

COOLING OFF AND REVIEW

As you approach the final draft of your message, you will gain much if you take some time to get comments on it and to let it cool off for a while before you review it again.

Run the draft by a colleague for comments. A colleague will be able to identify problems in minutes that you would not be able to see in hours.

If your message will have a large audience, it can be useful to test it on a sample of those readers or people like them. Their comments can help you to achieve a communications success story, and to avoid a communications disaster.

It also pays tremendous dividends if you allow time for a final message to cool off for a while before you review it again:

- If you have a month to work with, it's great to be able to leave the draft aside for three or four days before you review it.
- If you have a week to work with, it's helpful to have at least a day to leave the draft aside.
- If you only have a day to work with, try to find a way to leave the draft aside for at least some time — two hours, an hour, half an hour, even just 15 minutes — to give yourself a chance to review the message with at least a bit of a fresh perspective.

By getting away from it for a while, you will be able to return to the draft with a new objectivity that will enable you to catch mistakes and make significant improvements — none of which you would have been able to catch had you not walked away from the draft for a while.

When planning your [time lines](#), do everything you can to allow time for cooling off and second-party review. This time costs you nothing, yet it can improve your message tremendously.