

# EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

YOUR CONTENT WILL THANK YOU



# THE CHOSEN ONES

Congratulations! You have been selected to be part of an epic group of individuals charged with communicating to our employees. Remember, with great power comes great responsibility, so we've put together these Employee Communications Guidelines to help you stay on your A-game, help the Company stay on brand and keep our employees in-the-know.

Whether you're new to the Company or have been communicating with employees as part of your role for as long as you can remember, this guide was created to help everyone maintain a universal, consistent voice and tone. Don't worry, there are no grammar police. It's just that our Company has a writing style that is unique and our communications should reflect that whether it's an email, a newsletter, a poster – you name it. We are professional in our tone (absolutely!) but also like to be more casual and approachable. Most of all, we like to *Have Fun* in everything we do – including our writing. If you *Have Fun* when you're writing it, employees will likely *Have Fun* reading it.

This guide will give you an overview of our brand and will answer those pesky questions like: “Do I include ‘www’ in URLs?”; “Which titles are capitalized?”; and “How on earth do I know when to use hyphens?” We've got you covered in the pages that follow. Don't see what you're looking for? [Send us an email](#). This guide will be updated regularly to ensure we stay on brand and keep up with the latest writing do's and don'ts.

Thanks in advance for your commitment to adhering to these standards. Now, let's get to it.

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“  
**Don't worry,  
there are  
no grammar  
police.”**

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# INTRODUCTION

Using the Associated Press Stylebook (AP Style) as a foundation to build our Employee Communications Guidelines, we have created our own standards to echo our Company's tone, culture and unique style. Your writing is an opportunity to bring our Vail Resorts brand and values to life and it's a vital tool in being able to connect to our audience. Our employees are brave, ambitious and passionate, so your writing should be too.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to [drop us a line](#) and we'd be happy to help clarify anything pertaining to this guide or employee communications in general.

Here's the gist:

# COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Through engaging content, the Culture & Communications Team provides Vail Resorts employees opportunities to connect to the Company, to each other and to themselves.

## CONTENT WILL:

1

Inform, influence and inspire.

2

Demonstrate how employees align who they are with what they do.

3

Align with business priorities and Company news.

4

Serve the employee *Experience of a Lifetime*.

Have content to submit to our team? Here's the deal: we may tweak/edit any content that is submitted or published on a Vail Resorts-owned channel to align the tone and style with the standards set forth in this guide. We're here to make you look good. Promise.

# VOICE & TONE

To empower employees to feel connected, we communicate in an approachable and candid manner and we strive for authenticity and transparency. In other words, we like to keep it casual and fun! Don't be afraid to be creative and always use vernacular language. Overly corporate tone is a no-no. Your tone should be:



Talk directly to your audience, using "you" and "your" whenever possible. Use active voice over passive voice; write in a confident, direct tone.

### EXAMPLE

As an employee, you and your friends get access to 20 percent off the best available rate at all of our lodging locations.

### EXAMPLE

**USE THIS:** The Executive Committee has updated our Company's Mobile Device Policy. (This is using active voice.)

**NOT THIS:** The Mobile Device Policy has been updated. (This is using passive voice.)

# CONTENT BASICS

## ADDRESSES

Abbreviate St., Ave., Blvd., N., S., E., W. when part of a numbered address.

Always spell out Drive, Road, Court, Lane and Way.

Use two-letter postal abbreviation for states.

### EXAMPLE

The Keystone Conference Center is located at 633 Tennis Club Road, Dillon, CO 80435.

## BULLETS

Use bullets to provide a quick and easy read and to help break up large bodies of copy.

Capitalize the first letter of the first word after each bullet.

Avoid using more than two levels of bullets/indentations.

If the introduction to a bulleted list and the bullets together create a complete sentence, place a period at the end of the final bullet.

Apply these rules when the introduction to a bulleted list is a complete sentence in itself:

- Use a period if each bullet is a complete sentence.
- Use no punctuation if each bullet is a phrase.
- Avoid constructions in which some bullets are complete sentences and others are fragments.

### EXAMPLES

Here's how it looks when it's a bulleted list of phrases:  
Everything we do needs to align with our stakeholders:

- Our guests
- Our employees
- Our communities
- Our natural environment
- Our shareholders

Here's how it looks when it's a bulleted list of sentences:

Items to note:

- Participation is more important than the amount.
- Contributions can be canceled at any time.
- Gifts of all sizes are welcome, from \$1 per paycheck to \$100, or more.
- One hundred percent of your contribution will help fellow Vail Resorts employees.
- All paycheck donations are tax deductible.

## CAPITALIZATION & ITALICIZATION

Do not use all capital letters in body text to emphasize words; use bold text instead.

Use all capitals for headlines on websites and in e-newsletters.

Italicize passwords in body text.

*Note: See the Glossary Of Terms for specific Company phrases.*

### EXAMPLES

The final Winter Wellness Clinic will be held **Tuesday, Nov. 22.**

Find additional information at [VailResortsHealth.com](https://www.vailresortsh.com) (Password: *EpicBenefits*).

## NEWSPAPER & MAGAZINE TITLES

Capitalize magazine and newspaper titles; do not italicize. Only capitalize "The" if it's part of the official name.

### EXAMPLES

**Fast Company**, one of the most influential business magazines in the United States, named Vail Resorts one of the world's 50 Most Innovative Companies for 2016.

Check out this article in The New Yorker.

# CONTENT BASICS

## CURRENCY

Abbreviate and capitalize million/billion to M/B when used in a headline only; otherwise spell out.

Use the \$ symbol; never spell out “dollar(s).”

Use the \$ symbol before each number when using currency ranges.

### EXAMPLES

Wilmot Will Unveil More Than \$13M Worth Of Improvements This Season

Our Company invested more than \$100 million in resort improvements for the upcoming season.

The salary range for this position is \$40,000-\$45,000.

“Do not abbreviate days of the week.”

## DATES

Include day of the week for a specific date reference.

When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.; spell out months when they are alone or with a year only.

When a sentence includes a month with a specific day or year, set off the year with a comma. Do not use a comma after the year if it is just the month and year.

Do not abbreviate days of the week.

Avoid using expressions such as “5<sup>th</sup>” or “fifth” when referring to dates.

Only include the year when referencing a year prior to or after the current year. Except when writing a formal letter or email, do include the year.

When using a date range, use a hyphen, not the word “through,” and do not use spaces between the hyphen. Do not include the day of the week in date ranges.

When referencing resort opening and closing dates, always include “dates subject to change.”

### EXAMPLES

January 2017 brought 275 inches of snow to Lake Tahoe.

The snow totals on Tuesday, Jan. 3, hit a new record.

Saturday, June 10, 2017, was Perisher’s expected opening date.

Vail Snow Daze takes place Dec. 9-11.

## EMAIL ADDRESSES

To list an individual’s email address, always capitalize the first and last name.

The same goes for addresses that do not contain a person’s name.

For Company email address, also capitalize Vail Resorts.

### EXAMPLES

JoeSmith@VailResorts.com

VailResortsEmpComm@VailResorts.com

## FINANCIALS

Refer to the Company’s quarterly and annual earnings as follows.

### EXAMPLES

Vail Resorts reported Q1FY17 results.

The fiscal year results will be announced in September.

The FY17 results will be announced in September.

## HEADLINES

Capitalize all words in a story headline or email subject line. (Do this for headlines on internal websites and e-newsletters.)

### EXAMPLES

DO THIS: Whistler Blackcomb Is Now Epic

NOT THIS: Whistler Blackcomb is Now Epic

# CONTENT BASICS

## NUMBERS

Spell out numbers one through nine; use numerals for 10 and above.

Spell out first, second, third through ninth and use 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> for numbers 10 and above.

Use numerals for percentages, minutes, degrees, age, miles, ratios, dollar figures, decimals, times, dates, dimensions and numbers that are part of titles or service names.

Always spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence, except for years.

### EXAMPLES

2012 was the year Vail celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Two hundred people attended the annual holiday party in Broomfield.

The room is 30 square feet. But, it's a 30-square-foot room.

The storm left 5 inches of snow.

Michael is 5 years old. And, Michelle is a 3-year-old girl.

It was a 30-year plan.

## PERCENTAGES & DEGREES

Always use numerals.

Spell out “percent” and “degrees”; do not use symbols.

### EXAMPLE

We topped last year's EpicPromise Day participation by 8 percent.

It was 32 degrees when Heavenly opened this morning.

## PHONE NUMBERS

U.S. phone numbers should be formatted 123-456-7890 or 800-###-####.

International numbers should be formatted ###-##-###-####-####.

When providing a toll-free number that incorporates a word, use all capital letters: 800-464-HELP.

## PROFESSIONAL TITLES

Verify that all names and titles are accurate.

Always capitalize all Vail Resorts titles in all uses, including “Company.”

“Team(s)” should be capitalized when with the department title (e.g., Ski Patrol Teams, Talent Development Team). Otherwise, “team(s)” is lowercased.

Manager and Supervisor should always be capitalized.

Avoid using “of” in titles (e.g., use “Culture & Communications Director,” not “Director of Culture & Communications”).

Use abbreviations after the first mention of the following titles: Chief Operating Officer (COO); Chief Marketing Officer (CMO); Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO); Chief Information Officer (CIO); Chief Financial Officer (CFO); General Manager (GM). Include the abbreviation in parenthesis on the first reference. The abbreviation “CEO” may be used on the first reference since it is widely recognized.

Do not include formal title for executives (e.g., use “Chief Marketing Officer,” not “Executive Vice President”).

Do not use courtesy titles (Mr., Mrs.); use Dr. only when referring to a medical doctor.

### EXAMPLES

Get prior approval from your Manager before taking time off.

Contact the Talent Development Team with any questions.

Read this announcement from CEO Rob Katz.

Kirsten Lynch is our Chief Marketing Officer (CMO).

“Spell out ‘percent’ and ‘degrees’; do not use symbols.”

# CONTENT BASICS

## TIMES

Use lowercase “a.m.” and “p.m.” with periods; insert a space after the number.

Always spell out noon and midnight; do not use 12 a.m. or 12 p.m.

Use a short dash to indicate a timeframe.

Use time zones only when communicating with audiences in multiple time zones. Use abbreviations (all capital letters, within parenthesis). Note: Daylight Saving Time begins late-winter and lasts through mid-fall (usually March-November).

Avoid redundancy like 10 a.m. this morning.

### EXAMPLES

9:30 a.m.

9-10 p.m.

We’re holding an employee equipment inspection today from 10 a.m.-noon.

10:30 a.m. (MST)  
(use this for Mountain Standard Time)

10:30 a.m. (MDT)  
(use this for Daylight Saving Time)

## URLS

Vail Resorts should always be capitalized.

Do not use “www” in body text.

Always link the URL in non-printed copy and replace long URLs with shortened, hyperlinked text.

Get creative to encourage readership.

### EXAMPLES

Visit [InsideEpic.com](https://www.insideepic.com) for more information.

Contact the [Culture & Communications Team](#) with questions.

[Purchase tickets](#) today!

# PUNCTUATION, ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

## &/AND

Use “&” only in formal titles and headlines.

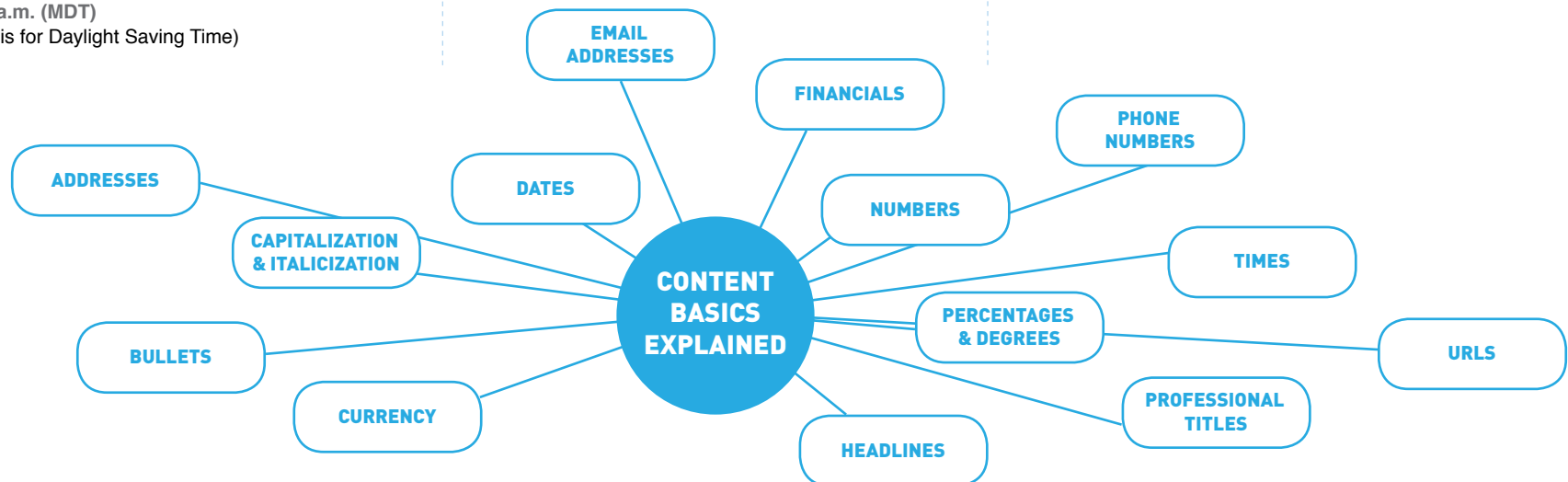
Always use “and” in body text.

### EXAMPLES

Review the Travel & Entertainment Policy on the SharePoint site.

DO THIS: Vail and Beaver Creek are open for the 2016-2017 winter season.

NOT THIS: Vail & Beaver Creek are open for the 2016-2017 winter season.





# PUNCTUATION, ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

## ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

Use abbreviations and acronyms (when applicable) after the first reference. Include the acronym in parenthesis on the first reference.

Do not use abbreviations or acronyms in headlines.

Always spell out states in body text; use the two-letter postal abbreviation in other cases.

Abbreviate number to “No.”; do not use #.

*Note: See the Glossary Of Terms for specific Company acronyms.*

### EXAMPLES

Colorado Mountain Express (CME) is a great option for visitors arriving at Denver International Airport. Guests can ride CME directly to Vail.

Perisher was recently ranked the No. 1 resort in Australia.

## HYPHENS

Hyphenate compound modifiers when they immediately precede their noun, unless the first word in the modifier ends in “ly.”

Don't hyphenate compound words formed from prefixes.

Always hyphenate state-of-the-art, case-by-case and up-to-date.

*Note: See the Glossary Of Terms for specific words.*

### EXAMPLES

He works full time. She's a full-time employee.

We do not have an overly corporate environment.

The meeting is in the multipurpose room.

## PUNCTUATION

Do not double space after a period; only use a single space.

Commas and periods always go within quotation marks.

Semicolons, question marks and exclamation points go within quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only; they go on the outside if they apply to the whole sentence.

Limit use of exclamation points; let your words speak for themselves.

Do not use serial commas before “and” or “or” in a series, unless it helps to break up the sentence more clearly.

### EXAMPLE

Stowe is an iconic resort with a rich history, loyal guests and an outstanding on-mountain and base area experience.

“Do not double space after a period; only use a single space.”

# BRAND CONSISTENCY

At Vail Resorts, our employees are brave, ambitious and passionate. So, we like to reflect that in all that we do. Our Employment Brand Guidelines help us keep things consistent. Take a look:

## LOGOS

Find all logos and brand guidelines [here](#). When in doubt about usage, ask [Creative Services](#).

## PHOTO USE & CREDIT

Here are some tips on crediting photos, sizing, photo selection and access to our Vail Resorts photo library.

- We often feature photos posted to our resort social media channels in our employee communications. Please include photo credit when the source is provided. These photos may be used for employee communications only, as we likely do not own any rights to publish these photos for external communication purposes.
- When posting photos on websites, always use a high-resolution image for larger photos to avoid pixilation. Smaller photos such as thumbnails don't need to be high-resolution. Use your best judgment – if it looks fuzzy after you post it, try a larger photo. If you don't have a high-resolution photo, you can find one in our [online photo gallery](#). We own the photos in this library so there's no need to credit.
- Remember, if using images of people engaged in skiing, snowboarding, etc., ensure everyone pictured is wearing a helmet and representing our Company in a positive light.
- You can find logos, photos, brand guidelines and more usefulness [here](#).

## MISSION, VISION, VALUES & LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Always italicize and capitalize the Company's mission, vision, values and leadership competencies when they are used in full as follows:

Our Mission: *Experience of a Lifetime*

Our Vision: *To re-imagine the mountain experience around the world.*

Our Values:

- *Serve Others*
- *Do Right*
- *Drive Value*
- *Do Good*
- *Be Safe*
- *Have Fun*

Leadership Competencies:

- *Re-imagine*
- *Develop*
- *Drive*
- *Out Front*
- *Connect*
- *Passion*

### EXAMPLES

Follow the slope safety guidelines to *Be Safe* this season.

Shout-out to all of the teams who were recognized for their *Drive, Passion* and all around epicness this year.

## NAME USE

Always use Vail Resorts when referring to the Company.

Always capitalize Company when referring to Vail Resorts.

Always list our resorts in this order: Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone, Park City, Heavenly, Northstar, Kirkwood, Whistler Blackcomb, Perisher, Stowe, Afton Alps, Mt. Brighton, Wilmot. Reference the [boilerplate](#) on our news releases for the most up-to-date order of resorts.

When writing for our internal Vail Resorts audience, use Vail, not Vail Mountain; Northstar, not Northstar California, etc.

Use Broomfield when referring to the corporate office. Avoid using the word corporate.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Is it farther or is it further? Can I abbreviate that? When is that word capitalized? Sometimes, you're just not sure, so we've put together this handy dandy reference of frequently used terms. And, if you have a question that isn't answered here, [send us an email](#).

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## A

a lot

Alpine skiing

American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI)

annual (an event can't be annual until it has been held for at least two consecutive years)

après

AUS (Australia)

avy dog (avalanche rescue dog)

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## B

bluebird sky (a sunny day after a snowstorm)

bumps (moguls)

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## C

CA (Canada)

citywide

Colorado Mountain Express (CME)

Company (always capitalize when referring to Vail Resorts)

Companywide

CSS (Corporate Sales & Service)

corduroy (freshly groomed snow)

---

## D

do's

don'ts

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## E

e-newsletter

email

employees (preferred instead of the term "staff")

epic

Epic Awards

Epic Discovery

Epic Life

Epic Pass

EpicPromise

EpicMix

EpicService

EpicVolunteers

Executive Committee (EC)

*Experience of a Lifetime* (always spell out and italicize; never an acronym (EOAL))

---

## F

fall (do not capitalize the season)

Farmers Market (always capitalize)

farther (refers to physical distance)

first tracks (fresh, untracked snow)

fiscal year (FY)

foot, feet (always spell out)

forward (never ends in "s")

flier

follow-up (adjective), follow up (verb)

further (refers to extension in time or degree)

---

## G

Google, Googled, Googling (always capitalize)

Grand Teton Lodge Company (GTLC)

---

## H

hashtag

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## I

i360 = Internal Marketing, Sales & Communications organization meeting. *Inspiration. Innovation. Impact.*

IM, IM'd, IM'ing (as it pertains to Instant Messaging)

in-depth

in-the-know

inch(es) (always spell out)

*Inside Epic Weekly* (always italicize)

InsideEpic.com

internet (do not capitalize)

## J

Jackson Hole Golf & Tennis Club (JHGTC)

## L

liftie (lift operator)

lift ticket

line of business (LOB)

*Live MTN!*

login/logon/logoff (noun and adjective); log in/log on/log off (verb)

long term; long-term (hyphenate when it's a compound modifier)

## M

Marketing, Sales & Communication (MSC)

Midwest (use when referring to all Urban resorts; always capitalize)

mile(s) (always spell out)

Mountain News Corporation (MNC)

Mt. Broomfield (Company's Broomfield headquarters)

MTN (NYSE symbol)

## N

nationwide

New Year

news feed

nonprofit

## O

offline

OK, OK'd, OK'ing

one-on-one

online

OnTheSnow

owned and operated hotels and properties (O/O)

## P

paddleboard

pow (powder)

Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA)

## Q

Q&A

## H

ride-booking (not ride-sharing)

ripper (accomplished skier)

RockResorts

## S

short term; short-term (hyphenate when it's a compound modifier)

shout-out

shredder (accomplished snowboarder)

signup (noun and adjective); sign up (verb)

Ski & Ride School

ski-in

ski-out

slope side

smartphone

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## S

(CONTINUED)

snowcat  
snowmaking  
snow sports  
social media  
spring (do not capitalize the season)  
square feet (always spell out)  
stand up paddleboard (SUP)  
Strategic Alliance  
state-of-the-art (always hyphenate)  
summer (do not capitalize the season)

## T

T-shirt (always capitalize)  
Tahoe (use when referring to all California and Nevada resorts; always capitalize)  
*This Week In Broomfield* (always italicize)  
timeframe  
timeline  
toward (never ends in "s")

## U

U.S. (United States)  
up-to-date  
Urbans (use when referring to all of our Urban resorts; always capitalize)  
username

## V

Vail Resorts (never an acronym (VR))  
Vail Resorts Development Company (VRDC)  
Vail Resorts Hospitality (VRH)  
Vail Resorts, Inc. (VRI)  
Vail Resorts Retail (VRR)

## W

Web  
website  
*Where Epic Begins* (specific to Urban resorts; always italicize)  
Wi-Fi (always capitalize)  
winter (do not capitalize the season)  
worldwide

## Y

year-round

# EXAMPLES OF EPIC COMMUNICATION

Different messages are tailored depending on the topic, audience and author. Need some inspiration? Please review articles on [InsideEpic.com](#) as a guideline.

### EXAMPLES

[Good Vibes | 1,600 At-Risk Youth Hit The Slopes In One Week](#)

[Do Us A Solid | Make Your Voice Heard](#)

[Sweet Success | Jackson Lake Lodge Assembles World's Largest S'more](#)

[Meet Stacie Mesuda | Epic Employee Spotlight](#)

# USEFUL RESOURCES

Use [this link](#) to find:

- Logos
- Brand Guidelines
- Online Photo Library

Use [this link](#) to find our Social Media Guidelines.

# USEFUL WEBSITES

- [InsideEpic.com](#)
- [News.VailResorts.com](#)
- [VailResorts.com](#)
- [EpicPromise.com](#)
- [Investors.VailResorts.com](#)

