

E-Mail Communication:

E-Mail communication has become one of the most popular ways for people to quickly and efficiently communicate, however there are rules of etiquette that can serve to help improve e-mail communication. Consider a few of these suggestions:

1. **Keep it to one screen or less.** When readers see words running off the bottom of the screen, they tend to start scanning rather than reading potentially missing the key elements of your message. Edit your e-mail and cut out extra words.
2. **Write in bullet points.** Online usability tests have shown that people find it easier to read and retain information if it is broken into bulleted points rather than long, dense paragraphs.
3. **Give the "Meat" of the message in the subject line.** The subject line is the headline for your e-mail. It needs to grab people and tell them exactly what the e-mail is about.
4. **Professionalism above reproach.** The electronic nature of e-mail means it can be forwarded, printed, copied, faxed, restored at a later date, etc. Refrain from gossip, speculation, off-color jokes, sarcasm and attacks.
5. **Spell-check your e-mails.** The additional time is worth the credibility you will gain.
6. **Encourage questions via e-mail.** Encourage a two-way use of e-mail by letting others know it is okay to ask questions and whom those questions should be directed to.
7. **Stay out of the forwarding business.** Do your part by avoiding adding to inbox clutter.
8. **Know your mailing lists and addresses.** Be sure you are not e-mailing to the wrong individuals. Review before sending.
9. **Give it time; proofread an e-mail before sending it.** E-mail is unique in that it is one-way, textual in nature, and not a true conversation, but rather a series of one-way comments. With no facial expressions involved, there is a higher opportunity for conflict and misunderstanding than with a face to face or telephone conversation. For sensitive issues it is best to speak face-to-face or via a phone call.