

'Yours truly': options for closing emails (part II)

 By [Tiffany Markman](#)

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Ciao. Yours truly. Regards. Yours sincerely. Thanks. TGIF. However you choose to close your business emails, there's a message there. And that message is the last impression with which your reader is left. So you may as well get it right.

Or, at the very least, not foul it up completely.

I run courses on business writing and I've yet to get through a single training day during which someone hasn't identified email salutations (the 'hello' part) and closes (the 'goodbye' part) as two of the things they most desperately want to cover. So here's a quick lesson on the 'goodbye' ([here's the 'hello' article](#)).

- ***The old-fashioned***

We were taught some funny things at school, of which how to end a letter is one. 'Yours truly', 'Yours faithfully' and hideosities like 'Cordially yours' have had their day. Please stay away from these; they make you sound a) old, b) far too keen or c) like you have very little social contact and live in a dark attic.

- ***The cheesy***

There's a tendency in business writing to choose-your-own-adventure when it comes to email closes, along the lines of 'Yours in business/Yours in sales/Yours in success/[pick your cheese]'. Unless you *want* to sound like a direct marketer who sells sales training or 'improve your life' e-books, these are not for you.

- ***The cheap 'n cheerful***

Casual, friendly closes such as 'Ciao', 'Cheers' and 'Later' are cool for very informal correspondence with colleagues or people that you write to three or four times a day. They're also fine if you're Italian. Or Australian. But, no matter how chilled a personality you are in real life, these zippy closes don't do you any favours in business writing. So avoid them unless you have a very, very good reason.

- ***The absent***

Some people don't close their emails. They have their email signature, featuring their name, do the job for them. I find this rude, and it's something I'd advise against. It says, "I'm in a hurry," "I don't know how to sign off," or "I'm someone who couldn't give a %&\$# about niceties". So take the chance to show that you're a human being, even if

you have to use one of the awful closes I've denigrated.

- ***The simple***

The simplest, easiest and least likely to offend, irritate or mislead when it comes to email closes are these: 'Regards', 'Kind regards', 'Best wishes', and 'Many thanks'. They suit formal *and* informal email and sound nice. Human. These are the ones I use most often, as well as 'Warm regards' if I want to seem like a friendly chick, 'Best' if I'm in a hurry and 'Thank you' to sound appreciative.

- ***The standard***

But if you like the old faithfuls that have served you since childhood, or you communicate with more formal (or older) audiences on a regular basis, you can feel free to use 'Yours sincerely' or my preference, 'Sincerely'. Everyone's comfortable with it, it reads nicely and it promises sincerity. You can't go wrong.

A tip on usage: I'm on my knees now. Please, please, please **only capitalise the first word** in all closes. It's not 'Yours Sincerely'; it's 'Yours sincerely'. Thank you. Very much.

How to choose

In an ideal world, how you close your emails should depend on two things: the **context** of your relationship with the reader (formal, informal; unfamiliar, familiar; whether he or she is a superior, an equal or a subordinate, etc.) and the **content** of the message in question (what it's about, what the history is, whether there's tact and diplomacy required, etc.) So make your selection based on that.

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