The Dummies Guide to Email List Netiquette

Before you hit SEND, check these 10 golden rules:

(1) Read all unread messages in your inbox, to avoid sending superfluous messages.

(2) Think before you write. Is your message relevant and appropriate?

(3) Think after you write. Re-read your message. Is it clear, concise and (again) relevant? Off-topic comments (sometimes flagged OT in the subject line) may be acceptable in some online communities, but not in others.

(4) Write properly. Many people will not take you seriously if you write messages without capitalization or punctuation (i dont like that). Use abbreviations only if you are sure everyone will understand them (*imho* or *btw,* for example).

(5) Break your writing into paragraphs: screenfuls of text are off-putting. "White space" separates your ideas, makes it easier to quote selectively (see #9 below) and encourages recipients to read your message in full.

(6) If you have nothing to say, say nothing. Unless your fellow users are very patient, emails that just say "me too", "me neither", "I agree" or (worse) "I don't know anything about this subject, but ..." are likely to irritate. Such messages might be better sent as a private email to the sender (do this by copying and pasting the private party's address into your mailer).

(7) Give your message a clear subject title. If you read your messages as a daily digest, try to refer to the subject of the thread to which you are replying, rather than digest #4203, as appropriate.

(8) Do not quote lengthy messages or entire digests in

your reply. It is more annoying than you probably realize for

users who read their messages in a daily digest, and it increases

the time and cost of downloads for others. Similarly, a two line

"signature" should suffice -- especially if you are frequent

correspondent (we all know who you are! - and put your profile

into the Yahoo Group site so we do!).

(9) Write for the lowest common denominator. Assume your reader

is using telnet across a 12k dial-up modem on a slow 386 or an

Apple II. Don't use html, don't use fancy graphics and colours and

don't assume that links are clickable. Remember that internet

access is expensive in some parts of the world, and many

people pay per minute.

(10) Break one of these rules rather than go against your

COMMON SENSE -- the best guide to (n)etiquette ever discovered.