

The Sixteen Rules of Writing E-mail

1. **As always, lead with your conclusion, rephrasing questions with your first sentence.**
2. **Keep it short: the presumption is 150 words or less.**
3. **Write in the second person.**
4. **Write in Anglo- Saxon English.**
5. **Avoid formal salutations and sign- offs.**
6. **Forget the exclamation point!!!**
7. **Play it straight.**
8. **Make sure your heading line summarizes the subject of the e-mail.**
9. **Assume unknown readers.**
10. **Think before you send.**
11. **Because the Internet has virtually obliterated the notions of confidentiality and privilege, be careful about what you put in writing.**
12. **If you're writing anything privileged, confidential, inflammatory, or contentious, put the names of the recipients into the "To" box last, after everything has been checked and edited.**
13. **Beware the "reply all" button.**
14. **Avoid certain phrases or sentences.**
15. **When you edit an e-mail, print it out with no paragraphing before you begin.**
16. **Don't overuse e-mail.**