

Write a short note that acknowledges your colleague's loss and lets them know you are thinking of them. A few sincere words are enough, especially if you do not know the person they lost.

Keep the message simple

Start with an expression of sympathy, then add a sentence that sounds like you. You do not need to explain the loss, offer advice or find a perfect way to make your colleague feel better. A flower card has limited space, and a brief message can be thoughtful.

If you know the name of the person who died, you can use it. If you knew them, a small, true detail can make the note more personal. Do not feel obliged to mention details you learned from someone else or are not sure your colleague wants shared.

Match the tone to your relationship. A close colleague may welcome a warmer message, while a straightforward note is appropriate for someone you know mainly through work. Sign your name so the recipient knows who sent the flowers.

Messages you can use

These examples are short enough for most flower cards. Adjust the wording to fit your relationship and what you know about the loss.

- I'm so sorry for your loss. Thinking of you and your family.
- Sending you my sympathy and thinking of you at this difficult time.
- I'm sorry to hear about your mother's death. Thinking of you and your family.

- I'm so sorry about Sam. I remember how warmly you spoke about him.
- We are thinking of you and sending our condolences. From everyone on the team.

Only include a personal detail if it is true. If the flowers are from several colleagues, make sure the signature reflects who contributed or agreed to the message.

What to leave out

Avoid telling your colleague how to grieve or suggesting that their pain will pass soon. Phrases such as “everything happens for a reason” can feel dismissive, even if you mean to comfort. There is no need to mention the circumstances of the death.

Be careful with offers of help. If you can take a specific task off their hands, say so in a separate message and follow through. The flower card itself can stay focused on sympathy, without asking for a reply.

Questions about sending a note

Is it okay to send flowers from the whole team?

Yes. Use a message agreed on by the group and sign it with the team name or the names of the people sending them.

Should I mention work?

You can, but keep the focus on your colleague. A simple offer to handle a particular task is better sent separately from the card.

What if I do not know what happened?

You do not need the details. “I'm sorry for your loss and thinking of you” is a complete message.

Worth a look: guide to flower paintings