

Professional Email

Etiquette for Today and Tomorrow



Nothing personal, but ...

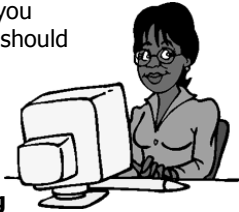
- ◆ Email belongs to the organization – just as computers, phones, and copy machines do.
- ◆ **Nothing** you send to, from, or at work using the workplace email program belongs to you.



Professional Etiquette

◆ **Professional** email, unlike the casual message you might send a friend, should look **professional**:

- polite
- considerate
- responsible
- **forward-looking**



WARNING!

◆ The ease of the technology itself means that we often treat email as something temporary and unimportant.

◆ **But workplace email is not a casual tool:**

- When sent **outside** the workplace, email functions much like the **business letter**.
- When sent **inside** the workplace, it functions like a **memo**.



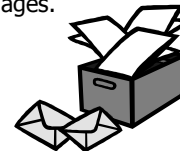
WARNING!

- ◆ Email, like the letter or memo, will be:
- **filed** (intentionally or unintentionally)
 - **referred to** by the recipient, sender, or a third party **sometime in the future**



WARNING!

- ◆ Most important, in legal proceedings email is **discoverable**.
- The most seemingly innocuous message can make you and the organization liable for damages.



WARNING!

- ◆ Most important, in legal proceedings email is **discoverable**.
 - Hitting the delete key **does not** permanently delete messages, sent or received!



Email Liability

- ◆ One law firm settled for a **six-figure** payout when a disgruntled client sued for malpractice and through routine discovery read the email correspondence from one attorney to another.



When are those **scumbags** going to pay us?

Email Liability

- ◆ Many a working relationship has soured when an employee was forwarded a derogatory email he or she was never meant to see.
 - Just ask Bryant Gumbel!



Two Email Fundamentals

- ◆ Email etiquette requires users to **never forward personal messages**.
- ◆ Email reality dictates that any message you send **will be forwarded**.



Like that FBI agent said, **Trust No One.**

Spamming

spam v. 1. to inundate with superfluous garbage; 2. to serve tasteless, bland pink blobs and call it meat; 3. to foist your views on those who have absolutely no interest.

- ◆ Define your **to** and **cc** groups carefully.
- ◆ Don't routinely send an email to **everyone** in the company, department, team, or organization.

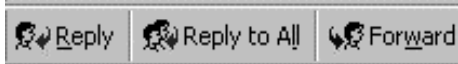
Spamming

spam v. 1. to inundate with superfluous garbage; 2. to serve tasteless, bland pink blobs and call it meat; 3. to foist your views on those who have absolutely no interest.

- ◆ Otherwise, recipients tired of your wasting their time will develop their own routine: **deleting your messages without reading them.**

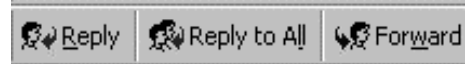


The Reply



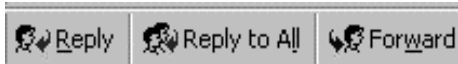
- ◆ Were you directly addressed or just cc'd?
 - A reply may not be required from you.
- ◆ Is a reply requested?
- ◆ Or is the message simply informational?
 - A reply may not be required from you.

The Reply



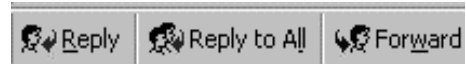
- ◆ **Reply** only to those who need a reply from you.
 - Usually, **reply** only to the individual who sent you the message.

The Reply



- ◆ Use **Reply to All** sparingly.
 - When appropriate, **Reply to All** ensures that other team members or departmental coworkers stay in the loop.
 - But be sure you're not replying to the 712 people the sender emailed!

The Reply



- ◆ If you receive **misdirected** mail, let the sender know what happened.
- ◆ Do **not** forward email without permission from the sender.
 - But of course, **assume that others do!**

The Message

- ◆ Email has two purposes:
 - to **document**
 - to **communicate**



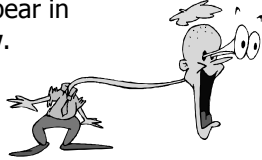
The Message

- ◆ If your purpose is **documentation**, be as clear as possible.
- ◆ Consider your readers:
 - your intended recipient(s)
 - the file
 - users months or years from now
 - the unintentional recipient (due to forwarding or discovery)

The Message

◆ If your purpose is **communication**, craft a message that will get the readers' attention within the few lines of text that appear in **Auto-preview**.

- For security, **disable** the Preview Pane!



The Subject Line

To:	
Cc:	
Subject:	

◆ This may be the only part of your email the recipient sees!

- Be **descriptive**.
- Do not type on the subject line beyond the visible screen.

The Subject Line

To:	
Cc:	
Subject:	

◆ **Avoid** "important" or "urgent."

- Readers usually ignore such overused signals.
- Instead, provide enough description that the reader understands the **urgency** of your message.

The Message

◆ Readers will not work to understand an unclear meaning. **Cut to the chase!**



Cut to the chase!



The recipient fell asleep while trying to find the point in this unproofed, rambling message.

Cut to the chase!



Here, the recipient knows exactly what the sender wants!

Cut to the chase!

- ◆ Use short sentences and short paragraphs.
- ◆ Bullet items to break up long passages.
- ◆ Avoid long passages.
- ◆ **Be professional!**
 - Use standard grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Netiquette Rule No. 28

- ◆ Professional correspondence lags behind acceptable-use trends.
- ◆ So be conservative when it comes to netspeak abbreviations and emoticons.

~~Lets do the 1st b/c Ive got plans on 2d, lol. :-)~~



Netiquette Rule No. 28

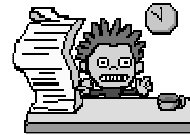
- ◆ Managers and supervisors have compared an excess use of emoticons and netspeak to the tendency of teens to dot their "i's" with circles and daisy petals.
 - And point out that they tend not to take such messages – or their senders – seriously.

~~Lets do the 1st b/c Ive got plans on 2d, lol. :-)~~



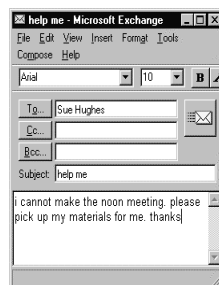
Netiquette Rule No. 1

- ◆ **Avoid** writing in all capital letters.
 - It reads as **ANGRY SHOUTING!**
 - And it's hard to read.



Netiquette Rule No. 78

- ◆ **Avoid** writing in all lowercase letters.
 - Unless you're e.e. cummings or k.d. lang!



The Message

- ◆ Beware of the **tone** of your message.
 - Short, curt responses may unintentionally communicate anger.
 - **Sarcasm** is an expression of anger – and often comes across hotter than it would in person, where the face and voice assist understanding.



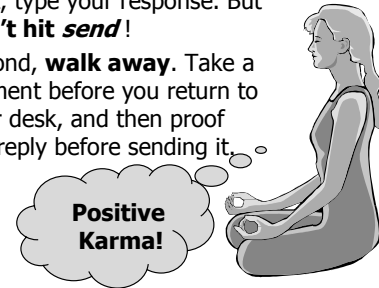
Beware the emotional reply!



- ◆ The marvel and the **danger** of email is its ease of use.
 - Too often we type our reply in anger (or when we're having a really bad day), then hit **send** before we take time to think.

Beware the emotional reply!

- ◆ First, type your response. But **don't hit *send*!**
- ◆ Second, **walk away**. Take a moment before you return to your desk, and then proof the reply before sending it.



Netiquette Rule No. 47

- ◆ Sometimes email gets in the way of good communication.
- ◆ **Know when to go low-tech!**

