EMAIL ETIQUETTE QUICK TIPS: **CHEAT SHEET**

The world of work runs on email, yet most of the emails sent every day are poorly written. Use these tips to email more professionally.

- Be aware of tone. Email seems a lot more casual than it is, so many are tempted to relax their professional standards.

- When using an acronym that might not be familiar to the recipient (like CaPS: Career Planning Service), it's best to spell it the first time you refer to it.

- When in doubt, have someone proofread your message. It's always better to err on the side of caution!

- PDF attachments are ideal because they can be opened on all computers.

- Try creating rules that sort emails as they come in. Rules can be set up to move emails to the folder you specify based on things like the sender, or specified keywords.

- If your email is going to be exceedingly complicated, you might want to speak over the phone or in-person instead.

- Spell. Check. Your. Messages.

DO

✓ **Know your audience.** Your e-mail greeting and sign-off should be consistent with the level of respect and formality of the person who will be reading it – mirror the language they speak and the relationship you have with them (formal vs. relaxed).
- Lead with "Hello," and their first name, or a more formal "Mr." or "Ms."
- If they emailed you first, notice how they signed off and then you can address them the same way
- Conclude with "Best regards," or "Thanks"

✓ Keep emails **brief and to the point** but be sure to include any relevant information that the recipient will need to know.
- Include a brief description of any attachments you've included.

✓ Be sure to maintain conversation threads when replying; this helps everyone keep track of what's happening

✓ Think about who should know about the information you're providing and **CC** them.
- CC stands for **Carbon Copy**; contacts that you CC will see the email as well but the idea is that it's not meant for them and they don't need to reply

✓ Consider using **BCC** when emailing a sizeable group of people, to ensure privacy.
- BCC stands for **Blind Carbon Copy**; contacts that you BCC will see the email as well but nobody else will see that they can see the email.

✓ When sending an email that requests action from multiple people, be clear about **who is responsible** for taking each action.

✓ Check and return emails promptly, even if only to say, "I received your message but won't be able to give it my full attention until next week."

✓ **Include a signature** containing your full name, department, and phone number. Not only does an official signature add validation to your email, but it also lets people know how to reach you, without having to search.
- Most email providers have the option to configure a signature. This way you won't have to write it out every time you want to sign-off.

✓ Set up an **Automatic Reply / Out of Office** automated message before going away on vacation.

✓ Spell check, spell check, **spell check**!

✓ When sending an email containing **confidential content**, always make it clear by stating that the email should not be forwarded or shared.

✓ Use a **subject line** that reflects what your email is about. A descriptive subject gives your contact an idea of the urgency of your message and makes it easier to track later on.

✓ Stay organized by using **folders** to help manage your emails. Doing so makes finding emails much easier.

✓ Make sure your emails are properly formatted and easy-to-read. If you have a lot to say, either make a bulleted list, or attach a separate file.

DON'T

✘ Don't use "Hey" as your greeting. Instead, use "Hello" or "Hi", depending on how well you know the recipient.

✘ Don't assume that being **cc'd** always requires a response.

✘ Don't hit **Reply All** unless everyone on the email chain needs to read your response.
- How you use reply all completely depends on the situation, so use your judgment. Sometimes, it helps to have everyone on the same page (e.g., one person's response has an impact on others).

✘ Don't over-email. If you have a question for someone that sits on your floor, try out good old-fashioned face-to-face communication.

✘ Don't rush – take the time to make your emails professional and read them over before clicking send. If your emails are scattered, disorganized, or contain mistakes, your recipients will think that you are also scattered, disorganized or careless.

✘ Don't use emoji's, acronyms, word shortcuts, and excessive exclamation points (4, u, LOL).

✘ Don't send emails when frustrated or angry. Emails written to vent, express frustration, or put others down are **unprofessional** – end of discussion.