



# Email Netiquette

## Desired Outcomes From Using This Guide:

Reduce email processing time  
Strengthen customer service  
Send fewer emails

Improve control over quantity and quality of email received  
Consistency: Increase sharing of best practices  
Improve quality of email sent

STEP 1	<p><b>Ask: Is email the right medium for this message?</b></p> <p><b>Review Checklist Before Sending Email</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Why am I writing this email?</li><li>✓ Who is my audience and what is their point of view?</li><li>✓ What is the main point?</li><li>✓ What kind of information should I include?</li><li>✓ What is the best way to organize the information?</li></ul> <p><b>Three Types of Business Email:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing information – <i>Susan Smith will be in the office at 10:00 AM</i></li><li>• Requesting information – <i>"Where did you put Susan's file?"</i></li><li>• Requesting action – <i>"Will you call Susan's assistant to confirm our meeting on Monday?"</i></li></ul> <p><b>Delivering Bad News: Don't do it in Email!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instead, pick up the phone and have a conversation, or</li><li>• Schedule a meeting to discuss in person</li></ul>			
STEP 2	<p><b>Composing a Good Email Message</b></p> <p><b>To:</b> Person(s) who are to act on your message</p> <p><b>cc:</b> Means 'courtesy copy'. Person(s) who are included in the 'cc' line are being sent the message for their information only – no action is required</p> <p><b>Complete Signature Lines:</b> Include name, work title, phone, fax, office location and mailing information in your signature lines so people know at a glance where and how to contact you</p> <p><b>Caution:</b> Use of personal quotes or graphics may be offensive to some, use sparingly or not at all</p> <p><b>Subject Line:</b></p> <p>Should be descriptive and concise, revealing the high points or summarizing the message:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Lunch rescheduled to Monday @ 1pm</i></li><li>• <i>Reminder: Friday is casual day</i></li><li>• <i>Thanks for the new schedule; it looks great!</i></li></ul> <p>Note urgency or timeliness of response needed</p> <p>When replying or forwarding, ensure that the subject still accurately reflects the content of your message. If not, change it.</p> <p>Clearly articulate purpose or action request (if appropriate). Examples:</p> <table style="width: 100%;"><tr><td style="text-align: center;">For Action Urgent An Update</td><td style="text-align: center;">For Approval A Request HELP</td><td style="text-align: center;">For Comment Confidential FYI</td></tr></table>	For Action Urgent An Update	For Approval A Request HELP	For Comment Confidential FYI
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STEP 2 (continued)	<p><b>Succinct Subject Lines: (EOM)</b></p> <p>When possible, send a message that is only a subject line. If your subject line is the whole message, add EOM (end of message) at the end--e.g. <i>Cake in conference room at 10:30 today (EOM)</i>.</p> <p><b>Body of Message:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict yourself to a single topic per email message</li> <li>• <b>Be succinct:</b> Summarize topic at front of email</li> <li>• Put any request near top of message and clearly state when you will need it</li> <li>• Keep sentences short and their structure simple</li> <li>• Subheadings (if necessary)</li> <li>• Number your questions/requests</li> <li>• When sending to multiple people, identify what each person needs to respond to</li> <li>• DON'T USE CAPITAL LETTERS: This equates to shouting in email</li> </ul> <p><b>Responding to Email</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce "reply all." Limit replies to only those who need a response</li> <li>• Reduce "thank you" only replies</li> <li>• Reply as soon as possible; no more than 24 hour response</li> <li>• Adjust subject line if needed to match message if the topic has shifted from the original email</li> <li>• Use departmental Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) responses when appropriate.</li> <li>• When email is not working or you see multiple emails on the same topic with no resolution, pick up the phone or ask for a meeting</li> </ul>
STEP 3	<p><b>Copying Others / Forwarding Messages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "cc" means courtesy copy, or FYI only; no action required</li> <li>• "bcc" should be used sparingly if at all. Keep communications transparent.</li> <li>• Be cautious about adding others to a forwarded email if originator did not include them</li> <li>• Ask permission of sender before forwarding a message to another individual or group</li> <li>• Generally speaking, do not change wording of original message when forwarding email</li> </ul>
STEP 4	<p><b>Before you Send</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check tone</li> <li>• Use spell-check before you send a message</li> <li>• Make sure subject line matches content of your message</li> <li>• Re-read your message before sending</li> </ul>
STEP 5	<p><b>Away From UW?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently use vacation or away messages for one or more days away</li> <li>• Make arrangements for your email to be redirected / forwarded to another email account, or use the Web Mail Auto reply facility to notify senders when you will be away</li> <li>• When you return, disable the auto reply via Web Mail so that senders no longer receive your "away" message or set it up to automatically disable on a date you choose when you set up your vacation message</li> </ul>