To: Whom?

The people you include in the *To:* field should be the people you expect to read and respond to the message.

If you receive an email that is addressed to multiple people – but you are the best qualified to field the question – promptly let the group know you will be handling it. This will save others from having to respond.

If people regularly send emails to the wrong recipient or multiple unfocused recipients, it is probably time to review the organizational chart, distribution of duties, or the process for decision-making.

Use cc: field sparingly.

Try not to use the *cc:* field unless that recipient knows why they are receiving a copy of the message. Using the *cc:* field can be confusing since the recipients might not know who is supposed to act on the message. On the other hand, if you mention another person by name in your email, it is often a good idea to cc them so they will know they have been referenced.

When responding to a cc: message, should you include the other recipients in the cc: field as well?

In general, do not include the person in the cc: field unless you have a particular reason for wanting this person to see your response. Again, make sure that this person will know why they are receiving a copy.

Do not overuse "Reply to All."

Only use *Reply to All* if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

For large mailings, use the Bcc: field or do a mail merge.

When sending an email mailing, some people place all the email addresses in the To: field. There are two drawbacks to this practice: (1) the recipient knows that you have sent the same message to a large number of recipients, and (2) you are publicizing someone else's email address without their permission. One way to get round this is to place all addresses in the Bcc: field. Or, using Microsoft Outlook and Word, you can do a mail merge and create one message for each recipient.

If you still get too much email, consider using tools to help manage the flow.

For example, you can use the *Rules and Groups* function in Outlook to place all messages from teachers go into one folder, or flag them, or color code them. Sometimes it is easier to follow emails when you group them by threaded email instead of date (Under Outlook View->Arrange by conversation).

Do not attach unnecessary files.

For items like a small Word document or Excel spreadsheet, it is easier for the recipient if you simply paste the text directly into the email. That way, the recipients don't have to go through the extra steps of clicking in the attachment and waiting for it to load. Only send attachments when the information can't be included in the email itself.

Include the message thread.

In other words, click 'Reply' instead of 'New Mail' and make sure your email options are set to include the original text below your response. An email response without the thread will not provide enough information to help the recipient remember the details from the initial email.
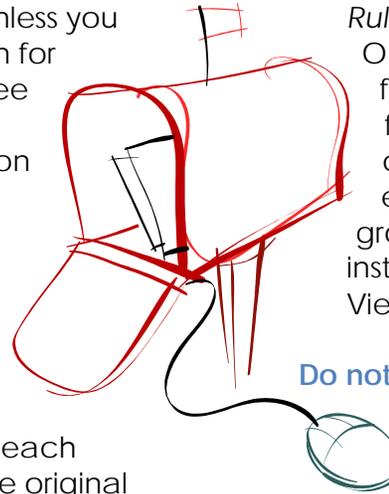
Also, keep the subject line the same as the original when replying. It will save the recipient time in looking for the related emails in their inbox.

Do not use email to discuss confidential information.

Sending an email is like sending a postcard. If you don't want your email to be displayed on a bulletin board, don't send it. Moreover, never make any libelous, sexist or racially discriminating comments in emails, even if they are meant to be a joke. Remember all district e-mail can be subpoenaed.

Use a specific, meaningful subject.

For instance, write "Field trip count due on Tuesday" instead for "Field Trip," or "Can't log into ABI" instead of "Help!"

Don't forward virus hoaxes and chain letters.

If you receive an email message that urges you to immediately forward it to everyone in your address list, this is most probably a hoax. Sometimes virus hoaxes even contain viruses themselves. The same goes for chain letters that promise incredible riches or ask your help for a charitable cause. Trash 'em, don't forward 'em.
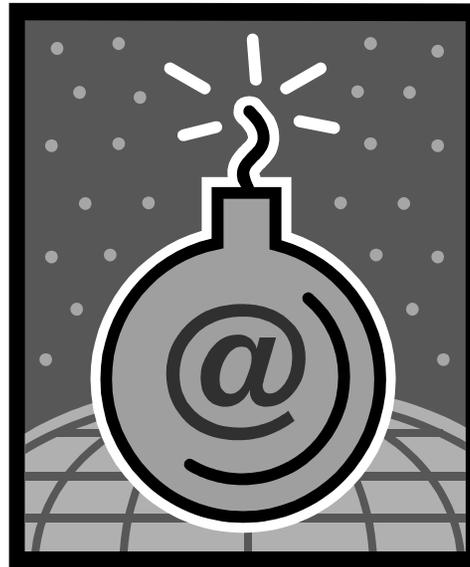
Don't reply to spam.

By replying to spam or by unsubscribing, you are confirming that your email address is 'live.' This will only generate even more spam. Therefore, just hit the delete button or use email software to remove spam automatically.

Be concise.

Email Tips