

**Looking and sounding professional gains you credibility on the job.**

### Projecting Professionalism When You Communicate

	Unprofessional	Professional
<b>Speech habits</b>	Speaking in <i>uptalk</i> , a singsong speech pattern that has a rising inflection making sentences sound like questions, using <i>like</i> to fill in mindless chatter, substituting <i>go</i> for <i>said</i> , relying on slang, or letting profanity slip into your conversation.	Recognizing that your credibility can be seriously damaged by sounding uneducated, crude, or adolescent.
<b>E-mail</b>	Writing messages with incomplete sentences, misspelled words, exclamation points, IM slang, and senseless chatting. Sloppy, careless messages send a nonverbal message that you don't care, don't know, or aren't smart enough to know what is correct.	Including subjects, verbs, and punctuation marks. Employers don't recognize IM abbreviations. Call it crazy, but they value conciseness and correct spelling, even in brief e-mail messages.
<b>Internet</b>	Using an e-mail address such as <i>hotbabe@hotmail.com</i> , <i>supasnugglykitty@yahoo.com</i> , or <i>buffedguy@aol.com</i> .	An e-mail address should include your name or a relevant, positive, businesslike expression. It should not sound cute or like a chat room nickname.
<b>Voice mail</b>	An outgoing message with strident background music, weird sounds, or a joke message.	An outgoing message that states your name or phone number and provides instructions for leaving a message.
<b>Telephone</b>	Soap operas, thunderous music, or a TV football game playing noisily in the background when you answer the phone.	A quiet background when you answer the telephone, especially if you are expecting a prospective employer's call.
<b>Cell and smart phones</b>	Taking or placing calls during business meetings or during conversations with fellow employees; raising your voice (cell yell) or engaging in cell calls when others must reluctantly overhear; using a PDA during meetings.	Turning off phone and message notification, both audible and vibrate, during meetings; using your cell only when conversations can be private.