



# Communication Culture | Part three of three on Email Success

## MANAGE YOUR SIGNATURE BLOCK AND REAP THE BENEFITS

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THE SIGNATURE BLOCK at the bottom of your mail can seal the deal you have set up in the content of the body above it and in the magnetic message your subject line carries. All this should have gotten your mail opened and read and that brings us to the signature space.

The signature block alone won't sell your readers on your product, service or idea. It does, however, tell the world how you want to be identified and contacted. As it sits just below your last paragraph, which likely has something to move your readers to action, it might be the clincher.

The action you request of your readers may be to buy, sign up, call, learn more, ask for a brochure, set up an appointment... I think you see where this leads. Your duty then is to make it easy for them to follow through. Make it easily to see how to contact you.

### WHAT you need to create an effective email signature:

- Your name
- Your company name
- The telephone and if applicable fax number
- Your email address with 'clickable' or active hyperlink
- Your website address if you have one, again with 'clickable', active hyperlink
- And an active hyperlink to the signup page of my newsletter
- Optional and an opportunity is to put in a line promoting one of your services, a special offer, a link to your newsletter, or anything your readers might want to know about. Perhaps even a good quotation!

**Do** provide the information that will make it easy for your readers to say YES and to act. **Don't** make them hunt for the way to get in touch with you, ask questions or place orders.

### WHY it's important for you to have a standardized signature block:

- Your potential and current clients and friends will know exactly how to contact you
- It's a no cost, good marketing tool

- You can promote special offers
- It can drive traffic to your website
- It tells people who you are and what you do
- It's fun and useful as a modern day 'calling card' for social or business courtesy culture

### HOW to make it readable:

- Select from fairly standard fonts. Colours and fancy fonts may not translate well from one mail system to another. You may have noticed North Americans favour 'Times New Roman' and Europeans seem to favour Arial. You can be creative and interesting. Test it out and see what happens.
- You may want to use your official logo or colours. This reinforces your image and identity. Ensure that the block is a fixed graphic, designed and permanently installed so that it always appears without variation.

### READY to set up your signature?

**Get set up** for the first time or revisit and adjust your signature. I'll share the steps in my system. Others are similar.

In MSOutlook

1. Drop down the Tools menu.
2. Open Options
3. Select Mail Format
4. Select Signature Picker
5. Then, click on 'New' and then enter a name for your signature i.e. Business
6. Click on 'Next' and design your signature in the blank box. You can control the font, font size, and text color
7. When done, click 'Finish'. Check your signature in the preview window. You can always edit by going back.
8. Satisfied? Click OK.
9. Make sure that 'Use this signature by default' box has the name of your new signature in it.
10. Click OK! And Send away securely.

**VIP:** Your very important point on signatures in email is 'make it automatic'. Every original, reply or forward email will carry your identity and relevant information. One caution: keep the length to six or seven lines so it does not distract from your actual mail, or seem longer than your message! Be consistent, interesting and complete in your signature. It alone sends a message about who you are!

*Helena works with executives, service providers and business owners who want to define their message so that it makes them money and gets them the results they desire in print, in person and online. <http://helenakaufman.com> Twitter, Face Book @HelenaKaufman Invite her on LinkedIn and take advantage of an active business network. [www.theafronews.ca](http://www.theafronews.ca)*