

# PROFESSIONALISM IN ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

## WHAT IS NETIQUETTE?

Simply put, netiquette is internet etiquette. Netiquette refers to the basic rules and manners considered to be standard online behavior. Because we use email so often for informal communication, it's sometimes difficult to remember to use professionalism when writing emails to potential employers and other professional contacts. The most important thing to keep in mind is that the same rules of courtesy and professionalism apply online as they do in the real world.

## EMAIL RULES:

- **Make sure your email address is professional.**
- **Type emails in a standard, commonly used font**, such as, Calibri, Times, or Tahoma. Do not use colors or other text formatting. Text formatting (including bolding and underlining) is not readable by all email programs.
- **Never type emails in all caps** – it's just like shouting! Use all caps in moderation, if necessary, for emphasis. You can also surround a word with single asterisks, like \*this\*.
- **Use standard written English** when corresponding with potential employers and other contacts. Writing an email is not an excuse to forget your grasp of correct grammar.
- **Use spell-check.** If your email program does not have spell-check, type your email in a word processing program, spell check it, then paste it into your email program. Then proofread - do not depend on spell-check or grammar-check alone.
- **Use blank lines to separate paragraphs.** Some email programs do not recognize tabs.
- **Do not use even common online abbreviations or acronyms** (i.e. LOL, BTW, FYI, etc). Do not use smiley-faces or other letter/punctuation art.
- **Use a descriptive subject line.** You should indicate in the subject line that you are responding to a job posting, or requesting information about a position.
- **Be formal.** Just like when you send a cover letter to several companies, be sure to change the company name and any other company-specific information each time you send the same email.
- **Be concise.** Just because you're not wasting paper does not mean it's okay to ramble. An employer who won't read a cover letter or resume that's longer than a page also will not read an email that's more than three paragraphs.
- **Be professional and careful what you say about others.** Email is easily forwarded.
- **Sign emails with full name** (first and last) and any necessary contact information.
- **Don't use inspirational quotations** under your name/signature.

# WHEN SENDING RESUMES & COVER LETTERS

In the current professional world, you will typically email or submit your application materials in other electronic methods. Because of the ease of submitting tailored resumes and cover letters today, you should ALWAYS ensure that your materials speak directly to the position for which you are applying. This means that each resume you send out could be slightly different. Here are some tips on how not to get eliminated from consideration because of simple errors:

- **When emailing your submitting materials online, it is best to submit in .pdf file format.** This ensures that your documents look the same on their computer as they did on yours!
- **If you are emailing your resume and cover letter, always attach both to the email. This gives the recruiter a clean copy from which to work.**
- **When emailing, be sure not to send an empty email with your documents attached.** You can choose to cut and paste the text of your cover letter into the email OR write a short statement such as:

*Please accept the attached resume and cover letter as my application to the Project Team Associate Position with Expressions Global Management. Feel free to contact me at [jgoldberg@yahoo.com](mailto:jgoldberg@yahoo.com) or (212) 555-5555 if you need additional information or materials.*

*Sincerely,  
Your Name*