

Winning Edge #17 – Persuade with an Email

This is Trevor Bragdon with Commonwealth Partners' *The Winning Edge*: Tips to help conservatives persuade and win.



We all check our email multiple times a day. We pick up our phone, scan the messages and subject lines, and then aggressively start swiping left on messages.

Retailer email - delete. Spammy looking email - delete. News alert email, read the subject line - delete. Email newsletter from my elected official - delete.

Most of us aggressively manage our emails by “deleting first and asking questions later.”

Now think about the last email newsletter from your campaign or office and answer this question: Would you have read it if it wasn't affiliated with you?

Don't feel bad. The next 3 minutes will show you how to be more persuasive with email newsletters.

To be more persuasive, it starts with one question: why send an email newsletter? Everyone has them, but why do it?

Here, you need to be pragmatic. The number one reason to have an email newsletter is to remind people you are still alive. Seriously, it's just about being top of mind. It's the same reason Coke and Coors Lite run ads.

The second reason to have a newsletter is to inform on a topic. Maybe there's something useful you need to tell your voters.

The third reason is to have a group of people you can email and hope a small percentage will take action.

How do you make your emails more effective? To improve any email, focus on fighting the swipe to delete with these steps.

First, **don't waste your reader's time.** This is the most crucial step. Provide value in your email. If you have nothing valuable to send, then don't send an email that week. Send a low-value email, and your reader won't open the next one.

The second step is to **make the reader curious.**

Why do you read some emails and not others? Because some emails make you curious. Make people interested with your subject line. A boring subject line equals a deleted email. Instead, have a short, direct 4-8 word subject line. Think engaging and urgent.

The other thing you can do after writing a subject line is to look at what's called the pre-header or email teaser. The pre-header is the short preview shown after the subject before you open the email. Most email services now allow you to customize this preview. You can write a 6-12 word sentence that previews your email content.

Spending five minutes writing a few options for your subject line and pre-header will make your emails more interesting and increase your open rates by 5 percent.

The third step: Make it skimmable.

Gina Pope does an excellent job making her emails skimmable with the News & Brews daily newsletter. ([Sign up for the News and Brews newsletter here.](#)) She's optimized these emails so all four bullet points that start the email fit on one iPhone screen. Then, each bullet point corresponds to a story below. But if you are in a hurry, you can take 15 seconds and at least get the headlines.

She designed the email this way because we skim in an "F" pattern on the phone. If you have quick bullets, skimming is simple.

To improve your email, start with 3 to 4 bullet points for your newsletter that reflect the content below. Use only 100-200 words for each content section. It works best to divide each section with a visual to make it feel like less to read.

If you want to make your emails more persuasive, follow these steps:

1. Don't waste your reader's time - Make the content valuable.
2. Make the reader curious - Use a strong subject line and customize the pre-header.
3. Make it skimmable - Start the email with 3-4 bullet points.

Do this and give your emails the Winning Edge.