

Email Etiquette

Key Points about E-Mail Message

Fast/Permanent: Once an email message is created, it is permanent. Sometimes this speed creates problems when e-mail messages are created and sent without adequate thought.

Easily Misunderstood: Because e-mail lacks traditional formatting and contextual clues, they can easily be misunderstood. It is important that your message and your intent are both clear to your readers.

Informal: Because e-mail is fast and easy, it is often treated as informal communication where spelling, grammar and punctuation do not matter-but they do. Every e-mail message makes an impression, so spend a few extra minutes to ensure your e-mail message is both complete and correct. Make the impression you want.

Do's for Sending E-Mail Messages

- Review each message before sending it. Ensure your message is clear and easily understood.
- Do always identify yourself in the body of the email by including a brief signature with workplace and phone #.
- Do respond to individual inquiries by sending your response to that individual only. Also if you are having individual conversations, cut and paste that individual's e-mail address to replace the listserve so your conversations are not seen by the whole listserve. It takes time to delete messages that don't need to be read.
- Do remember to tell people the format of any attachments you send.
- Always be polite and courteous.
- Don't reply to an email message when angry or upset, as you may regret it later. Once the message has been sent, you will not be able to recover it.
- Keep messages short and to the point.
- Don't send large attachments without checking with the recipient first.
- Copy (cc) those who need to know the information. Limit the number the number of points covered in each e-mail message. (One point per e-mail is usually best.)
- Use all capitals and use special punctuation for emphasis only.
- Check spelling, especially the spelling of people's names, before sending your e-mail.
- Use a meaningful subject for every e-mail message. The subject should tell what the email is about.
- Keep the Executive committee informed.

Do not's for Sending E-Mail Messages

- Do NOT send e-mail messages to large groups, unless everyone in that group needs it.
- Do NOT combine unrelated items in one message.
- Do NOT be a novelist. Few people read long e-mail documents
- Do NOT expect your reader to decipher your meaning.
- Do NOT use all capitals unless you are SHOUTING, it is considered RUDE, and do NOT over punctuate (using 10 exclamation points won't make your point any more than one).
- Do NOT use copy (cc) or blind copy (bcc) to get people to do things. NEVER cc or bcc large groups unless everyone needs to know the information being sent.
- Do NOT forward company mail out of the office. (Ethically and Morally incorrect and Confidentiality)
- Do NOT be terse or abrupt. It may be taken as hostility. NEVER send a message while you are angry. Always cool down, look at the message again, and then decide if you want to send it.
- Do NOT send cute messages, stories.
- Do NOT expect to resolve problems via e-mails.

- Here is a link to a series of suggestions and more specifics on [email etiquette from Yale University \(http://www.library.yale.edu/training/netiquette/\)](http://www.library.yale.edu/training/netiquette/).