

Email Etiquette Tip Sheet

Email has changed the pace and the way we communicate. It's lightning fast, easy and efficient. Here's how to keep it that way.  
  
**Don't Over Communicate**  
Prevent duplication of efforts and limit the number of emails per event or announcement.   
  
**Know when NOT to "Reply to all"**  
Think twice when replying to all. Help cut down on the volume of emails we all receive about things that don't concern us or don't require any action. ***Tip:***As a sender, you can prevent your recipients from "replying to all" by entering the email addresses into the BCC field.   
  
**Use your college signature block**  
This identifies you as an employee of the college in a consistent and professional way. It also makes it much easier for the receiver to identify and contact you.   
  
**Proofread**The convenience of email has allowed us to become sloppy but correct spelling and punctuation still matter. Read and re-read before sending.  
  
**Check your recipients**  
Make sure you've selected the correct names and choose your recipients wisely.   
  
**Limit humor and sarcasm**  
It can easily get lost in translation without the right tone or facial expression. Just leave it out unless you know the person very well.  
  
**Know when to call**When topics become complicated, avoid misunderstandings. At some point it's best to pick up the phone and talk it through.  
 **Watch your tone**Communicating via email makes it easy to feel separated from the other person's feelings and emotions. Be careful with your tone and content. Avoid emailing when you are frustrated or angry.  
  
**Nothing is confidential**A word of caution –– If it's in writing, it lasts forever.  And, emails can be easily forwarded. Don't write anything that would offend someone or get you in hot water.  
 

*Important Note: All state employee emails are subject to inspection by the public via the*[*Colorado Open Records Act*](https://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/info_center/laws/Title24/Title24Article72Part2.html)*, or CORA.*

**Keep it short**  
Write concisely and don't be afraid to use bullet points. Don't overwhelm your reader. If you cannot get to your point in the first couple sentences then consider a conversation or meeting. Also, keep each email to single subject.  
  
**Make your emails accessible**  
If you're sending an image with text on it, make sure all of the text is also in the body of the email or as the embedded alternative text.  
  
**Respond in a timely manner**Come to a consensus with your team on what an appropriate time frame is and stick to that. For most, 24-48 hours is acceptable.  
  
**Choose your subject line wisely**  
One of the great mysteries is how to get someone to open an email and read it. The bottom line is to use a clear, direct and short subject line.  
  
1. State the benefit the reader will gain by opening the email. "Free pancakes during finals."   
  
2. Pique the interest or curiosity of the recipients. "Good news and bad news"  
  
3. Create a sense of urgency BUT only if it is truly urgent. "Urgent notice about road closures"  
  
4. Bring in the human element. "Volunteers needed to help hungry students"  
  
5. Use words to indicate you are providing important news. "Important Benefits Changes"  
  
6. Consider adopting a set of abbreviations and phases to help the reader prioritize the message just by reading the subject line. Examples: FYI (For Your Information), ACT (Action required), URGENT, Y/N Question, PYR (Per your request), Reply by EOD (End of Day)

7. Help the reader prioritize by categorizing the subject line by topic. Examples: Benefits Update, Message from President, Student Event, Construction Update

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