

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

by
Kerry Mulcrone

To send or not to send...that is the question! Do you know that 92% of all internet users in the U.S. use email? This is a lot of people, many of whom are your Customers and your Model Home Visitors. That is why it is so important that you as the Sales Professional really understand the value that email can bring you as a communication tool.

What is Email Etiquette and why is it important? Email Etiquette, or “Netiquette” as it is called, will display your level of professionalism, skill and efficiency to the recipient. Emails say a lot about you, the sender. The image you wish to portray to the recipient will be seen in each and every email you send. Emails can also be ongoing conversations; spend as much time perfecting them as you do your Presentation and Delivery in the model, to ensure timely and positive customer responses and repeat visits. You never get a second chance to make a good “first” impression, so make sure all of your outgoing emails are worthy of clicking “**SEND**”.

Emails are perfectly acceptable in many situations, and often preferable because of busy work or family schedules. Emails should not however, take the place of phone calls or face to face communications in certain situations. Remember what you were taught growing up about the importance of saying please and thank you? Emails should not be a substitute for a handwritten, personal thank you note.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when you are sending or replying to business emails.

- 1.) Before you start to compose your email, make sure the “stationery” of your email is appropriate. As a general rule for business emails, the background should be plain so that your words will be what the reader sees. Flowery or designer backgrounds may have a place in non-business mails (or even a few select business emails), but they are generally distracting and make your message difficult to read. The same holds true for using fancy fonts, colors, or graphics that are not related to your message. This will not add to the content of your message, and will probably distract. Also stay away from using emoticons, better known as smiley faces! ☺
- 2.) **DO NOT FILL IN YOUR To: Cc: or Bcc: line yet!** This is very important. Read on.
- 3.) Make sure to fill in the Subject line and try to make it interesting or compelling. The Subject line will not only peak the recipient’s interest, but it will also help keep any ongoing email conversations on this Subject organized.
- 4.) Your salutation should be kept formal, at least until you have a relationship with this person clearly established. When unsure, it is always safe to stick with formality.
- 5.) Be concise and clear in your message. You do not have to write a novel, so try not to make your email longer that it needs to be. Remember that for the recipient, reading an email is not always as easy as reading the same information in a printed, formal document. Often times the recipient may be multi-tasking when they open an email, and if it appears to be too long, they may delay reading it until later, when you would have preferred to have a more timely response.

- 6.) Remember that even the printed word can convey a tone or expression. Make sure that the message you are sending will be received and “heard” the way you intended.
- 7.) Try to organize the content of your email, and if there is more than one main thought or point, number each item. This will increase ease of readability and make it easier to respond to each item, if you are requesting a response. If no response is necessary, you can also state this to the recipient.
- 8.) Make sure that you have a complete email “signature”. This is not your actual signature, but your contact information. You can always be reached if they simply hit “Reply”, but your signature should include your contact information including company name, address, and phone numbers where you can be reached. Your company logo can be included here if you like. You want to make it very easy and convenient for them to reach you other than through email.
- 9.) Go to Tools in the menu bar and use the Spelling and Grammar check, then re-read your creation and make sure it says just what you want to say.
- 10.) Now you can fill in the To: Cc: and Bcc: lines. Doing this last will prevent you from inadvertently sending an email until it has been completely proofed.

In closing, try to remember that the email should not only convey your message but also your personality. Can they SEE you smile? Don’t multi-task while you are composing, and always proof what you have written. Now you are ready to click SEND!