Tips for Youth
Using Email to Effectively Communicate

As you move from school to adult life, the way you communicate with others will become very important. This is especially true in the workplace. Today, email is the way most businesses and agencies communicate with employees, customers, and other businesses. Below you will find some tips for communicating with others through email.

Tip #1: Think About Whether Sending an Email is Appropriate

People receive many emails every day. Before using an email, ask yourself if it would it be easier to talk with someone over the phone to get a question answered? Will multiple exchanges be needed to get an answer? If so, an email might not be the best method. A personal conversation might be the better way to get the answer or communicate your concerns. If the content of the email is something you would not say in person, it is probably not something you should email either. Also, remember that emails are not private and can be sent on to others.

Tip #2: Subject Lines on Emails

Clearly state what your email is about on the subject line. Keep the subject line short and to the point. Your subject line should state the topic of the email. For example, "Meeting" would not provide enough information for the reader to know what you are emailing about. However, using "Friday Meeting on Cleaning Project" would let the person know more about what you are emailing about.

Tip #3: Using the To, Cc, and Bcc Lines on Emails

It can be confusing to know how to use these lines. As a rule, the **To** field is for the person you are emailing and want a response from. The **Cc** (carbon copy) field is for the people you want to see the email, but may not need to reply to you. The person in the To field can see the others' email addresses typed on that line. The **Bcc** (blind carbon copy) field is a hidden field for email addresses that you do not want the people in the **To** and **Cc** fields to see. You might use the **Bcc** field to let your boss be aware of an email you are sending. You might use it if you are emailing a large group of people who do

not know each other. Be sure to check all email addresses before you send.

Tip #4: Email length

Most people only read the first few lines of an email. State the important information in the first few lines of the email. You want the information to catch the attention of the reader. Be as short as possible in your email. Use bullet points if you need to give multiple ideas or separate information. Be sure to provide enough information in the email so that the reader understands why you emailed them.

Tip #5: The Body of the Email

Use a courteous greeting and closing. Address the person appropriately and spell his/her name correctly. Use spell check and grammar check. Always end your emails with "Thank You," "Sincerely", or another polite ending. Use the right tone in your email. Sometimes words can be misunderstood in email. Remember that email does not allow for body language and emotion to help provide the tone. Do not use fancy or colored fonts that can be hard to read. Do not use all capital letters in an email

as it implies that you are shouting or yelling. Read the body of the email to yourself before you send it to check for mistakes and tone. Use proper capitalization and correct punctuation.

Tip #6: Acknowledging, Forwarding, and Replying to Emails

Unless it is a junk email, always let the sender know that you received the email. If a reply is expected, be sure to reply in a timely manner (within 12 hours max). People do not like receiving forwarded chain mail and hoaxes, so do not forward that type of email. Check with the sender before forwarding an email to someone else.
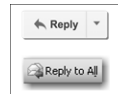
Tip #7: Reply vs. Reply All

There are times when **reply all** is needed so that everyone knows the responses to an email. Other times, **reply** should be used. For example, if everyone needs to know that you will not be able to attend a meeting, then **reply all**. If you are congratulating someone on a promotion that was announced, everyone in the email chain does not need to see you congratulating them, so use **reply**.