

[UPDATED] How to prevent mistakes in your event emails

UPDATE: I just received an email invitation that incorrectly stated the event took place on EST (Eastern Standard Time). Furthermore, the event invitation stated it was free for all. When I went to register I found that there are different fees for members, nonmembers, and students. Not only was the event not free, it had different costs that were not listed. I've updated the checklist below to include these items.

I went to an event yesterday afternoon for which I got two (conflicting) reminder emails. Both emails detailed where the event was taking place and how to get there, including the nearest Metro stops and parking garages. Both had the date and time, but the first reminder said the event took place at 3:00 p.m. and the second said it was at 3:30 p.m.

The second email had the correct information, although the organizers did not bother to clarify that it was an update. I was left wondering which email was right.

Event email checklist

Making mistakes like these is common (and human). Having someone to edit or proofread your copy often prevents these kinds of errors. But if you are a one-person shop, here's a handy checklist of items to always check (and double-check):

- **Dates:** Using a calendar, check the date is correct and that it corresponds to the day of the week that you are saying it is. For example, today is Tuesday, April 21 not Monday, April 21 or Tuesday, April 20.
- **Times:** Make sure you have the correct start time, and double-check that you are indicating the right time of day (a.m. or p.m.). Additionally, if your event is online, add the time zone (e.g., Eastern (ET), Central

(CT), Mountain (MT), Pacific (PT), etc.). If you are adding Standard or Daylight time, make sure to use the right one. To avoid this issue, it is best to use ET instead of EST or EDT, CT instead of CST or CDT, etc.

- **Location:** Is the street address correct? Have you included any additional information, such as floor number or suite number if in a building?
- **Directions:** If you have included directions, are they accurate? Will anything be happening on the day of event that would create changes, for example, roadwork or street closures?
- **Names and titles:** Double-check *every single name and title* of your speakers, panelists, presenters, moderators, etc. For example, if your speaker is named Allison, make sure she spells it with two ls not one. Additionally, if you are referencing the name/title of a book, building, school, etc. ensure you are using the official/complete title and that you have double-checked the spelling against an official source such as the organization's website. Perhaps you call it MoMA (note the capitalization), but it's officially The Museum of Modern Art (you can call it MoMA on second reference).
- **Cost/Fees:** If your event requires payment, double-check the dollar figure and whether there are different costs for different audiences (e.g., members, nonmembers, students, etc.).

Fix your mistakes!

And finally, if in spite of checking and double-checking, your email contains a mistake, send an updated, corrected email. In the subject line, write [UPDATE] or [CORRECTION] to indicate this email has different information than the last. You may also want to include a line in the body of the email indicating the error or update. For example: Our last email incorrectly stated that the event takes place on Tuesday, April 21. The correct date is Wednesday, April 22.