

EMAIL ETIQUETTE IN THE WORKPLACE

In today's rapidly changing workplace, overlooking the value of the written word is easy to do. Writing skills are as important in electronic form as in paper communication. It is important to take an extra moment to review and organize your thoughts before keying them onto the screen and pressing the "send" button. Here are some email tips and a review of email diplomacy:

- To help recipients prioritize email, make the subject line specific.
- Email is a form of professional communication and it is also the property of the employer. Never write anything that would make you uncomfortable if it were published.
- Don't send an email if you are angry or emotional. Cool off, and then review your response. You may find you want to send a more tactful message.
- Ask the writer's permission before forwarding their email directed to you, to others. Sometimes a great deal is lost without the context of that original conversation, and misunderstandings by third parties can result.
- Be careful about identifying some email as "urgent". Use this warning sparingly, or you may find yourself in the same predicament as the boy who cried wolf too often.
- Be discriminating when sending lengthy attachments. They take time to download, as well as time to read.
- When replying to a question, copy only the question in your email, then provide your response. Don't send a message that only reads, "Yes." It's too blunt and the message could confuse the reader.
- If you have not had correspondence with someone, introduce yourself with your first email by identifying your company, area of interest, background, etc.
- Add contact information at the bottom of your email messages in each one that you send. Include your name, title, email address, company, phone and fax numbers, and web site address.
- **DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPS.** This can be perceived as "shouting" via email.
- If you aren't able to check your email for a period of time, be sure to leave an outgoing message indicating the date when you will be reading and responding to your messages.

Remember, email is still a written medium, and it is important to review outgoing communication for spelling errors, incomplete sentences, or grammatical errors.