

Top 10 Email Etiquette Tips



With the sheer volume of email messages people receive, you must ask yourself, “Am I communicating effectively?” Investing extra time while authoring an email can pay big dividends later by helping your reader to clearly understand your message.

1. **Use a professional email address.** Ex: thompson@gmail.com, packpride@yahoo.com, or zoograd2006@msn.com.
2. **Always include a brief, descriptive subject line.** It is important to accurately describe what the reader will find inside. Considering the level of spam and anti-spam software in place today, you cannot afford to risk your message not being delivered because of a generic subject line such as, “What do you think?”
3. **Compose clear and concise messages.** Email communication works best if you clearly outline the points you are making in an easy-to-understand format.
4. **Use spell check and reread your entire message before sending.** Often times, you will notice words which have been left out, incorrect grammar, and worst of all – words which our spilled write butt knot used in the write weigh.
5. **Copy back salient points when replying to an earlier message.** Most people receive hundreds of emails every week, so your recipient may not remember your earlier exchange.
6. **Always double-check the recipient line before sending any email.** Replying to a listserv e-mail means it will be viewed by many other unintended parties.
7. **Never put anything in writing that is considered to be confidential or that might introduce potential liability.** If your situation dictates you email such information, try to word your message in as factual and balanced a way as possible.
8. **Practice the 24-hour rule when you are upset.** It is never a good idea to send an email when you are angry. You will be glad you gave yourself time to cool off.
9. **Avoid shortcuts and abbreviations.** Today, communicating via the Internet means you practically need a CIA decoder chart to understand the abbreviations and shortcuts that are popular. Even common shortcuts like LOL (laughing out loud), 2 (to), and u r (you are) are simply too casual for professional communication.
10. **Do not forward viral messages.** Everyday, intelligent people who would never consider themselves gullible forward hoax messages about:
 - a. Easy steps for getting some of Bill Gates/Disney/AOL’s money.
 - b. How to delete viruses from your pc (which are actually legitimate files your system needs).
 - c. A widow from Zimbabwe begging you to look after her \$18,000,000 if you’ll just give her your bank account number.

The list goes on. If you are the recipient of an email message you think is relevant to your friends and family, run it by this test: Copy and paste a few key words from the message into Google.com™ along with the word “hoax”. If the returns come back showing articles claiming the message is a fake, hit the delete key.

Source: Tips For More Effective Email Communication, David Friedman (2005)