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ALL THE WRITE MOVES

An email definitely has that immediate-gratification factor, but sometimes putting pen to paper or picking up the phone is the best way to get your point across. Our experts weigh in on when to go electronic and when to go "old school."



CAREER
Nicole Williams

THE SCENARIO:
HUNTING FOR A JOB

REACH OUT WITH CONFIDENCE

● It's now customary (and totally acceptable) to email your résumé when applying for an opening, but don't get lulled into being too casual with your words. To be taken seriously, you should craft the body of the electronic missive as if it were a cover letter (minus the date and addresses on top), including details like why you want the position and what makes you such a good fit. But don't stop there—you should also mail a hard copy. When it arrives on the hiring manager's desk, it'll remind her about you, upping the odds she'll reach out to schedule an interview.

If you do nab a meeting, send a brief thank-you note immediately afterward—both electronically *and* via snail mail. To differentiate yourself from the other candidates, mention something personal that came up when you spoke, like your love of dogs or passion for scuba diving. Make sure your handwriting is legible and the note is free of spelling errors (this goes for *all* professional correspondence!). And should a week go by without a response, feel free to send a follow-up email indicating you're still interested and asking if there's anything more you can do.



ENTERTAINING
Annie Lee

THE SCENARIO:
HOSTING A PARTY

MAKE GUESTS FEEL SPECIAL

● Invitations and save-the-dates set the tone for an event, so it's important to make the right first impression. For a formal fête, like a wedding or a 40th birthday, you want to go the paper route. But for a relaxed affair, email is totally fine, provided it's personalized. Rather than just typing the details, send an Evite or create a digital invite at paperlesspost.com (a site with beautiful designs).

Did a guest at your party bring wine or flowers? There's no need to send a thank-you note (though you should acknowledge the person when you open the bottle or place the bouquet on the table). But if someone brought an actual present for you, be sure to mail her a card within the week. And always mention the gift specifically in your message—no one wants to feel like she's received a form letter.



FRIENDS AND FAMILY
Lauren Ing

THE SCENARIO:
KEEPING IN TOUCH

SHOW PEOPLE THEY MATTER

● Staying close to loved ones—from your college roommate to your grandmother in Florida—can be time-consuming, but it's worth it. These relationships create a loving, supportive network that helps keep you healthy and happy.

You might think, "That's what Facebook is for!" but I believe that the faster and easier the method of communication is, the less meaning it has. Blog posts, status updates, and group emails are appropriate for reporting what's going on in your life—but they don't replace one-on-one time.

When you can't meet in person, opt for the phone or Skype, because hearing or seeing a loved one helps you connect better. (And a typed "LOL" just can't convey your sister's contagious laugh.) Try to check in with your favorites at least once a month; the longer you wait, the more daunting those conversations will seem.



THIS "REEL GIRL" IS FULLY CONNECTED!

For Linda Vongkhamchanh, a 24-year-old in New York City, finding time to catch up with friends and family has always been tough. But then she started following Lauren's advice—and now has standing phone dates set up.

● For videos of Linda and our three other Reel Girls who tried out this month's advice, head to shape.com/women-in-action.