**Writeaway Hotels**

**Email Communication:**

**Writing and Managing Email Messages**

*Instructor’s Guide*

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**Simulation Overview**

The Writeaway Hotels simulation encourages students to practice writing and managing email messages. Designed as an in-class activity, the simulation works best for 12-25 students, each playing a role within the fictitious company, Writeaway Hotels. Within 30 minutes in a computer lab or classroom, students read, write, and respond to each other’s messages. During a debrief discussion, students evaluate messages sent during the simulation.

**Learning Objectives**

After participating in this simulation, students will be able to:

* Apply strategies to reading and prioritizing email
* Make appropriate decisions about whether and how to respond to email
* Write clear, concise messages under pressure
* Evaluate the effectiveness of email they receive.

**Options for the Simulation**

You have several options for facilitating the simulation.

**Options using computers in the classroom**

1. ***Create Gmail (or your school’s email) accounts for each role (see Attachment 1).***

This is the ideal option, with some technology set-up and maintenance but high ease-of-use.

1. ***Provide the emails to students for them to copy and paste into their own email accounts.***

This option maintains the email environment and requires less technology set-up for instructors, but students may be distracted by other messages in their email.

**Options using computers outside the classroom**

1. ***Use option 1 or 2 above but have students log on at the same time from home or a computer lab.***

This method is useful when students cannot access computers in the classroom. The debrief may be held during the next class.

1. ***Post messages to a virtual learning environment (e.g., Blackboard discussion board), a blog, or a website.***

This method still requires some technology set-up and maintenance, but students can do the activity on their own computers and on their own time.

**Option without computers**

1. ***Distribute printed copies of the email messages in class.***

This method is least ideal but will still provide a good learning experience for students when computers are not accessible.

**Preparing, Managing, and Debriefing the Simulation**

This section provides guidance for using the Writeaway Hotels simulation:

1. Before the Simulation (the class before)
2. During the Simulation (30 minutes)
3. After the Simulation (the same or next class)

**Phase 1: Before the Simulation (30 Minutes)**

***Review Simulation Instructions***

Distribute “Writeaway Simulation: Scenario and Instructions for Students.”

Review background information and the organizational chart so students understand all of the roles and what is expected of them during the simulation.

Help students visualize this: “We’ll meet in the computer lab. You’ll sign on and see an inbox with email messages…”

***Assign Roles***

Ask for volunteers for the nine non-Pat (“supporting”) roles. Explain that this involves some preparation:

* + Logging onto the site ahead of time to check sent email (takes 5-10 minutes)
  + Providing samples of effective emails during the debrief following the 30-minute simulation.

**Phase 2: During the Simulation (30 minutes)**

Prepare and distribute “The Cast” handout (Attachment 2). Consider assigning the student who plays Sis one of the Pat roles, too, so he or she can experience the simulation as other students will.

Check that students playing supporting roles are all present. Assign roles if someone is missing.

Check in with students assigned to play Janet and Marc and explain their draft emails. If Marc doesn’t hear back from people, he can send a version of the draft email and/or annoying interim emails. Janet’s “Our History: Moment of Silence” email should be sent five minutes before the simulation ends.

Prepare for the simulation:

* + Help non-Pats (supporting roles) log in if they haven’t already.
  + Make sure all Pats are logged in.
  + Walk through how to access email (NOTE: Gmail seems to be intuitive for students who haven’t used it, so only a brief lesson about how messages are grouped may be necessary.)
  + Show Pat’s inbox as an example; show links in the email for help
  + Note that people have different numbers of inbox messages (Pat has the most, 17, while others have fewer or none.)
* Discuss the “chat” feature in Gmail. This is optional. Students should use this only if they have time and instant messaging is appropriate for the message and audience.

Open your email to see responses to Cara Currigan and respond, as appropriate.

Observe and answer questions. Watch students’ monitors and circulate to answer questions. Tell students you will watch as they write and manage messages.

Check in about 25 minutes into the simulation. Ask students how many are caught up with all of their email. If most have, encourage Janet to send the “Our History: Moment of Silence” email (from her draft folder), which ends the simulation.

**Phase 3: After the Simulation**

After the simulation, spend the rest of the class debriefing. Discuss the following:

* + Email Management
  + Ask: How did you decide how to prioritize the messages (relevant to those playing Pat)?
    - * By job title or function within the organization
      * Sequence (although Marc’s email with a time deadline is far down)
  + Discuss the goal: an empty inbox.
  + Discuss the “two-minute rule”: if you can respond to something quickly, do so.
  + Demonstrate email management tools (or have a student demonstrate this in the most commonly used email program):
    - * Folders
      * Highlighting or flagging
      * Filters or rules
      * “Unread” markings
  + Message Analysis (see “Notes and Learning Points” below for each message)
  + Ask each non-Pat role in sequence on “The Cast” handout:
    - * What were you expecting?
      * How did people respond?
      * What is an example of an effective message you received? (Show for everyone to see.)
      * What was effective about this example?
  + Instant Messaging [optional]
  + Ask students if they used the chat feature and, if so, for which messages.
  + Show sample emails and discuss whether IM was a good choice.

**Notes and Learning Points for Each Message**

Janet’s “Checking In” email (to all internal employees)

* This is a nice gesture from a senior manager.
* Her tone is informal, so students should respond in kind.
* Everyone should respond!
* A short, positive response is most appropriate.

Margaret’s “Bio” and “Vacation” emails (to all internal employees)

* Short messages are most appropriate here.
* This is an opportunity to delegate to Jay, the intern who needs work.

Ian’s “Second Request” email (to students playing Pat)

* This and Diana’s “Missed Conference Call” email are the most important.
* Students playing Pat should respond to his request immediately (preferable) or at least indicate a timeframe for response.
* Information about ADA is provided in Jay’s email and one of Sis’s—students who scan their inbox first will find these.
* The information is, however, a bit light, so Pat ideally should supplement this and not simply forward either email on.
* Pat needs to decide whether to give Jay credit in the email to Ian; this is a good discussion point.

Ron’s “Confidential” email (to all internal employees)

* Students should respond only to discuss a meeting time.
* No other information about the sexual harassment claim should be discussed in email.
* A better solution to setting up a meeting is to use a calendar program (for example, the calendar integrated in Microsoft Outlook). Discuss how this works in most companies today.

Ron’s “Your Candidate” email (to all students playing Pat)

* Ideally, students playing Pat read this message before responding to Marc (the external job candidate).
* As the HR manager, Ron is a good resource for such decisions.

Jay’s “ADA” email (to all students playing Pat)

* This is the information Ian needs, but it requires more substance.
* Students should ask Jay for more detail, include information from Sis, or add some of their own.

Jay’s “Need Work” email (to all students playing Pat)

* Students can relate to this! Discuss how students can handle this situation during their own internships.
* Students should all respond, even though this may not seem like a priority.
* They can suggest additional work (e.g., the bio), ask him to do additional ADA research, or refer him to others in the organization.

Diana’s “Missed Conference Call” email (to all students playing Pat)

* This email, like Ian’s, is critical.
* Students should respond by email with a sincere apology and explanation. They should also reassure Diana that she is an important client. Tone is important to ensure sincerity. Diana’s email is informal (signed “D”), so clearly Pat has a nice relationship with her, but this is a critical point with a client.
* Ideally, students will offer to meet with Diana in person or will indicate that they will call her. This message requires more personal contact in addition to the initial email response. Discuss channel choice here.

Diana’s “Contact Info” email (to all students playing Pat)

* This email may indicate how frustrated Diana is.
* Students playing Pat should respond. It’s their choice whether to give a home phone number. Most give a cell number, which a major client should have.

Sis’s emails (to everyone)

* Sis is very distracting during the simulation.
* Students need to decide how to handle this.
* Perhaps IM isn’t the best option to discourage Sis.
* Ideally, they will address Sis directly and encourage her to contact them after work at home.
* Discuss how students can handle similar situations during their own work experiences.
* Sis does provide some useful information about ADA, so students may include this in their email to Ian, if appropriate.

Marc Cohen’s “Re: Offer” email (to all students playing Pat)

* The tone of this email is a bit presumptuous, particularly with the tight timeframe.
* Because Marc set a time deadline, students should attend to this quickly, but it’s at the bottom of their email list. Discuss the value of scanning an inbox.
* Students may choose to make a counter-offer, decline the offer, or discuss this with Ron, the HR manager. Any approach is acceptable as long as students maintain a goodwill relationship with Marc.

Brian White’s “Inquiry from Cornell Student” (to all internal employees)

* This, too, will sound familiar to students.
* Students may invite Brian for an interview, decline the request, or refer the email to Ron. Again, any approach is acceptable but clarity and tone are important.
* If students forward the email to someone else, discuss whether they copy that person and the implications of doing so (i.e., opens the door for Brian to contact that person directly, which is acceptable for students in their own communication).

Cara Currigan’s “Inquiry” email (to everyone)

* This is spam, and students are easily fooled.
* The email is only an invitation to ask for a request for proposal, with an unrealistic deadline.

**Attachment 1**

**How to Create and Maintain Gmail Accounts**

Gmail is free and easy to use. Following are instructions to create Gmail usernames and maintain them for future simulations.

**Creating Gmail Accounts (one-time set-up)**

You can create Gmail usernames for each role in the simulation (e.g., [PatGSimulation1@gmail.com](mailto:PatGSimulation1@gmail.com), [PatGSimulation2@gmail.com](mailto:PatGSimulation2@gmail.com), [RonHSimulation1@gmail.com](mailto:RonHSimulation1@gmail.com), etc.). If these names are taken, choose others. You will need to create accounts for the nine supporting roles and for the number of “Pats” you have remaining in the class.

If you have multiple sections and no time to clear the inboxes in between, you might create accounts as follows:

***Section 1: (25 students—9 supporting roles and 16 people playing Pat)***

Sample Gmail usernames for the nine supporting roles:

[RonWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:RonWSU1@gmail.com)

[JanetWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:JanetWSU1@gmail.com)

[JayWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:JayWSU1@gmail.com)

[MarcWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:MarcWSU1@gmail.com)

[MargaretWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:MargaretWSU1@gmail.com)

[IanWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:IanWSU1@gmail.com)

[DianaWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:DianaWSU1@gmail.com)

[SisWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:SisWSU1@gmail.com)

[BrianWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:BrianWSU1@gmail.com)

Sample Gmail usernames for the students playing Pat:

[PatWSU1@gmail.com](mailto:PatWSU1@gmail.com)

[PatWSU2@gmail.com](mailto:PatWSU2@gmail.com)

[PatWSU3@gmail.com](mailto:PatWSU3@gmail.com)

Etc. through [PatWSU16@gmail.com](mailto:PatWSU16@gmail.com)

***Section 2: (25 students—9 supporting roles and 16 people playing Pat)***

For all of the supporting roles, simply change the numbers to “2,” for example:

[RonWSU2@gmail.com](mailto:RonWSU2@gmail.com)

[JanetWSU2@gmail.com](mailto:JanetWSU2@gmail.com)

For the students playing Pat, begin the numbering at 17 and end at 32, for example:   
[PatWSU17@gmail.com](mailto:PatWSU17@gmail.com)

**Preparing for New Simulations (ongoing maintenance)**

You may find it easiest to store multiple messages in the draft folders for each Gmail account. This way, you can simply send new messages when setting up new simulations. You also may set up an address book for easier sending to the correct recipients.

To prepare the Gmail accounts before each simulation:

* + Delete all old emails in inbox and sent folders from previous classes.
  + From the draft folder, send messages from each supporting role in this order (Do not deplete the drafts; create new drafts if only two messages are left):
  + Janet—send the “Checking In” email only
  + Marc—send the first “Re: Offer Letter” email only
  + Jay
  + Margaret
  + Ian
  + Diana
  + Sis
  + Brian
  + Ron
  + Double check all inboxes, sent, and draft folders for all roles.
  + Send email from Cara Currigan (external vendor). You may use your own email account for this, or set up another Gmail username for this character.

**Attachment 2**

**Writeaway Hotels**

**Email Simulation**

**The Cast**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **Sign into Gmail**  **www.gmail.com** | |
| **Student** | **Character** | **Role** | **Username** | **Password** |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
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|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Pat Gibson | Catering Director |  |  |
|  | Janet Dewey | General Manager |  |  |
|  | Margaret Bryant | Administrative Assistant |  |  |
|  | Ian Mendoza | VP, Sales and Marketing |  |  |
|  | Ron Harrison | HR Manager |  |  |
|  | Jay Chan | Intern |  |  |
|  | Diana Chavez | Major Client |  |  |
|  | Sis | Everyone’s Sister |  |  |
|  | Marc Cohen | Job Candidate |  |  |
|  | Brian White | [School Name] Student |  |  |

**Attachment 3**

**Writeaway Emails to Send**

**Summary of Emails**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sender** | **Email(s)** |
| Janet | * Checking In * Our History: Moment of Silence (sent during the simulation) |
| Marc | * Re: Offer Letter |
| Jay | * Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) * Need Work |
| Margaret | * Need updated bio by 4pm today * Vacation schedules |
| Ian | * Second request for disabilities information |
| Diana | * Missed Conference Call * Contact Info |
| Sis | * Mom’s Birthday * Biking this weekend?? * Need Advice * OK, last email |
| Brian | * [School Name] Student Seeking Summer Internship * Inquiry from [School Name] Student (to Jay) |
| Ron | * Confidential * Your Candidate |
| Cara Currigan | * Inquiry |

**Emails to Send**

Sender: Janet Dewey

Recipients: All internal employees (All Pats, Margaret, Ian, Ron)

Subject: **Checking In**

Hi,

I'm just checking in because I noticed that today is your one-year anniversary with us! How's it going??

Janet

Sender: Janet Dewey

Recipients: Everyone (send 5 minutes before the end of the simulation)

Subject: **Our History: Moment of Silence**

Dear Writeaway Friends and Colleagues,

As you know, Writeaway Hotels has a long, proud tradition. My father, Paul Shilling, began the company in 1937, and I have done my best to continue his vision and values as we built a successful group of hotels.

At [add the time, which will end the simulation] today, I'd like you all to observe a moment of silence in honor of my father who passed away this time last year. I would appreciate your demonstration of respect by ceasing work for 1 minute.

Thank you – from me and on behalf of my father,

Janet

Sender: Marc Cohen

Recipients: All Pats (i.e., everyone playing the role of Pat)

Subject: **Re: Offer Letter**

Pat,

Thank you for sending the offer letter. I would very much like to work with you at Writeaway. As I said when we last met, you're my first choice. However, I just received another offer from Soprano Resorts, which is $3,000/year higher. This is an offer I may not be able to refuse.

I will gladly accept your offer if you can match Soprano's. I promised them an answer within the hour, so I would appreciate a fast reply.

Regards,

Marc

Sender: Marc Cohen

Recipients: Pats who haven’t responded (Students may send this or a modified message during the simulation.)

Subject: **Re: Offer Letter – follow-up**

Pat,

This is to inform you that I have accepted the position at Soprano Reports. Thank you again for the offer, and I wish you all the best in your search for a new associate.

Marc

Sender: Jay Chan

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Pat,

About the disability question…here's what I found: "You can ask people about their abilities, but you can't ask people about their disabilities. This means that you can ask an applicant how she plans to perform each function of the job, but you can't ask her whether she has any disabilities that will prevent her from performing each function of the job."

Let me know if you need anything more,

Jay

Sender: Jay Chan

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **Need Work**

I've completed all of the work you've given me so far. Is there anything else you'd like me to work on….or anyone else I should talk to? To be honest, I have nothing to do.

Sender: Margaret Bryant

Recipients: All internal employees (All Pats, Janet, Ian, Ron)

Subject: **Need updated bio by 4pm today**

You may want to submit an updated bio before tonight's presentation—it looks out of date.

Can you get it to me by 4:00, please?

Sender: Margaret Bryant

Recipients: All internal employees (All Pats, Janet, Ian, Ron)

Subject: **Vacation Schedules**

To All Employees:

Please submit to me by the end of today your vacation schedule through the end of the year.

Thanks,

Margaret

Sender: Ian Mendoza

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **Second request for disabilities information**

Pat,

I had asked you a week ago to research employers' rights in asking job candidates about disabilities. Where are you on this? We have a candidate coming in at 5:00 for an interview, and this would really help.

Sender: Diana Chavez

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **Missed Conference Call**

Pat – Why weren’t you on the conference call this morning with Bill? We just talked about this yesterday, so I’m sure you knew about it. I was embarrassed that you weren’t on.

This brings up a bigger issue: I’m glad business is going so well for you, and that you have a lot of new clients. But I’m starting to feel like I’m getting less attention now, and I want to make sure that we can maintain the good working relationship we’ve had in the past.

D

Sender: Diana Chavez

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **Contact Info**

Pat – Can I please have your home phone number?

Thanks,

Diana

Sender: Sis

Recipients: Everyone

Subject: **Mom's Birthday**

Hey, Sib: Did you remember that Mom's birthday is today??? Do you want to take her out to dinner tonight? When and where? Let me know!

XOXO

Sender: Sis

Recipients: Everyone

Subject: **Biking this weekend??**

Do you want to go? Weather should be nice.

Sender: Sis

Recipients: Everyone

Subject: **Need advice**

What do you think of this sofa for me?

[Add a link to a website with a sofa description.]

Sender: Sis

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **OK, last email, I promise**

Hey, didn’t you need some information about hiring people with disabilities? Is this useful to you? <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/>

Sender: Brian White

Recipients: All internal employees (All Pats, Janet, Margaret, Ian, Ron).

Subject: **[School Name] Student Seeking Summer Internship**

Dear Hiring Manager,

I'm interested in a summer job opportunity with Writeaway Hotels. As a [school name] student, I am looking to expand my knowledge of the hospitality industry, and Writeaway seems like the perfect place for me.

For the past two summers, I worked as a host for an upscale restaurant where I learned the importance of customer service in a fast-paced environment. I'm currently working at the Marriott Courtyard as a bellman, serving as valet and helping people with their luggage.

To build on my experience, I am open to a variety of jobs at Writeaway. I would like to speak with you further about opportunities at Writeaway and how I might contribute to your hotels during this coming summer. I am available to work between May 15 and August 15.

My resume is enclosed for more information about me. You can reach me by email or at 917-555-6169. I look forward to hearing from you to arrange a time to meet.

Thank you,

Brian White

Sender: Brian White

Recipients: Jay

Subject: **Inquiry from [School Name] Student**

Jay -- Laura Catona told me that you're interning this summer at Writeaway. I'm a [school name] student applying for an internship next year, and I was hoping that you could tell me about your experience. Who are you working for and how do you like it?

Also, is there someone you would recommend I send my resume to?

Thanks,

Brian

Sender: Ron Harrison

Recipients: All internal employees + Jay (All Pats, Janet, Margaret, Ian, Jay)

Subject: **Confidential**

We need to talk. Someone in your department filed a sexual harassment complaint and I'd like to discuss it with you. Are you available tomorrow at 10:00? That time would work best for me. Please let me know asap.

Sender: Ron Harrison

Recipients: All Pats

Subject: **Your candidate**

Pat -- I just picked up a voice mail from Marc Cohen. He said something about renegotiating his offer? Did you hear from him?

Ron

Sender: Cara Currigan

Recipients: All

Subject: **Inquiry**

Greetings – You have been selected to submit a proposal to speak to Fortune 500 CEOs at the 10th Annual American Meeting Partner’s Executive Conference. This group has selected Exceeding Customer Expectations as a critical topic, and I understand this is an area of expertise for you and/or your company. Please respond by the end of today's business day if you would like to receive our Request for Proposal. Proposals are due by Friday.

Last year, we had over 1500 executives participate in our conference. This is sure to be another successful year. You are invited to share your knowledge, showcase your talent—and reach decision-makers throughout the country.

Please call me with any questions at 212-555-6767.

Cara Currigan, Conference Chair

**Attachment 4**

**Tips for Responding to Emails**

In each email you set up, you may embed help for students. For example, when students open the “Checking In” email from Janet Dewey, you may add two links to the bottom of this email:

* Tips for responding to this email
* Would you send [name] an IM?

These links can open new web pages (if you create a separate web site with the content), or you may copy and paste the text, below, into each email.

**Tips for Janet’s “Checking In” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

This is a nice gesture from a senior manager. As you think about how to respond, you might consider:

* What do you think is an appropriate response? Consider the tone and approximate length of her email.
* Ideally, what would Janet want to hear from you? If you were unhappy with the job so far, would you tell her?
* Within what timeframe should you respond to Janet? Where do you prioritize this email among the others you’ve received?
* What do you expect in return? Something would be nice but don’t expect anything too personalized unless you have a strong working relationship with her.

***Would you send Janet an IM?***

Even if Janet is online, as a senior level manager, she may not want to get into an IM conversation with you. Stick to email for this—it’s best to respond in kind, particularly for people senior to you in the organization.

**Tips for Marc’s “Re: Job Offer” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Clearly, Marc is pressuring you to increase the job offer. You have a few options here:

* You might feel that his timeframe and request are unreasonable, in which case, you have no obligation to make a counteroffer. Even so, you probably want to maintain a good relationship with the applicant, so what kind of email could you send that would deny his request, but still wish him luck, etc., and maybe keep the door open for working together in the future (you never know!)?
* You might still think Marc is the best candidate and want him onboard. In this case, you can either:
  + Make a counteroffer yourself
  + Seek approval for a counteroffer (which would be typical in an organization). Think about approaching either Ian Mendoza (your boss) or Ron Harrison (the HR manager) for advice and/or approval.
  + Either way, consider stretching Marc’s deadline. Many managers would feel that Marc’s approach is aggressive: The deadline he imposes is his, not necessarily yours.

**Tips for Jay’s “Americans with Disabilities Act” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Here’s the answer you wanted for Ian Mendoza. Did you find it before responding to your boss?

Still, the answer is a little light and, if you haven’t already noticed, Jay has time on his hands, so perhaps he could at least give you a reference for this quoted source—and maybe provide some more depth?

***Would you send Jay an IM?***

Good choice! You could IM Jay about his workload and/or the ADA information; both probably would be quick discussions.

**Tips for Jay’s “Need Work” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Hey, we’ve all been there. This isn’t exactly a burning priority, but—as you know!—keeping interns happy is important. What ideas do you have for Jay? And how can you make sure he still feels the love?

***Would you send Jay an IM?***

Good choice! You could IM Jay about his workload and/or the ADA information; both probably would be quick discussions.

**Tips for Margaret’s “Need updated bio” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

This appears to be a simple request; a good guideline to follow is, if you can reply to an email with two minutes, just do it—don’t put it off to create more work later. You can deal with this in a few ways:

* Respond directly to Margaret with your plans.
* Delegate this to Jay (your intern). You could, for example, give him the dates of your planned vacation, and ask him to send an email to Margaret. This may seem like \*make work\* because you can probably as easily send this email directly to Margaret. So, you may, instead…
* Assume that Jay knows your vacation plans. In this case, you might just forward the email to him with a brief request to please send your schedule to Margaret by the requested time—as long as you trust Jay to do this.

***Would you send Margaret an IM?***

It’s better to stick to email for Margaret’s two requests: an updated bio and your vacation schedule. Although enterprise (corporate) IM systems typically let users save messages, email is still seen as an easier medium for saving documents that may be referenced later.

**Tips for Margaret’s “Vacation schedules” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

This appears to be a simple request; a good guideline to follow is, if you can reply to an email with two minutes, just do it—don’t put it off to create more work later. You can deal with this in a few ways:

* Respond directly to Margaret with your imaginary updated bio attached.
* Delegate this to Jay (your intern). You could, for example, give him updates, and ask him to send an email to Margaret. This may seem like \*make work\* because you can probably as easily send this email directly to Margaret. So, you may, instead…
* Send your resume to Jay and ask him to please send an updated bio to Margaret by the requested time—as long as you trust Jay to do this.

***Would you send Margaret an IM?***

It’s better to stick to email for Margaret’s two requests: an updated bio and your vacation schedule. Although enterprise (corporate) IM systems typically let users save messages, email is still seen as an easier medium for saving documents that may be referenced later.

**Tips for Ian’s “Second request for disabilities information” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

The tone of this email is generally \*nice,\* but it’s clear that he’s waiting for something from you and is disappointed he hasn’t received it. As you respond to this email—which you’ll want to do quickly!—consider:

* What can you write that will help regain Ian’s confidence in you, particularly to meet the upcoming deadline?
* What other email interactions do you have that might help you with this work for Ian (hint: emails from Jay Chan and Sis). How can you get Jay to help you with this work? Is the information that Jay sent you sufficient? If not, how can you request more from Jay?

***Would you send Ian an IM?***

For Ian’s request, you probably wouldn’t start a dialog with him, so the interactivity of IM is not necessary. Also, for people senior to you, you may want to avoid using IM unless they initiate the interaction, or you’re sure that IMing is acceptable to them. Otherwise, IM may be perceived as too informal.

**Tips for Diana’s “Missed Conference Call” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

This email—and the one from Ian Mendoza—are probably the most important emails you have received. Certainly, you will want to make this a priority and respond immediately.

Of course, you want to maintain the relationship. Let’s assume that you messed up: You missed the call. You don’t want to lie, so what do you say? Some considerations follow:

* How do you re-instill Diana’s confidence in you?
* Will you respond to this by email, phone call, and/or a visit?
* If you messed up, how much—if any—of an excuse do you give? How can you address what Diana refers to as the “bigger issue”?
* What, if anything, would you communicate to Bill?
* Sometimes, it’s a good idea to give your manager a heads-up, in case he or she hears about a situation (it’s better to hear about it from you first). In this case, would you communicate anything to Ian now—or at some other time?

***Would you send Diana an IM?***

You may want to avoid discussing serious issues over IM. Because IM is perceived as less formal communication, sending Diana an IM may communicate to her that her concerns aren’t important. What is a better medium for this interaction?

**Tips for Diana’s “Contact Info” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

One consideration here is what time this email was written and when you responded to Diana about missing the morning conference call. If you haven’t yet responded to Diana, you should!

As for your home phone number…that’s up to you. Maybe a cell number is more appropriate? But don’t miss her underlying message—how will you address her concerns?

***Would you send Diana an IM?***

You may want to avoid discussing serious issues over IM. Because IM is perceived as less formal communication, sending Diana an IM may communicate to her that her concerns aren’t important. What is a better medium for this interaction?

**Tips for Sis’s “Mom’s Birthday” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

You have only a half-hour to get through all of your work emails, and this one is clearly personal. On the other hand, it sounds like you have to do something for your mother’s birthday, and your sister is willing to take some responsibility for it. Maybe name a restaurant and a time and be done with it? And how about planning a bit better in the future?

***Would you send Sis an IM?***

Be careful about personal IMing at work. Do you really want Sis to IM you in addition to sending 3-4 emails a day?

**Tips for Sis’s “Biking” and “Need Advice” Emails**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Your sister is getting annoying. You may want to discourage her from sending emails to work.

***Would you send Sis an IM?***

Be careful about personal IMing at work. Do you really want Sis to IM you in addition to sending 3-4 emails a day?

**Tips for Sis’s “OK, last email” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Good thing you opened this one! This may be helpful for Ian’s request. But do you have time to sort through this?

***Would you send Sis an IM?***

Be careful about personal IMing at work. Do you really want Sis to IM you in addition to sending 3-4 emails a day?

**Tips for Brian’s “[School Name] Student Seeking Summer Internship” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Doesn’t this sound familiar? This doesn’t have to be answered immediately, but you will probably want to respond within 24 hours (You know how impatient those college students are!). You can handle this in a number of ways:

* Tell Brian that you’re not hiring or that his credentials aren’t what you’re looking for right now (or something like that).
* Pass Brian’s email along to Ron Harrison, the HR Director, for review and consideration. If you do this, you might want to copy Brian and—either within this email or separately—let him know that you passed along his request. You may or may not give Ron’s name to Brian. What are the consequences of each?

**Tips for Ron’s “Confidential” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Uh oh. This typically isn’t good news. Well, you should probably just focus on the appointment time and not worry about it until you hear the facts. What are the potential consequences of discussing the situation over email?

***Would you send Ron an IM?***

IM is good for quick interactions, like setting up meetings. Just avoid discussing the harassment claim over IM or email—both can wind up in court. Stick to the meeting time for this IM.

**Tips for Ron’s “Your Candidate” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

If you haven’t already, this email tells you that you should bring Ron, the HR manager, in the loop. At this point, you’ll need to either tell Ron how you handled Marc’s request or—better yet—if you read this email before responding to Marc, you may ask Ron’s advice.

***Would you send Ron an IM?***

Good choice! You might try IMing Ron about Marc’s salary request. This could be a short interaction to get Ron’s opinion. If the discussion gets too complicated, you can always finish up by phone.

**Tips for Cara Currigan’s “Inquiry” Email**

***Tips for responding to this email***

Read this one carefully. Consider the following:

* What have you been “selected” to do?
* What is the timeframe for your response?
* What is the deadline for the proposal?