How to use COB in an email

Close of business, often abbreviated COB, is a common acronym used when requesting employees, suppliers or stakeholders to perform a specific action by the end of the day. In the business world, acronyms can save time, but they can also create confusion if everyone isn't on the same page.

Here are some guidelines on how to use COB in a professional email:

☐ **Set realistic deadlines**: When using COB to assign tasks or projects, ensure that the deadlines are achievable and allow sufficient time for completion. Setting unrealistic COB deadlines can lead to stress and reduced quality of work.

☐ **Specify the time zone**: COB often refers to the end of the business day, which can vary depending on time zones. To avoid confusion, specify the time zone you are referencing when using COB. For example, "Please submit your report by COB (5:00 PM EST)."

☐ **Consider the recipient**: When using COB in emails or messages, consider whether the recipient is familiar with the acronym. If not, it's a good practice to explain it the first time you use it in a conversation or provide a definition.

☐ **Use in clear communication**: When setting deadlines or making requests, ensure that the use of COB is clear and unambiguous. State the specific date and time if needed to avoid misunderstandings. For instance, "I need your feedback on the proposal by COB Friday."

☐ **Use in project management**: COB can be helpful in project management to establish deadlines for tasks or milestones. Make sure the project team understands the meaning and implications of COB in the project schedule.

☐ **Coordinate across time zones**: In organizations with employees or stakeholders in different time zones, coordinate the use of COB to avoid confusion. Clearly communicate which time zone's COB is applicable to the task.

☐ **Follow up and confirm**: After assigning a task with a COB deadline, consider following up with the responsible party to confirm that they understand the deadline and have the necessary resources to complete the task on time.