Email Etiquette

Email etiquette is how we maintain a respectful, professional, and appropriate tone in a digital context (like email or text). It is extremely important to present yourself in a professional manner when corresponding with potential contacts, employers, colleagues, and members of campus like faculty and staff. The ability to write a polite and professional email is vital to success in school, while job searching, and in the workplace. It is a skill that may not seem as important as others, but knowing what ot say and how to say it can make or break your experience interacting with other professionals.

WHERE TO START

- Use a professional email, like your JeffCo email address or a variation of your name (ex: vicviking3@jeffco.edu).
- Include a brief, clear, and specific subject line (ex: "COL101 Assignment Question" or "Resume Assistance Appointment")
- Begin and end with professional salutations
    - Ex: Good Morning, Good Afternoon
    - Ex: Sincerely, Thank you
- Address the recipient with a greeting and their correct title (Dr., Professor, Mr., Ms., etc.)
    - Do not use first names unless you know the person well or they sign an email with their first name
    - If you are unsure of pronouns, you can address the recipient using their first and last name (ex: "Dear Victor Viking" instead of "Dear Sir")

GUIDELINES

Make sure spelling, grammar, and punctuation are correct throughout the email

- Re-read the email before sending it, use spell check or Grammarly, or you could have someone else read over it to check for errors.
    - Avoid text speak, slang, jargon, or excessive punctuation.
    - Overusing capital letters gives the appearance of shouting.

Use a professional tone

- Tone can be hard to translate over email or text, so it's very important to be aware of how you and your words may be perceived.
    - Be polite and respectful.
    - Be concise; overexplaining or complex sentences can be easily misinterpreted.

Signing off

- Conclude with a polite closing like "Sincerely" or "Thank you".
- Include a signature with your name and contact information.
- Proof-read your message for errors and tone.

Common Courtesies

- Be understanding and respectful of people's time and consideration.
    - Email well in advance if possible and avoid emailing outside of business hours.
    - Give a reasonable window of time (at least 24 hours) for a response before sending any follow-ups.
- Do not use the "Reply All" function unless the message does need to be read by everyone in the conversation.
- If you have a question for an instructor, check the syllabus or other materials first to make sure it hasn't already been answered.