

## Advantages of E-mail

**Speed** Speed is the main advantage of using e-mail. Unlike regular mail, which may take days or even weeks to reach its destination, e-mail reaches its destination instantaneously. A message can be sent quickly to anyone anywhere in the world. Distance is immaterial. Just type the name/names and e-mail address/addresses of the recipient and click the mouse on the send button, and your message goes.

The advantages of using e-mail include speed, low cost, quick distribution, flexibility, easy attachments, and easy upward communication.

**Low Cost** Low cost is yet another advantage of using e-mail. As sending e-mail does not involve printing and copying, it is less expensive than any other channel of communication (that is, postal mail, telephone, fax etc.). Ten e-mail messages may be sent in ten minutes and the cost could be as low as five rupees. Moreover, the size of the message or the distance to the recipient does not affect the cost.

**Quick Distribution** E-mail makes distribution quick and easy. Messages can be sent to more than one person at the same time. There is no wasting of time and no repetition.

**Flexibility** E-mail allows complete flexibility during composing and drafting. While using e-mail, the sender may edit, revise, modify, and redesign his/her message without printing and copying it. He/She can easily reshape e-mail messages before sending them. Moreover, he/she has the flexibility to receive or compose e-mails as per his/her convenience.

**Easy Attachments** It is easy to attach files, photographs, clippings, drawings, video clips, sound recordings, and so on to an e-mail. For example, resumes, scanned copies of testimonials, transcripts, and other documents can be attached to job application e-mail.

**Easy Upward Communication** E-mail is less formal and structured than letters and memos. It is normally in the form of a private dialogue, where the sender wants to say something and expects a response to the message. Thus, e-mail promotes easier upward communication. While using e-mail the sender need not worry about a formal and fixed style of communication. He/She may follow the norms of any set pattern of writing and is free to choose any style or pattern that suits the content.

# E Mail - Etiquette

## E-mail Messages

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**Check Mailbox Daily** As speed is the main advantage of using e-mail, everyone wants a quick response to his/her e-mail. We should check our mailbox daily so that we can read every e-mail message sent to us and respond swiftly. In case, we cannot respond because we do not have enough information, an acknowledgement should be e-mailed.

**Be Correct** Many people tend to be casual while sending e-mail messages. Special care should be taken about accuracy, which includes, both, accuracy of information as well as accuracy of presentation. It is very important that the sender assures himself/herself of the accuracy of information he/she is sending before clicking the send button. The following should be double-checked:

- the electronic address/addresses of the receiver;
- the Subject line,
- basic content of the e-mail message; and
- the attachments.

Also, it is important to review, edit, and revise e-mail messages in order to improve their quality of presentation. E-mail messages should be reviewed to analyse whether they can achieve their purpose. They should be edited to correct their format, mechanics, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The spelling and grammar check may be used.

**Be Brief** E-mail may be used effectively to convey non-sensitive simple messages. E-mail may not be very suitable for conveying complex or non-sensitive information. So, e-mail messages should be short. No one likes to read very lengthy e-mail messages. Unnecessary information, wordy expressions, repetitions, and exaggeration should be avoided. The e-mail message should make its point in the fewest words possible and sentences and paragraphs should be short.

**Be Formal** E-mail is a formal channel of communication and formal language should be used. Standard writing techniques are used and professional writing conventions are followed. Standard English is used and informality is avoided even if the sender knows the receiver very closely. Emotional expressions, informal words, personal remarks, humorous statements, jokes, and so on should be avoided. The main purpose should always be borne in mind, and distractions should be avoided.

**Maintain Readability** In order to make a message easy to read, the sender must be able to visualise the computer screen while composing the e-mail message. Design elements such as introductory summary, headings, side-headings, listings, and so on may be used in order to improve the readability of longer e-mail messages.

**Care About Tone** Using a tactless or negative tone can lead to confusion and misunderstanding. A formal but conversational tone, which gives a personal touch to your e-mail is preferable. The sender must adopt his/her expression to the demands of the situation and the needs of his/her readers. First person pronouns (I, we) and conversational contractions (you'll, he'll, she'll, can't, don't, doesn't.) may be used.

## FORMATTING E-MAIL MESSAGES

### E-Mail Format - structure and Layout

Although e-mail systems normally provide us with a readymade format, we need to follow standard writing conventions and use the existing format effectively. Thus, formatting e-mail messages demands awareness of current e-mail conventions and standard practices. In order to write an appropriate e-mail, it correctly should be formatted correctly.

When we receive an Internet e-mail message, it usually contains many lines before the beginning of the actual text. These lines consist of the "header" of the message. Most of it is a record of the path the message took from the sender's computer to the reader's computer. Headers also often contain a time and date stamp and an indication of whether files are attached to the message.

The three most important pieces of information in the header are the e-mail addresses of the sender and the recipient, and a subject line that tells what the message is about. All e-mail messages contain these three pieces of information.

When a person sends an e-mail message, the programme usually inserts him/her name, return e-mail address, and date automatically. Therefore, the sender need not type his/her name, e-mail address, and date again. He/She just needs to fill in the "To" line with the recipient's email address, the "Subject" line with a clear and concise description of the subject of his/her message, the CC line with the e-mail address of anyone who is to receive a copy of the e-mail message, and the BCC line with the e-mail address of anyone who is to receive a blind copy of your e-mail message.

#### **E-mail includes the following:**

- Heading
- Salutation
- Body
- Closing
- Signature

E-mail messages contain six segments: heading (date, from, to, subject, CC, BCC), salutation, opening, body, closing, and signature.

**Date:** Sat, 14 August 2004 10:12:15 + 0100(BST)

**From:** "john shannon" <shannon@uaeu.ac.ae>

**To:** "anindya sarkar" <anindya@rediffmail.com>

**Subject:** Return from Leave

**Cc:** <ronaldpl@uaeu.ac.ae>\_

**Bcc:** <deshpander@uaeu.ac.ae>

*Sample E-Mail*

Dear Dr Sarkar,

Thank you for your prompt reply. I appreciate the difficulties you are facing and I hope you make a quick recovery.

I look forward to seeing you by 28 August, or earlier if you can manage it. It would be in your interest if you could arrive earlier so as to allow yourself adequate time to prepare the strategy to launch our new product.

Kind regards,

John Shannon

**Fig. 24.4**

## **A Model E-mail Message**

**DATE:** Sat, 14 August 2004 10:12:15 + 0100(BST)

**FROM:** "john shannon" <shannon@ito.ac.ae>

**TO:** "anindya sarkar" <anindya@rediffmail.com>

**SUBJECT:** Return from Leave

**CC:** <ronaldpl@ito.ac.ae>\_

**BCC:** <deshpander@ito.ac.ae>

Dear Mr Sarkar,

My name is John Shannon and I am the new Sales Director of the International Trading Organization Ltd. I am currently planning various activities related to the new Sales Division of the company and it is important that we know your date of return to duty.

Would you please contact Ronald and let us know.

Thank you and regards,

John Shannon