

6.6 Email Best Practices Policy

Intent

The employer has adopted this policy to ensure that employees are provided with guidelines for the appropriate use of email communications.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees always and without exception.

Unionized employees are requested to refer to their current Collective Agreement for specific information pertaining to email best practices. Where a Collective Agreement is silent on the issue, this policy shall dictate the requirements for unionized employees. In situations where the directions of this policy cover issues also in the Collective Agreement, the Collective Agreement will be the final authority.

Guidelines

The employer strives to convey a professional image always, and will work to ensure that all forms of communication meet specific standards of professionalism, and are created using best practices. Employees are required to adhere to the following standards pertaining to email communication on behalf of the company:

1. Employees are expected to ensure that all communications will be created using a consistently high level of professionalism.
2. Email communications must be polite, and begin with an appropriate greeting (e.g. Hello, Dear, or Good Morning, etc.).
3. Ensure that all messages use appropriate language. Inappropriate language found in communications may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
4. Proof-read your emails before sending them. Use the spell check function to ensure that the message is free of unnecessary spelling errors. Where an email includes grammatical or spelling errors or is inaccurate, we risk the chance of being viewed as unprofessional and may potentially lose business or disappoint our customers.
5. Use an appropriate and professional tone in the email messages. It is often very difficult to determine when a person is using humour, sarcasm, or irony in an email. Please note that emails that include humour may be misunderstood, and the effects may negatively impact our business.
6. At all times, please avoid the use of the "All Caps" function, as messages sent using all CAPITALS is the e-mail version of yelling, and may be taken as offensive.
7. Keep messages short, simple, clear and concise.
8. Remember that when you send an email, it creates a permanent electronic record. Whatever is written in your email will be on the record for all time. Ensure that all messages sent are appropriate, and accurate in their content.
9. While it's common to use short-hand for personal notes, it is unacceptable for business communication. Standard abbreviations (including: e.g., Mrs., Mr., etc.) will continue to be acceptable, however, the use of excessive or colloquial abbreviations (LOL, ROFL, TTYL, BRB, etc.) is unacceptable.
10. Ensure that all messages are sent only to the intended recipients.
11. Emails that contain financial information (quotes, costs, etc.) must be checked for accuracy.



12. Under no circumstances should confidential business information be sent out to any third party using email, without prior written authorization from management.
13. Ensure that all passwords are maintained securely, and change your password a minimum of once each month. Do not share your password with others, including colleagues. Passwords should include letters, numbers and special characters.
14. Alert management immediately of any breach in email security.
15. Check your email frequently. If any emails are missed, there is the potential for lost business, miscommunications, or failure to complete required job duties.
16. Mark spam messages appropriately and file them in the spam folder.
17. Never reply to spam messages.
18. Open attachments only from known senders.
19. If the volume of spam becomes unmanageable, contact the department or individual in charge of managing the facility's information technology in order that they may address the issue.
20. Archive all messages that are older than three months.

Any email sent from a company computer and company email address is considered the property of the employer. As such, management reserves the right to review all emails received and/or sent by their employees.