



6. What should you do if an e-mail “bounces” back to you?

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7. What is meant by the statement “An e-mail should stand on its own”?

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8. What is SPAM, why is it a problem, and how should you deal with it?

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9. List some different information that the signature line may include.

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## E-mail Etiquette

As e-mail use has grown, some problems have evolved concerning how it is handled, especially in the workplace. Applying e-mail etiquette, sometimes called netiquette, in the workplace will help you avoid such problems. Remember these tips to keep your e-mail communications safe and effective:

- Personal e-mail is a very informal form of written communication. What is acceptable in personal e-mail may not be proper in formal business e-mail. For example, using a cute e-mail address such as *sweetbaby@yahoo.com* does not give a professional impression.
- E-mail extras like emoticons—little “faces” created with colons, semicolons, and parentheses—and abbreviations such as *pleaz* or *thanx* are fine with friends but not in workplace correspondence. The same goes for acronyms such as *lol* (laughing out loud) or *B4N* (by for now).
- In cyberspace, the practice of writing words in all uppercase is known as “shouting” and should be avoided.



## Effective Workplace Communication

- In the workplace, e-mail messages should be no longer than one page. Think of your reader. Do not ramble. Make e-mails brief and to the point. Don't be so hurried that you become careless about grammar and spelling, however. Proofread before you hit send.
- Most organizations will have strict measures in place to ensure their online security and the integrity of their network. This may include specific rules for e-mail use, like which ones to delete, how to use SPAM filters, and when to open attachments. Always follow the guidelines set by your employer when using e-mail at work. At home, just follow the simple rule: it is better to be safe than sorry.
- There is little question that e-mail is a fast and efficient way for people to communicate with each other, but that doesn't mean that the content of those e-mails is always appropriate for the workplace. Millions of humorous or witty messages are traded back and forth across cyberspace daily, but forwarding such e-mails to coworkers is not an effective use of time. Non-work-related e-mails, especially those with pictures, take up valued space on a company's network and clog the system.
- Always remember that your e-mail might be read by others, not just the person you are e-mailing. Sometimes e-mails even get posted. Think before you send an e-mail. If you feel angry or especially emotional, wait before sending an e-mail.
- Be thoughtful of others' privacy. Don't give out others' e-mail addresses without their permission.
- E-mail should not be used to avoid talking to someone face-to-face or on the phone. For example, unless told otherwise, you should call your employer if you are going to be late to work rather than e-mailing them.
- Finally, read and answer your e-mail. Get in the habit of checking your e-mail regularly. Communication by phone only happens if you pick up the receiver, communication by letter only if you open the envelope, and communication by e-mail only if you check your inbox.

### **"Flaming" and Harassing E-mails**

An e-mail message that expresses the writer's frustrations, anger, and other strong emotions is called "flaming." This is something that you should avoid doing, especially in the workplace. Using e-mail to vent frustrations, criticize a policy or coworker, or even to insult a customer can be grounds for a reprimand and sometimes even a dismissal.

Likewise be careful sending any messages that are designed to be humorous. Be sensitive to other people's cultures and beliefs, and be aware that a message that may be seen as funny by some may be offensive to others.