

THE EMAIL YOU ALMOST TRUSTED

The phrase "Trust, but verify" (*Doveryai, no proveryai*) is originally an old Russian proverb.

While it is most famously associated with U.S. President Ronald Reagan, who frequently used it during nuclear disarmament negotiations with Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s, he learned it from American historian and Russian scholar Suzanne Massie, who suggested he use the rhyming proverb to connect with Soviet leadership.

What Are the Red Flags in Emails From People You Trust?

Because these emails can look convincing, even a small inconsistency should make you stop and take a closer look.



A familiar sender doesn't always mean a safe email.

Trusted accounts can be compromised, so unexpected links, attachments, or requests should always be verified with the sender before you act.



Watch for these Warning Signs:

1

Unexpected links or attachments – Did you ask for this file? Were you expecting this link? If not, pause.



2

Unusual urgency – Phrases like "please action this immediately" or "time-sensitive request" are designed to short-circuit your judgment.



3

Slightly off phrasing – If something feels grammatically awkward or unlike how that person normally writes, trust that instinct.



4

Requests for credentials or sensitive information – Legitimate colleagues and vendors rarely need you to log in somewhere or share a password via email.



5

A link that doesn't match the expected domain – Hover before you click. If the URL looks unfamiliar or slightly misspelled, don't proceed.



None of these signals alone confirms an attack, but any one of them warrants a pause.