Proper Email Etiquette

September 12, 2013/GovMail Team
Email Communication
Email Communication

• Parts of an e-mail
  – Header
    • From
    • To
    • Date
    • Subject
Email Communication

• From
  – This lists the sender's e-mail address
  – The header may also list the actual name of the sender when the sender has recorded this information with the e-mail service
• From [Anatomy of email]
  – Email recipients put more weight on who the email is from than any other item when choosing
    • Which e-mails to open
    • Which to delete
    • Which to complain about

Chris Baggot, Exact Target
Email Communication

• **To**
  – This indicates to whom the message is being sent
  – Original messages may be sent to more than one recipient
Email Communication

• Date (and often time)
  – This refers to when the message was sent
  – Time stamps are often issued by the e-mail server
Email Communication

• Subject
  – This contains the topic of the message
  – When no subject is included, some e-mail services deliver the message to junk mail
    • Junk mail – A folder for messages from senders not found in the receiver's address book
Email Communication

• Other E-mail Options
  – Forward
  – Reply
  – CC
  – BCC
  – Attachments
  – Signature
Email Communication

- **Forward**
  - A feature that allows the sender to pass the message to another recipient, including attachments
Email Communication

- **Reply**
  - A feature that allows the recipient to respond to a message from the sender
  - Many e-mail services allow the recipient to change the original message when replying
Email Communication

• CC
  – A feature for sending an original message to the prime recipient and to other interested parties
  – When using CC, all recipients see who is receiving the message
  – CC originally meant carbon copy and has transitioned into “courtesy copy”
Email Communication

• BCC
  – A feature similar to CC except that in BCC or blind courtesy copy, recipients are invisible to the other recipients
Email Communication

• Tip: Use BCC wisely

   To: You mad mustachio purple-hued maltworm

   – To keep addresses private, put your own address in the To: line and paste your mailing list in the CC: line
   – BCCs within an organization can create distrust
Email Communication

- Attachments
  - Other files sent with the message

Never open an attachment from someone you do not know.
Email Communication

• Signature
  – A “sign-off” feature that allows the sender to create additional information for the receiver
  – Signatures may be saved and pasted to the end of any e-mail
  – Signatures often list the sender's business name, address, telephone number, etc.
Email Communication

• Tips to avoid being marked spam
  – Minimize use of large fonts, colored fonts and ALL CAPS, including signature file
  – Use specific, descriptive subject
    • Do not begin the subject with:
      » Urgent assistance or very urgent
      » Confidential, reply, response, help, business, attention
Email Communication

• Body of E-mail
  – The area where the message is entered
Email Communication

• Body [Anatomy of an email]
  – Before you type anything into a new message, answer these two questions:
    1. Why am I writing this?
    2. What exactly do I want the result of this message to be?
Email Communication

- Body [Anatomy of an email]
  - Before you hit Send, review and delete
    - negative comments about management
    - criticisms of staff or performance issues
    - bonuses or salary issues
    - product or liability issues
    - gossip
    - humor or other ambiguities
Body [Anatomy of an email]
- Write so emails are easy to read
  - Make paragraphs 7-8 lines
  - Insert a blank line between paragraphs
  - Use headlines, bullets, and numbers
  - AVOID ALL CAPS; THAT'S SHOUTING
  - If a message is longer than 3 screens, send an attachment
• Etiquette
  – Proper conduct or manners for producing an e-mail message is called netiquette
  • Etiquette for the Internet

www.danielbowen.com
Email Communication

- Netiquette
  - Be sure to include a subject line
    - Some e-mail services sort incoming messages by subject for the recipient
  - Consider using a Bcc to keep e-mail addresses private or to ensure that the “To:” area of the message remains a small size (recipients need not scroll past several listings to arrive at the body of the message)
Email Communication

• Netiquette
  – Write clear and concise messages
  – Write short sentences
  – Avoid double spacing your messages as e-mail requires recipients to scroll through messages without the benefit of highlighting or marking the message as one might on a printout.
Email Communication

• Netiquette
  – Avoid the use of all capital letters
    • Capitalizing all letters is considered “shouting” or flaming
    • Avoid using red color font; the recipient may consider this hostile
Email Communication

• Netiquette
  – When replying to a message, consider deleting part of the original message to save space on the screen
    • Retain the part of the sender's message to which you are responding
  – Avoid using the Reply To All function as this sends your response to all recipients of the e-mail
    • Ask yourself: “Does everyone need to know this information?”
Email Communication

• Netiquette
  – E-mail is an official written document
    • Do not write something that you would not say to the recipient in person
    • Consider e-mail a formal message, and keep it professional
  – Avoid acronyms (abbreviations using the beginning letters of words) because not everyone will know their meaning
    • (e.g. BFF = best friends forever and HAGW = have a good weekend)
Email Communication

• **Netiquette**
  – Use proper grammar
    • Conduct a spell check of your messages
  – Use simple fonts
    • Computers may have a limited number of fonts available for e-mail use
    • Using a small or compact font keeps the message in a more confined area
Email Communication

• Netiquette
  – Be specific
    • State terms and conditions clearly to avoid mis-communication, especially when providing information about times, places, or people
    • Being clear and concise in the original message prevents future e-mail request for directions, times, phone numbers, contact person, etc.
    • Most recipients ask, “Why do I need this e-mail?” or “What is expected of me?”
Email Communication

• Tip: Leave address blank

- If you're furious and must answer an email right away, leave the address line blank
- If you hit **Send** before you've had a chance to cool down, the email won't go through
Email Communication

- Email etiquette is evolving
  - E-mail has quickly became a communication standard and the Internet's most popular application
    - Both the number of e-mail users and the usage rates are continuing to grow exponentially

Mischelle Davis, V.P. Of marketing communications at NewWorldIQ
Where are we now?

Right now online writing is pretty much in its Wild West stage, a free-for-all with everybody shooting from the hip and no sheriff in sight.

O’Conner & Kellerman (2002)
What makes email different?

"On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog."
Email Communication

• General Email Etiquette Rules
  – ALL CAPS IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING
  – So is over punctuating !!!!!!!!
  – Not using capitalization or punctuation makes e-mail hard to read
  – Text messaging abbreviations r confusing 2 ur co-workers
  – Avoid emoticons
  – Explain acronyms
Email Communication

• General Email Etiquette Rules
  – Check spelling and grammar before sending
  – Keep slang at a minimum
Email Communication

• More Email Etiquette Tips
  1. Beware of hidden readers
  2. Write as if Mom or the boss is going read it
  3. Remain gender neutral
  4. Keep harassment and discrimination policies in mind
  5. Don't use email to let off steam
  6. Control the urge to “flame”
  7. Respect other people's time
More Email Etiquette Tips

8. Never reply to spam
9. Do not email the world
10. Copy with care; reply to all with care
11. Don't oversell your message
12. Ask permission before forwarding
13. Be cautious in sending attachments
14. Always use a salutation and signature
Email Communication

• More Email Etiquette Tips
  15. Beware of the exclamation point
  16. Resist the urge to capitalize
     – Also applies to all lower case letters
  17. Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation
  18. Think before requesting a receipt
  19. Keep editorial comments to yourself
  20. Treat others as you would have them treat you
• More Email Etiquette Tips
  21. Consider e-mail's limitations
  22. Always use a descriptive subject line
Email Communication

• References
  – GovMail Policy: Annex A
  – word-crafter.net/EmailEtiquette.ppt
  – Melinda Bradbury, “Email Etiquette and Appropriate Use”, Ag Information Technology (AgIT) Call Center [http://www.docstoc.com]
  – https://kbase.asti.dost.gov.ph from Paul Serrano presentation
Thank you