

What is Netiquette?

"Netiquette" is network etiquette, what you should and should not do when you are online. Netiquette covers both common courtesy online and the informal "rules of the road" of cyberspace.

Some Netiquette Email Tips

Treat Others the Way You Would Want to be Treated

The person you are emailing is a human being just like you. Whatever you say, make sure it is what you would say face to face.

Use Descriptive Message Subjects

The Subject field should be just that. Make it clear and descriptive so the recipient will know exactly what the message is about.

Writing your Message

Make your message clear, concise and as brief as possible. Email messages are not substitutes for long documents, letters or reports. Make them attachments to your email.

Read and Re-read your Message Before You Send It

Give the message a short rest and then read it over to make sure that it is clear and you said what you want to say. Once you hit the "Send" button you most likely will not be able to retrieve it. If you don't need an electronic paper trail, ask yourself if a phone call may be the better way to relay your message.

Reply Properly

When replying to a message copy the portion of the email to which you are responding and put it in the reply message. Then type your response below the copied portion. You will let the person know that you are replying to that particular portion of his/her email.

You are not expected to send a reply back just to say "Thank You". Also, there is no need to reply with "OK" as your message. It just adds more emails to another's mailbox.

Forwarding Messages

When forwarding a message make sure that you delete the email addresses of persons who previously received the email. You may want to copy and paste the original message into a new message if there is a trail of people who have received the email you are forwarding. If the persons who have previously received the email is integral to the message, do not delete their email addresses.

Plain Text, HTML or Rich Text Format

When in doubt, use plain text. In MS Outlook, go to Tools, Options, Mail Format and choose plain text. Some colleagues outside of the university may have email programs that are not capable of reading HTML or Rich Text Format. Remember the message is what is important, not how you format it.

Using All Caps in your Email Messages

Use All Caps sparingly. It is similar to shouting.

Ask Before You Send Large File Attachments

Some email programs are not capable of sending or receiving large attachments. Call before you attach a large file. Also, saving emails with attachments uses up much needed storage space and you may exceed your limit. Delete emails with file attachments after you save the attachment to your network drive, hard disk or another storage option.

Email Recipients (To, Cc, Bcc)

When you use Cc (Carbon copy) and Bcc (Blind carbon copy) indicate in the body of the message to whom you are sending the email, e.g. Stan, so those who are copied will know that they are getting it for informational purposes only. Remember that anyone can forward your email. Nothing in an email is confidential no matter how much you tell the recipient(s) it is.

Sending Email to multiple Recipients (Using the Bcc field)

When sending email to multiple recipients, use the Bcc field. When you use this field to enter email addresses each one gets an individual email without seeing all the other recipients' email addresses. There will be no long list of addresses before the email message.

Additional Information

Here are some useful URLs on Netiquette

The Information Booth - <http://www.kassj.com/netiquette/netiquette.html>
Email Etiquette - <http://www.iwillfollow.com/email.htm>
Email Netiquette - <http://www.georgedillon.com/web/netiquette.shtml>