



# The Email Charter

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## Respect recipients' time

This is the fundamental rule. As the message sender, it is *your* responsibility to minimize the time your email will take to process. Make your email easy to read, by using plain English.

2

## Short is not rude

It's ok to be brief. Don't take brevity personally and know that others won't. Wordy responses take longer to read. People will scan it and are less likely to read it all; key details can be easily missed.

3

## Celebrate clarity

Use the subject line to clearly label the topic, and maybe includes a status category [Info], [Action], [Time Sens] [Low Priority]. Use the opening line of the email to explain the basic reason for writing.

4

## Slash surplus cc's

CC's are like mating bunnies. Only CC someone who really needs this message. Don't thoughtlessly 'Reply all': choose individual recipients.

5

## Tighten the thread

Some emails depend for their meaning on context. If you need to include the email trail showing the context, cut what's not relevant. If it's long, summarise or make a phone call instead.

6

## Reduce attachments

Don't use images or logos in signatures that appear as attachments. Time is wasted trying to see if there's something to open. And don't send text as an attachment when it could be included in the body of the email.

7

## Give these gifts: EOM NNTR

If your email message can be expressed in half a dozen words, just put it in the subject line, followed by EOM (End of Message) or NNTR (No need to respond). This saves the recipient having to actually open the message.

8

## Should we expect an instant response?

Don't feel you need to give an instant response, and don't expect to get one. Skype or the telephone are your tools if something is urgent.

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## Disconnect sometimes!

Consider calendaring half-days at work where you can't go online. Commit to email-free evenings, weekends and holidays. Have an 'auto-response' that makes it clear you're not checking.

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## References this charter

Spread the word and help change email culture. Reference this charter in *your* email footer.

