

The dos and don'ts of e-mail etiquette

- 1 In our previous videos we discussed how to determine when e-mail is the right tool, and the mechanics of an e-mail.
- 2 In this segment we will cover the dos and don'ts of e-mail etiquette.
- 3 [Text on screen] The proper greeting.
- 4 When sending an e-mail, using the proper greeting to address your recipient is important.
- 5 If an e-mail is formal or you are communicating with someone you don't know for the first time, use *Dear* and *Mr.*, *Ms.*, or *Mrs.* along with their last name.
- 6 Formal e-mails, like formal letters, start with the recipient's name followed by a colon, not a comma.
- 7 Commas, as in *Dear Mr. Wiley*, indicate an informal relationship typical of a friendly letter.
- 8 You can be less formal after you have received your response from the person and made one or more e-mail exchanges.
- 9 How the person signs this e-mail will give you an indication of whether you should keep it formal or can take it to a more casual tone.
- 10 Using *Hello* is professional and friendly and is considered appropriate when you are addressing someone you know or have been associated with for a while.
- 11 *Hi* is casual and conversational and more appropriate for people you have regular e-mail communications with.
- 12 Avoid using *Hey*. It is slang and should not be used in a professional setting under any circumstances.
- 13 [Text on screen] E-mail content.
- 14 Keeping the content of your e-mail accurate and concise is important in getting your message read and understood.
- 15 A few key tips include:
- 16 Keep your formatting simple.
- 17 Always come across friendly, respectful and approachable.
- 18 Be sure your message is not offensive.
- 19 Do not be curt or demanding.
- 20 Remember: the tone of your e-mail should always be positive, as mentioned in our first video.
- 21 Always put your important information at the top.
- 22 Keep your message brief and to the point, focusing on one topic.
- 23 If you have several items to discuss, use bullets or consider sending multiple e-mails with an appropriate subject line.
- 24 This will make it easier to find e-mails later if there is a need to refer back to information you are sending.
- 25 Remind people who you are if you only met briefly or if it has been a while.
- 26 On the flipside, if you met with someone as recently as an hour ago, it is important to remind them in the e-mail why you are writing.
- 27 In this multitasking world of ours it is easy for even the sharpest minds to forget what's going on.
- 28 [Text on screen] Use your work e-mail address for business only!
- 29 Be sure your e-mail focuses on business.
- 30 E-mail should not be used for gossip, and do not use your personal e-mail account for business messages.
- 31 [Text on screen] Helpful tips.
- 32 Don't underline words or information as it can be mistaken for a hyperlink.
- 33 If you receive a message you think is a hoax, use Snopes.com, an internet resource for misinformation, urban legends, or myths before you forward the information.
- 34 When sending an e-mail that does not require a response, it is appropriate to include *No reply necessary* in the content of the e-mail or the subject line.
- 35 [Text on screen] Replying to e-mails.
- 36 When replying to an e-mail, set the appropriate tone.
- 37 It is a good idea to thank the sender for their message.
- 38 This shows a sense of courtesy and creates a positive beginning to your message, which is especially helpful if your response may be perceived negatively.
- 39 When replying to an e-mail, it is important to keep the original message.
- 40 If the original e-mail has a list of questions, it can be frustrating to receive multiple answers back without the original content appended.
- 41 When you're responding to multiple questions, it is helpful to write your response under each question in a different colour.
- 42 This will make it easier for the recipient to read, and they will appreciate the effort you made.
- 43 [Text on screen] Cleaning up your content.

- 44 Occasionally, you might receive a dirty e-mail.
- 45 No, not that kind!
- 46 We are talking about those funny little arrows called *carets*.
- 47 Be sure to remove all carets when you are responding.
- 48 Another thing that can dirty up multiple threads are the e-mail addresses of numerous people when a message is sent to a group.
- 49 Be sure to erase them so the content of each message is more prominent.
- 50 [Text on screen] Sending a good response.
- 51 One final thing to consider about content are inane responses.
- 52 Have you ever put a lot of thought and effort into an e-mail, only to receive the response, "Okay" or "Sure"?
- 53 Take the time to sufficiently acknowledge the sender's questions or issues.
- 54 If you don't have time to provide a detailed response immediately, then an appropriate reply would be:
- 55 "Thanks for the information.
- 56 I'm swamped today.
- 57 Let's get together and discuss in more detail tomorrow."
- 58 [Text on screen] Closing your e-mail properly.
- 59 When closing your e-mail, end in a friendly, positive way using terms like *Best wishes*, *Have a great day!*, or *Thanks*.
- 60 They are considered casual and more appropriate for the people you have regular contact with.
- 61 If your message is more formal, use *Sincerely*, *Kind* or *Best regards*, *Thank you*, or *Many thanks*, followed with your branded signature.
- 62 [Text on screen] Use of confirmation receipts.
- 63 Other areas of e-mail etiquette to consider include the use of the confirmation or read-receipt tool.
- 64 This tool should only be used with important e-mails, not every one you send.
- 65 [Text on screen] Out of office etiquette.
- 66 If you will be out of the office for more than twenty-four hours and have limited or no access to e-mail, consider using the out-of-office assistant, found under the *Tools* tab of Outlook.
- 67 Leave a phone number or name of a colleague the person can contact in case of an emergency.
- 68 [Text on screen] Use of the auto-responder tool.

- 69 Do not use auto-responder to acknowledge receipt of an e-mail, such as "Thank you for your e-mail" or "I will respond as soon as possible."
- 70 This tool will further clutter the sender's inbox.
- 71 If you are sending an e-mail to announce a meeting and providing more information than you would include in a calendar invite, be sure to include all details, such as date, time, and location.
- 72 When cancelling a meeting last minute, call instead of e-mailing, as the person may miss your notice.
- 73 [Text on screen] Using previous messages to contact a specific group.
- 74 Sometimes we will use an old message to contact a specific group of people on a different topic.
- 75 When doing so, be sure to erase the old message and create a new subject line before writing the new message and sending.
- 76 [Text on screen] E-mail response time.
- 77 Response time to e-mail is critical, and failure to respond impacts everyone.
- 78 In general, you should reply as quickly as possible, and no longer than twenty-four to forty-eight hours after receiving the message.
- 79 If you are unable to answer due to the need for information sourcing, acknowledge the e-mail with a time frame to respond it.
- 80 For example: "Thank you for your message.
- 81 I am researching the information you requested and will send it to you no later than 5 pm tomorrow."
- 82 If you need an immediate response to a question or request for information, consider calling the person.
- 83 Do not call the recipient shortly after you send the e-mail, as it can be annoying.
- 84 If the e-mail is urgent, mention it in the message.
- 85 If you do not have a response after twenty-four to forty-eight hours and you're unsure if the e-mail was received, it is then appropriate to call.
- 86 E-mail, an important component of your daily communications, is a reflection of your professionalism and will leave a lasting impression.
- 87 Follow these guidelines to build your message as you build lasting relationships.