recruiter to review your LinkedIn profile and make suggestions	171
≡ Chapter 6: Handwritten Notes	173
The Essentials	173
The general rules of a proper letter	173
Why and when to send a handwritten note	174
How to thank someone after a networking meeting	175
How to thank someone after a job interview	175
How to thank someone who went above and beyond	176
≡ Chapter 7: Graduate School Templates	177
Basics for Back to School	177
How to contact a faculty member before you apply to the program	177
How to contact a faculty member while you're in school to learn about his/her work	179
How to contact a current student before you apply to the program	180
How to network among classmates	181
How to ask a professor for a letter of recommendation	183
How to ask an employer or former employer for a letter of recommendation	184
How to thank a professor or employer for a letter of recommendation	185
≡ Chapter 8: Phone Conversations	189
How to Talk the Talk	189
Nine times you should pick up the phone instead of send an email	189
How to introduce yourself properly	190
How to make the other person feel important	190
How to ask about internship opportunities	191
How to make sure the company received your job application	191
How to prepare for an interview (phone, Skype or Google+ Hangout)	192

≡ Chapter 9: The Power of Stories	195
Cover Letters.	195
Why you should tell stories in cover letters	195
Outline for the storytelling cover letter	197
Cover letter example if you're a recent grad	198
Cover letter example if you have work experience.	199
More Storytelling Opportunities	202
Reference letters.	202
Job interviews	203
≡ Chapter 10: Effective Resumes	207
The Fundamentals	207
How to write an impressive objective statement	207
How to make any job look remarkable	209
Professional resume template	211
How to keep your resume to one page	215
Please don't use those little black dots	217
How to account for resume gaps.	218
≡ Chapter 11: List Posts with a Purpose	221
The Lists	221
4 questions everyone should ask in a job interview	221
9 reasons every 20-something needs a side hustle	223
10 reasons every 20-something should spend time in a big city	225
17 things you are 100% capable of doing right now	227
25 things every young professional should know by age 25	228
101 skills I learned after two years of blogging	230
CONCLUSION	237
THANK YOU	239
INDEX	243

Introduction

Hi there. I'm Danny Rubin.

I realize we met a minute ago, but I can already tell you have big plans for your career and intend to make an impact. I mean, a *real* impact. The kind where your talent, passion and ambition collide in a beautiful explosion to better the lives of everyone around you.

How do I know?

Well, you picked up this book. That means you recognize writing skills are a critical aspect of career development and business success. Plenty of people dream big dreams, but only a select few can put their vision into words and move others to action.

With *Wait, How Do I Write This Email?*, I help you turn routine situations into game-changing opportunities.

A networking email isn't a burden; it's your chance to make a lasting impression before you ever shake hands.

A job search email isn't a chore; it's a way to demonstrate poise and confidence.

And a cover letter isn't an imposition; it's how to tell your story and stand out from the competition.

Wait, How Do I Write This Email? is a teaching tool and reference guide. As you compose professional documents and emails, refer to my chapters on brevity and etiquette to stay sharp. When you need to write/revise your resume or compose job application emails, you can use my 100+ templates to structure the message and hit "Send" with confidence.

As you read this book, keep in mind great leaders are more than effective organizers, managers and public speakers. They are people who understand the power of the written word in our noisy digital age.

Strong writing is a remarkable tool, and I'm excited to show you why. I encourage you to read the opening chapters on writing skills before you use the templates. That way, you will understand the fundamentals and be ready to compose effective emails and documents.

Now let's get started.

We have important work to do.

Author's Notes

Before you begin, two points about the book:

- 1.** I use the writing lessons and templates in the book when I lead communications workshops for college students, recent graduates and young professionals.

I often see the guides help millennials open doors, begin conversations and move ahead in their careers. Still, it's important to keep in mind the book doesn't guarantee new relationships, job interviews, job offers or acceptance to graduate schools. The best we can do is work hard to make each message a memorable one.

- 2.** All the people, schools, businesses and organizations I name in the guides and templates are fictitious.

Chapter 1

How to Write Everything Better

How to be Brief

YOU MAY NOT REALIZE IT, BUT YOU'RE A PROFESSIONAL WRITER.

Every day, you type words on the screen and place them before your friends, colleagues, clients and extended network. In essence, you put your writing ability on display for everyone to see.

That's why in Chapter 1, I show you easy ways to edit your work and improve how it looks and feels to the reader. Use these resources as you send emails, write job applications and correspond with people online.

In order to learn extremely effective writing skills, it's quite important that you are paying close attention and following instructions.

By the end of this chapter, you'll recognize all the problems with the above sentence. I count five issues. (Find an improved version on page 17.)

OK. Let's dive in.

THE ONE QUESTION EVERY GREAT COMMUNICATOR ASKS

“Do I need it?”

Everything you write, whether an email to one person or a presentation to 5,000 people, requires the “Do I need it?” treatment. When you cut what you don’t need, your argument becomes stronger and more discernible. Two key parts of the deletion process:

- ▶ Remove extraneous words that make your writing too long (more on page 3)
- ▶ Remove ideas and arguments that distract the reader (more on page 6)

Questions to ask as you work on professional documents:

Resumes

- ▶ Do you provide too many bullet points under each job? Three is usually a good benchmark, although you may only have room for one or two (more info on page 215).
- ▶ Are you too wordy as you describe your duties at each company? Less is more.
- ▶ Is some of the information so old it’s no longer relevant? For example, you list every internship even though you’ve worked for five years. Time to hit delete.

Cover Letters

- ▶ Do you explain how the job will boost your own career? Instead, focus on how you can help the company prosper.
- ▶ Do you include unnecessary details about your life? Focus on what’s relevant to the job.
- ▶ Does your cover letter summarize your resume? That’s boring. Better to use the letter to tell one great story. More on the “storytelling” cover letter on page 195.

Speeches and Presentations

- ▶ Practice your speech in front of someone else. Ask the person, “Does it go on too long?” If yes, read through each section and then ask yourself, “Do I need it?” Either find sections to remove, or you’ll give a dull speech.
- ▶ Does your talk occasionally drift from the main topic or central argument? Locate parts that aren’t essential and remove them.

- ▶ Do you spend too much time on any one topic? Are there sections you can cut out entirely? If so, delete them.
- ▶ A speech isn't about you. It's about the people in the crowd who take your message to heart. "Does the *audience* need to hear it?" That's what counts.

Emails

- ▶ Does the reader have to hunt to find your main point? Help the person out.

NOTE: What's essential? The main argument or one big request. Everything else deserves the "Do I need it?" treatment.

- ▶ Do you devote too many words to the problem? The reader would prefer you lay out a solution.
- ▶ Is the email you're about to send necessary at all?

We are trained to think the "delete" key is a negative. Like we only press the button when we screw up. Nonsense.

The "delete" key is the most important command on the keyboard. With every stroke, we strengthen our writing.

How to improve everything you write in three minutes

The tutorial below allows you to improve anything you write in a few short minutes. Keep these pages handy!

STEP ONE: When you finish your document, hit CTRL+F to bring up the search function.

STEP TWO: One by one, look for these words and delete/amend them.

- ▶ very, just and really (remove all three)
- ▶ that (delete, as in "I believe that you are correct")
- ▶ quite (delete, excess word)
- ▶ thing (replace with specific word for the "thing")
- ▶ utilize (switch to "use" or pick another verb)

- ▶ get or got (pick another, more descriptive verb)
- ▶ -ing verbs (“The boy is running” becomes “The boy runs”)*

STEP THREE: Read over your work to check your edits.

*The “-ing” verbs bullet point deserves further explanation. At the start of an email, you may want to use the phrase “I am writing” as in “I am writing to introduce myself.” In my view, that’s an acceptable use of an “-ing” verb because it’s the best way to begin. “I write to introduce myself” is too stilted.

In many other cases, you can cut the “-ing” and the sentence still makes sense. Here’s one more example with multiple “-ing” words:

*At my most recent job, I was responsible for **managing** projects, **working** with clients and **overseeing** our budget.*

Let’s chop down the three “-ing” verbs.

*At my most recent job, I **managed** projects, **worked** with clients and **oversaw** our budget.*

The original sentence has 18 words and 31 syllables.

The revised sentence has 15 words and 22 syllables.

Brevity makes you sharper. Plain and simple.

“**Filler**” words to cut out and why

Let’s go a bit further than the “three minute” exercise. Here are five more words and phrases you need to delete, along with an explanation for why you shouldn’t use them.

1. **Amazing**

In an unscientific poll I conducted by...well, observing the conversations around me, I have concluded “amazing” is the most overused word in our vocabulary.

Why? A word that means everything actually means nothing.

“Man, that show was so amazing last night. What an amazing crowd and the guitar solo at the end? Amazing.”

See my point?

Words to use instead of “amazing”: fascinating, astounding, breathtaking, spectacular, terrific, magnificent and unbelievable. Need more? Grab a thesaurus.

2. Definitely

Like “amazing,” the word “definitely” has become a filler term. You can remove “definitely” and the sentence retains its meaning.

“I am definitely glad Susan was at the happy hour to help with the awkward conversation.”

Becomes...

“I am glad Susan was at the happy hour to help with the awkward conversation.”

Same difference.

Also, no more “definitely.” There’s only one correct spelling.

3. Literally

“This is literally the funniest thing I’ve ever seen...”

“You have literally got to be kidding me...”

“Are you literally about to do this?”

“Literally” has also become a filler word, an uninspiring adverb with zero flavor or style.

Delete whenever possible. The word *literally* does nothing for you.

4. In Order

The words “in order” may turn up in our writing for three reasons:

- ▶ We try to make our sentences more professional.
- ▶ We use them out of habit.
- ▶ We assume the two words *need* to be there.

For example, “I wrote this line in order to show you how to use less words.”

If we remove “in order,” the meaning stays the same.

“I wrote this line to show you how to use less words.”

5. Such As

A tiny phrase, sure, but “such as” screams out, “I’m trying to impress you!”

For example, “My internship taught me a range of skills **such as** project management, problem solving and time management.”

People rarely use “such as” in normal conversation. So why write it?

Instead, use “like” as in “My internship taught me a range of skills **like** project coordination, problem solving and time management.”

When you finish writing and start the revision process (hint: print out the page to spot errors), make sure you search the document for “such as.”

Remember: when it comes to documents **like** job applications, the reader is the only one who matters.

How to remove big sections of text

Now that we have covered easy ways to remove words and short phrases, let’s turn our attention to big ideas and chunks of words.

Cover letter, presentation, speech, formal work document — you should edit **EVERYTHING** you write. Before you consider a document “finalized,” be tough on yourself and chop it down.

No one will ever say, “This person’s document is way too **short**. Now what am I supposed to do with all my free time?”

I created a chart to help tighten your writing. Are the rules hard and fast? No. They are a reminder to give people exactly what they need and not a word more.

Length of Document	Number of Words to Remove
300 words	50-60
400 words	75-85
500 words	100-110
600 words	125-135
700 words	150-160
800 words	175-185
900 words	200-210
1,000 words	225-235
1,000+ words	At least 250

Questions to Ask as You Remove Words

- ▶ Is each sentence — or part of the sentence — absolutely necessary to make your point?
- ▶ Do any sentences repeat a point already made?
- ▶ Which sections are **least** essential?
- ▶ If you HAD to remove a paragraph, which one would it be?
- ▶ Does it “feel” like a section drags or slows down the pace?

#1 Rule: Never fall in love with a particular line.

Let’s look at three examples to understand how we delete chunks of words.

1. Two paragraphs of a personal statement for graduate school

“Too long” version:

My career path so far has been unconventional but valuable every step of the way. Yes, I could have gone the usual route like my peers: graduate college, dive into a regular 9-to-5 job, wear a suit and tie and battle every day in traffic, but that life doesn’t appeal to me. It might be a great option for others, but I had different plans. After graduation, I decided to go down a road few people would consider, and it’s made all the difference in my life. I joined a service organization and spent two years in a village in Madagascar.

When I arrived in the village, I wanted to turn around and run home. I felt so alone and out of my comfort zone. Sure, in college I had traveled a good amount. I studied abroad in Barcelona, which is where I learned to speak Spanish fluently. But now I was in Africa and my Spanish skills wouldn’t be much use. With the help of a local fisherman named Haja, I integrated into the culture of the village and...

OK, that’s enough. As you read those two paragraphs, did you notice how they wander and lose focus? The writer repeats the same ideas and includes information that distracts from the main point: why the experience in a service organization makes the person an ideal fit for the graduate program.

Key sections to delete:

Yes, I could have gone the usual route like my peers: graduate college, dive into a regular 9-to-5 job, wear a suit and tie and battle every day in traffic, but that life doesn't appeal to me. It might be a great option for others, but I had different plans.

Wonderful for you but not essential information. Delete.

Sure, in college I had traveled a good amount. I studied abroad in Barcelona, which is where I learned to speak Spanish fluently. But now I was in Africa and my Spanish skills wouldn't be much use.

Not necessary to include. Delete.

The "much shorter" version:

After graduation, I decided to go down a road few others would consider, and it's made all the difference in my life. I joined a service organization and spent two years in a village in Madagascar.

When I arrived in the village, I wanted to turn around and run home. With the help of a local fisherman named Haja, I integrated into the culture of the village and...

Faster, sharper, more focused. In the second version, the writer eliminates information that's redundant or unnecessary. Ask yourself:

- ▶ Do I stray from the main point?
- ▶ Do I provide extraneous information?

Be tough on yourself. Be critical.

2. One paragraph of a big email to coworkers

“Too long” version:

I want to address what happened last night at the gala, why the evening became chaotic and how our team needs to improve to make sure what happened never happens again. I have received numerous complaints either in person or over email from people who were upset with the food, our service and how we mixed up entrees for over 50 people. In all my years of event planning, I have never been so embarrassed by a team’s performance, and again I hope this email can help us improve, especially because we have another big dinner on Saturday night, and we need to be at our best. Now, the first problem we need to correct is communication between the kitchen and the servers. It’s a simple process: talk with the chefs before dinner service begins and make sure they understand how many meals to cook that are fish, chicken or vegetarian. That’s a basic, fundamental part of the night for us. All you need to do is keep an open dialogue, and we won’t have these food screw-ups. The second issue is...

Whew. Are you exhausted from that paragraph? I am. And I wrote it!

Can you pick out the sentences with redundant information? Did you choose these three?

I want to address what happened last night at the gala, why the evening became chaotic and how our team needs to improve to make sure what happened never happens again.

I have never been so embarrassed by a team’s performance, and again I hope this email can help us improve, especially because we have another big dinner on Saturday night, and we need to be at our best.