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Leadership Tip: Best Practices for Emailing Club Members

There are many ways to relay messages and information with members in your club or region. You might call or text them if you don't see them in person. Chances are though, you fall back on one tried and true method of communication: email.

In a world where there are many technology options to communicate, email remains extremely popular. It's estimated that BILLIONS of emails are sent every day. Email is a great way to reach every member in your club or to send important documents to your Board. However, without the benefit of face-to-face contact, the intent of our meaning has a greater chance of being skewed.

In order to enhance your communication skills and make sure your message is successfully received, consider a few tips from *The Business Etiquette Bible* by Scott Steinberg:

- Tone, context and subtle nuances can be lost in translation. Take time to reread what you are about to send. Is it possible that innocent question or statement could be misunderstood? Might it be misread and cause hurt feelings? Consider picking up the phone if these questions raise a red flag.
- Be mindful of your words. While it is possible to "recall" some emails once they are sent, most likely when you hit send, the email is gone for good. What you've said can't be undone and will be sent to the recipients and anyone you've copied.
- Always think "ANYONE could read this email." Ask yourself if you would be "OK" if someone you cared about read your email. Think about saying the words of your email in public. Because email can be forwarded, it's possible your words could make their way around your club and any inappropriate comments may reflect negatively on your character.
- Check the "To" and "CC" lines. Take notice that you have typed in the correct recipients. Sometimes, emails will automatically populate email address that you frequently use. If you aren't careful, you could be sending an email to the wrong person. You may want your email to go to Jane Smith, a member of your club but the system automatically populates your email to go to Jane Smalley, your business client.
- The subject line is important. Keep your subject directly related to what your email is about. For example, maybe you shared a recipe with your Board for a dessert you brought to the last meeting. Your treasurer replied "thanks" and you responded to that email titled: "RE: My Amazing Chocolate Cake Recipe" asking for the latest club budget report. The email may sit in your treasure's inbox for a while because she thinks you are replying about the cake!

- Use “Reply All” sparingly.
The “Reply All” button sends your message to everyone who has been copied on the email. Take a moment to consider if everyone needs your reply - especially if you are just saying, “Thank you for this information.” Remember, billions of emails are sent every day. Less is more!
- Be timely about responding to emails.
Try to respond within a day you receive the email. If the email requires more than a quick reply, send an email back to the sender letting them know you will get back with them as soon as possible. Simply saying, “I’m under a deadline right now, but I’ll get back to you by Thursday,” is a courtesy that lets them know you’ve received their request.
- Take a vacation - you deserve it! But let the world know.
Attending your region conference or the SIA Convention? Set up an automatic response for when you won’t be available. Let senders know that you are away from your computer and won’t be checking your email until _____ (date). This is another courtesy that lets senders know you aren’t ignoring them.

Email is a great way to deliver a unified message to your club quickly and share important information. You may find for certain types of communications, email may be the best way to communicate with members and these are just a few ways you can improve your email etiquette. Think about using the above tips to increase your email skills and model best practices.

You may find when you use email effectively; your club can complete projects more quickly and more successfully. As an added bonus, you will boost the club’s teamwork and members will see the value of what they can accomplish together!

Source:

Etiquette Expert: The Right Way to Send Email in 2018: https://parade.com/640069/scott_steinberg/etiquette-expert-the-right-way-to-send-email-in-2018/