Email etiquette

- **Use the subject line to indicate the content of the email.** A subject line such as "Hey" does not provide insight into the content of the email and does not give the recipient a reason to read it.
- **Be concise.** Limit your email to one topic per message. Keep the email short, perhaps what can be read on a typical computer screen without requiring the reader to scroll down. Do not use bureaucratic language.
- **Be careful about using the *Reply All* feature.** When a message has been sent to multiple recipients, your response may be relevant to only the original sender, not to the entire recipient list. Do not clog the other recipients' inboxes with messages they do not need.
- **Include your contact information.** Many email programs allow you to include a signature, something which includes your full name, the name of your company, your phone number, and your mailing address.
- **The tone you think you're using in your writing may not be what the reader perceives.** Choose your words carefully, and avoid typing in all capital letters. Jokes and sarcastic comments may be interpreted differently than intended. Using all capital letters is the email equivalent of shouting. You may choose to use an emoticon (such as a smiley face) but remember that emoticons look unprofessional and do not take away the sting of a hurtful message.
- **Spelling and grammar count.** Your email presents you (and possibly your company) to your reader, so present yourself well through your writing.
- **Do not write in CAPITALS.** WRITING IN ALL CAPITALS SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING. It might get an unwanted response and come across as rude or aggressive.
- **Pick up the phone, or walk down the hall.** Some topics are better expressed in person or verbally than through an email. Anything that's personal, sad, or shocking is better discussed in person than through email.
- **Email is not private.** Whatever you write in an email can be forwarded to others. According to Laura Stack, anything sent over email at work is considered company property and "can be retrieved, examined, and used in a court of law."
- **Wait.** It's possible that you misunderstood an email you received, and your gut reaction might be to fire back something snappy. Remember that "the pushing of the **Send** button lasts a moment; its effects can last a lifetime."
- **Fill in the recipient box last.** Few things are as embarrassing as sending a message to an unintended recipient or hitting the Send button before you're finished writing.
- Never use BCC, never break the loop (CC, use reply all if you find addresses in CC)
- Do not propagate emails to which you are unintended recipient.

Footer and disclaimer

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