



BEST PRACTICES : REPLY-TO & FROM

DIGITAL STRATEGY & ENGAGEMENT

1. REPLY-TO ADDRESS

Transactional emails contain important data. While readers might not reply to the message, and will look for the proper contact channels if necessary, providing a real reply-to address instills comfort and trust.

If a reader takes the time to read your email, a “noreply@” address gives them the impression that your time is more valuable than the reader's time. It's easy to see how the use of “noreply@” implies one-way communication rather than open communication.

Common reply to addresses used in the Division of Development and Alumni Relations include:

- **alumni@gwu.edu**
For general alumni messages. Email account monitored by Alumni Relations operations staff.
- **giving@gwu.edu**
For solicitations. Email account monitored by Annual Giving staff.
- **campaign@gwu.edu**
For campaign and stewardship messages. Email account monitored by Communications staff.

2. FROM NAME/“FRIENDLY-FROM”

Generally, it's best to use the most recognizable option—your unit name—as the From Name, but, depending on your content and unit, you may find that a person's name works better for your needs.

When using a person's name in the "from line" make sure there is alignment between the sender and the email content. An email "from" an individual should have more of a personal voice and tone than an email that is "from" The George Washington University.

If a staff member requests using a specific person's name as the "from" name in an email that staff member is responsible for obtaining approval from this person or their delegate on the email content. The staff member who requested the email is also responsible for following up on any email responses to the "sender" that come to generic email accounts. Use university and volunteer leadership as email senders sparingly, on the most important messages.



Jeffrey Smith, GW
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If your intention is to form a real connection by including a person's name as the sender, it's best to use the same name with each send. Then your readers will start to recognize your emails and the person they're connecting with. If you're using a different name with each send, readers will have a harder time recognizing your emails, and you'll run the risk of ending up in the spam folder.

