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Email Etiquette Tips

In many cities and towns, email is becoming the preferred method of communication. It's fast, inexpensive, and often less frustrating than playing "phone tag." Public Works relies more on email everyday and many citizens would prefer to send an email than place a phone call. This article contains a few, important tips for email use.



Use upper and lower case. AVOID TYPING IN ALL CAPS. THIS IS THE EQUIVALENT OF SHOUTING! Many people see a message typed in all caps as rude and disrespectful. The recipient may perceive this as an angry email.

Proofread. Proofread. Proofread. Use punctuation, correct grammar and spellings. Always proofread email before sending and use spell check.

Watch message length and tone. Avoid long, rambling messages. Readers may stop reading before they get your main point or points. Long messages are often confusing. Also, however, excessively short unclear messages. Be more polite than usual.

Use detailed and specific subject line descriptions. This helps the recipient quickly determine the point of the email. It may speed up response time. Detailed subject lines help senders to manage and locate emails. Many readers will delete an email without opening it based on the subject line. A quality subject line tells readers the purpose of the email.

Avoid cutesy email addresses. Most agencies have standard email formats. Some people use a personal account for business purposes. Avoid using a cute name for your address because people form an impression of the sender based on this address.

Use "high priority" or "urgent" sparingly. Only use when absolutely necessary and when a message needs immediate attention. When someone always sends out urgent messages, recipients may start to ignore your emails that are truly critical. *Remember the boy who cried wolf...*

Don't send chain letters, urgent virus warnings, or other hoax letters. Many virus warnings are not legitimate. Before forwarding these messages, verify that their legitimacy. Check with the agency's email administrator regarding the legitimacy of these warnings.

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