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Earning better email marketing response rates - by Chuck Sink

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One of the easiest things to do is make people delete your emails immediately, with or without opening them. Simply disappoint recipients with irrelevant content. That's all. There's nothing to it... nothing worthwhile that is, in the subject line or content, that genuinely relates to audience needs.

A couple of recent emails from familiar firms hit my inbox last week. The subject lines were "Big News from..." and "News from..." Upon opening the "Big News..." one, I found that the news was small and mundane from my vantage point. The news could only be "Big" from an internal standpoint – to the owners and managers of the company. They reported that they completed a project on schedule – one that you would expect them to handle without difficulty. The content was a letdown. How much engagement or response do newsletters like this generate?

Get Audience-Centered!

With an audience-centered approach, your subject line will resonate with relevance and more likely get an email opened. With a company-centered approach, your subject line will have little or nothing of value to the recipient. You need to give your audience a reason to engage! Instead of talking about your accomplishments, talk about their opportunities and what they value.

Relevance and Reward

Your subject lines and content must not only be relevant, they must align so that your audience gets rewarded for opening your email. The reward can be as simple as breaking industry news, product and service innovations or a simple solution to a nagging problem. Whatever it is, be relevant and relatable. Your audience should be able to identify with keywords in your subject lines and the themes of your articles or promotions.

It's fine to sprinkle employee and company news updates into your newsletters as long as that isn't the main thrust of the content. In fact, people will be more likely to pay attention to your internal news once they see that you are a purveyor of worthwhile information.

The last thing you want your subject lines to do is promise "Big News" when upon opening your email, the recipient thinks "fake news" or "no news is good news." When that happens, the unsubscribe link will be the most relevant section of your email.

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