

Honeywell DA Style Guide

*Follow current AP Style guidelines for all responses.

Abbreviations

- Don't abbreviate *thousand*, *million* and *billion* as *K*, *M* and *B*. Spell out *thousand*, *million* and *billion*, or use the entire number. For example, Total cost to the enterprise: 300,000 hours and \$30 million per year.
- Don't abbreviate days of the week.
- Don't abbreviate *days*, *hours*, *weeks*, *minutes*, *seconds* or *years*.
- Abbreviate time zones using *ET*, *CT*, *MT* and *PT*. Don't specify *standard time* or *Daylight-Saving Time* unless you're providing information about a specific event where that information matters.

Acronyms

- It's okay to incorporate widely known abbreviations in the DA's conversations (i.e. FAQ, URL).
- All other acronyms must be spelled out upon first reference in each chat/flow.
- Consult the Honeywell Glossary for company-specific abbreviations and discuss usage with the team.
- Add *s* to make an acronym plural, not *'s*.

ADA Compliance

- Make links informative and unique to add more context for the screen reader.
Right: "Here's where you can [view your account information](#)."
Wrong: "You can view your account information [here](#)." or "You can view that information on [this page](#)."
- Steer clear of using directional content, such as "below," "above" and "on the top righthand corner of the page."
- Ensure that instructions, guidance, and error messages are clear, easy to understand and avoid unnecessarily technical language.
- Write in short, clear sentences and paragraphs.
- Present content in a meaningful order and sequence so that it reads properly.
- Be mindful of visual elements like dynamic displays. There should be a high contrast between font and background colors, and images should not be the only means of communicating content.
- If the DA must use a link or send the user away from the conversation, always prompt it by saying something like, "I'll take you to that screen now."

Agreement

- Though it may seem formal in some cases, nouns should always agree. For example, “*Employees* are given raises based on their *performances*.” When we speak, we’d likely say “performance” singular, even though we’re not discussing one collective performance. To keep the bot looking intelligent and trustworthy, we must use proper grammar.

Answering questions with generic responses

- Utterances can come in many forms. To ensure we’re giving users the best experiences and avoiding disparities between utterances and responses, the DA should never answer “Yes” or “No” when beginning a response. And if the user asks for a specific action, that action should be acknowledged in the response. For example:
Utterance: Can you take me to the page where I can create a requisition?
Right: “Here’s where you can [create a requisition](#).”
Wrong: “Yes, I’ll take you there now.” and/or “Here’s a [link](#).”
- It’s better to seem as if we’re repeating ourselves than to provide a response that doesn’t exactly align to the utterance.

Beginning conversations

- Always begin conversations by saying: “How can I help you today?”
- Okay to begin responses with conjunctions (*and*, *so* and *but*) as it’s common in human conversation.

Buttons

- Use sentence case.
- Try to only display four buttons per intent.

Change log

- Keep a record of any changes made to intents, decks, keywords, responses, etc.
- Be as detailed as possible.
- Add dates, initials and version.

Character count

- Each response should not exceed 140 characters unless it’s unavoidable.

Comprehension level

- Write for a seventh-eighth grade reading level to ensure responses will be understood by 80% of the population.

Contractions

- As our DA is conversational, it's encouraged to use contractions (i.e. I'm, what's, you're, they're, can't, won't, shouldn't, etc.) as that's how people speak in real life.

Currency

- Any mention of currency in a response will require security roles for employees in different countries.

Dates

- As we roll out to other countries, write dates in the following format as the majority (56%) of our workforce is outside of the United States: 1 November 2019.
- Always spell out the names of months to avoid confusion on a global scale.
- Try to avoid using years if possible, to avoid the need to update responses every year.

Default Answers

- If an FAQ could be asked and answered for ALL HW Employees, there will be **no default answer**
- If an FAQ is specific to US and an India (or any other country) employee should never see it (i.e. w2, 1095) there will be **no default answer**.
- If an FAQ is India (or any other country) specific that a US employee should never see there will be **no default answer**.
- If an FAQ is super specific to a security role (i.e. What should I do if there is no Market Reference (MRP) data available in the Compensation Offer Tool (COT)?) there will be **no default answer**.
- If a similar FAQ/answer exists in the US but is asked by someone in another country, there will be **no default**.
- If an FAQ has a security role of an HRG but it's possible that an employee or manager can ask it, then you will have a **security role-based default answer**.
- There will **only be a default answer** for US and India (or any other country) FAQs that can be asked by anyone but just doesn't have an answer for the corresponding country.
- There are two default answers that should be used:
 - **Security role-based default answer:** "I can only answer questions about that for certain business groups. If you'd like to chat with someone about it, I can help you start an HR LiveChat."

- **Country default answer:** “I'm still learning about that in this country, but I'm getting smarter every day. In the meantime, you can chat with someone about this by starting an HR LiveChat.”

Differentiating from existing content in HR Direct

- The DA's responses should not mirror what's in HR Direct. Theoretically, any user can find the lengthy, process- and legal-heavy content on the website themselves. Our job is to condense that content and make it conversational.

Ending conversations

- Always conclude conversations. Ask if there's anything else the DA can help with and include the buttons:
 - Yes
 - No
 - Done for now
- “Done for now” provides an end to the conversation that doesn't feel abrupt or forced, keeping with the friendly, helpful tone of the DA.

Ending sentences with prepositions

- It's okay to do this since the DA is conversational.
- i.e. “Is this what you were looking for?” instead of “Is this the information for which you were looking?”

Expansion to mobile

- As the DA expands to experiences beyond the traditional desktop (i.e. smartphone, tablet, etc.) avoid using words like “click” or “tap.” Instead, use “choose” or “select.”

Filler words

- Avoid using unnecessary words in responses that serve no purpose other than taking up space. For example, “The number that you can call is +1 (888) 888-8888.” The word “that” isn't required and just bogs down the response. It should be, “The number you can call is +1 (888) 888-8888.”
- Another example: “Not all of your direct reports have reportees.” Here, “of” is not needed.

Formatting in responses

- Any formatting, such as bolding, bullet points, etc., should be used sparingly. The DA is supposed to be a conversational chatbot, and conversations are unnatural when they include formatting.

Hyphenating

- Always hyphenate when there are two words used to describe something, i.e. “time-keeping tool” or “three-day vacation.”

Limitations

- Acknowledge the DA’s limitations, but never apologize or admit fault. If the DA is unable to complete a task, state that it’s still learning and offer related intents or information, if available. It’s okay to express that it may be frustrating for the user, but ***never*** use, “I’m sorry.” Our DA has done nothing wrong, just lacks certain abilities and therefore shouldn’t need to feel remorseful.

Links

- Use links when needed to shorten responses. So, instead of giving the user step-by-step instructions on how to access a particular page in HR Direct, give them the link that will drop them on said page.

Natural Language Processing

- When writing utterances, include keyword variance, i.e. putting them at the beginning, middle and end of sentences to account for the many ways users may phrase questions.
- Utterances should also take into account the ways other countries structure sentences, i.e. “the green hat” in English is translated to “the hat green” in languages like Spanish and French.
- Include as many synonyms as possible (use a thesaurus!) in utterances and FAQ synonyms.
- With FAQ synonyms, don’t include things that are matched at the topic or subtopic level; only what truly makes the questions within the topics/subtopics different. For example, “What is my retirement checklist?” The word “retirement” will be detected and match it to the retirement topic. What differentiates it from the other retirement intents is the word, “checklist,” meaning that should be the associated FAQ word.

Numbers

- Write out numbers through nine, unless it’s an HR process/policy with the figure in the title.
- Use figures for any value 10 or more, unless the number appears at the beginning of a sentence. But try to avoid beginning sentences with numbers.

- Use the dollar sign or other security role appropriate currency figures (i.e. \$1,000) for any amount of money.
- Always use “more than” and “less than” rather than “over” and “under” in reference to numbers.
- Use “from” and “through” to describe a range of numbers (i.e. from 9 through 17).
- Use an en dash in a range of pages or where space is an issue, such as in tables and UI. For example, *2016–2020* and *pages 112–120*.
- Use “to” in a range of times. For example, *10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.*
- Don't use “from” before a range indicated by an en dash, such as *10–15*.
- Write telephone numbers with the country code since our DA will be available in multiple countries. The format should be: +1 (888) 888-8888.

Pronouns

- Always remain gender neutral (i.e. they/them) when referring to a person.

Punctuation

- Always use proper punctuation.
- Use exclamation points sparingly, if at all.
- Do not use the Oxford comma in lists.
- Quotation marks are always used outside of punctuation.
- When referencing specific links to pages, put them in quotes. For example, “...choose “Personal Information,” type in your new address then “Submit.””
- Use spaces between dashes and content.

Responses and pacing

- Thoughtfully pace the conversation by breaking up messages into separate, readable responses to make it feel more natural.
- No more than two bubbles per response.
- Keep content clear and concise and get to the point as quickly as possible.
- Provide only pertinent information. If users want additional information, they can ask for it.
- Read all responses out loud to ensure they make sense and answer the question or respond to the request at hand.
- Boost the relevance of the bot's responses by making them specific to the context. For example, say, "Here's how you change your address," not "Here's how you do that."

Saving format

- IntentName_v1.01_Date_Initials

Spacing

- Only one space following periods.

Times

- Use periods when writing a.m. and p.m.
- Use “noon” and “midnight.”

Tone

- Informational, yet conversational. Helpful and friendly.