10 Top Tip Do's and Don'ts of Em@il

Follow these steps to take back control of your email

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DO's & ✗ DONT's

Keep it brief

If you need to cover several topics, summarise the important points in the first paragraph and provide highlights with subheads and brief introductions that link to attachments or intranet pages for more information.

Email personal or confidential

Emails live on forever and can be forwarded, shared, copied and subpoenaed. Don't share anything in an email that you would not want to see on the front page of a newspaper or a billboard in Times Square.

Share key content in the subject line

The subject line will help recipients screen and prioritise email in their inboxes. Specify "Action needed" or "Reply requested" when you need immediate response..

Send unnecessary business emails

Being the source of unnecessary or excessive emails puts you at risk of being ignored now and in the future. Don't send something by email unless it's needed, especially if information is repeated in other internal communications vehicles.

Target the Right People

Limit email communications to those for whom the topic is relevant. Use group lists only if information is meaningful for the entire group. Think twice before you hit the 'reply all'.

Forward virus warnings, chain letters or junk mail

Check with your information technology department to verify any virus warnings and let them communicate issues to the organization.

Consider the Timing

Email is not an appropriate vehicle for something requiring an urgent response – keep in mind the audience and the fact that some may not check or respond to email immediately

Use sarcasm, negative comments or ALL CAPS

Remember that email messages lack the nuances of facial or voice voice expressions. Don't take chances with misinterpretation – err on the side of positive language and never send an email response when you are upset.

Check it twice

Prevent most-embarrassing moments by proofreading everything in an email, including the recipient email addresses, message content (including previous emails you may be forwarding) and any attachments, before you press 'send

Use as a replacement for personal contact

Don't underestimate the importance of a face-to-face conversations especially for matters that are personal or sensitive. Don't use email to avoid a difficult situation – if you have a problem with a person or must admit a mistake, speak with them.