

Email Etiquette

Good Email Etiquette

- **Do** try to think about the message **content** before you send it out.
 - **Do** make sure that the content is **relevant** to the recipients. Nobody likes to receive junk email.
 - **Do** be **polite**. Terseness can be misinterpreted.
 - **Do trim** any quoted message down as much as possible.
 - **Do** try to use humour and irony **sparingly**. You can use smileys such as :) or :(to indicate facial expressions, but make sure that the recipient understands what they mean.
 - **Do** ensure that you have a **relevant "Subject"** line.
 - **Do** try to **quote** from the original message where relevant. You can break the quoted message down into paragraphs and comment on them individually to make it clearer.
 - **Do** be **patient**, especially with inexperienced email users. Give people the benefit of the doubt - just because you are familiar with email etiquette, it doesn't mean that they are.
 - **Do** include a brief **signature** on your email messages to help the recipient understand who it is from, especially if you are dealing with someone you do not know very well.
 - **Do** be **careful** when replying to mailing list messages, or to messages sent to many recipients. Are you sure you want to reply to the whole list?
 - **Do** remember to **delete** anything that isn't needed or is trivial.
 - **Do** remember to tell people the format of any **attachments** you send if they're anything other than basic Microsoft Office file types.
 - **Do** tell your correspondent if you **forward** a message to somebody else to deal with, so they know who to expect a reply from.
 - **Do** use **emphasis** where its useful to do so. If your email system doesn't allow **bold** or *italics* then a common convention is to use a *star* either side of the word you want to stress.
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Bad Email Etiquette

- **Don't** reply to an email message when **angry**, as you may regret it later. Once the message has been sent, you will not be able to recover it.
- **Don't** keep mail on your **server** longer than necessary, especially large attachments.
- **Don't** copy out an **entire, long** message just to add a line or two of text such as "I agree".
- **Don't** type in **CAPITALS** as this is considered to be **SHOUTING**. This is one of the rudest things you can do.
- **Don't** over-use punctuation such as **exclamation marks** ("!") as these are meant to be for emphasis. In particular avoid more than one exclamation mark ("!!!"), especially if your email is quite formal. Also, over-use of the full-stop (e.g. "....") can make a message difficult to read.
- **Don't** send **irrelevant** messages, **especially** to mailing lists or newsgroups.
- **Don't** send large **attachments** without checking with the recipient first.
- **Don't** send **excessive multiple postings** to people who have no interest. This is known as "spamming" and is considered to be ignorant, and may lead to serious trouble with your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or IT department.
- **Don't** send **chain letters** or "make money fast" messages. There are several **hoaxes** about to do with viruses - never pass these on without checking with your IT department first.
- **Don't** criticize people's **spelling**, it is considered petty. Many people have no way of running a spell check on their messages and will make typos. Not all nationalities spell words in the same way.
- **Don't** conduct **arguments** in public, for example on a mailing list.
- **Don't** "flame" people by sending them **abusive** email messages.
- **Don't** make **personal remarks** about third parties. Email messages can come back to haunt you.
- **Don't** send **unsuitable** email or attachments, especially anything of a sexual nature as they may well be found by a third party later.
- **Don't** use an **over-elaborate** signature on your email message. Never, ever, use scanned images in a signature as these tend to be very large.
- **Don't** mark things as **urgent** if they aren't, because then when you really do have an urgent message it may not be treated in the way it deserves.
- **Don't** post your email address on web sites and other public parts of the Internet unless you want to be deluged with **spam**.