

Rules for good practice of email use School of life sciences



The following guidelines for appropriate use of email permit all collaborators to work in a respectful environment.

An important email may be skipped if your mailbox is overloaded, which is an additional source of stress.

60 daily emails times 3 minutes of treatment each correspond to 3 hours of your working day.



Write an email

- ✓ Indicate the subject of the message clearly in the “subject” field
- ✓ Be brief, precise and give sufficient context to the message
- ✓ Question if email is the appropriate means of communication for a long text
- ✓ Help an easy read by dividing into multiple paragraphs. A precise and well-structured text helps to prevent misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Keep small screens in mind
- ✓ Take time to re-read your message and ensure that recipient addresses are correct, before sending a message
- ✓ Avoid leaving the whole history at the bottom of the text if it is not helpful, when forwarding an email
- ✓ Use the indicator “urgent” and eventually mention “urgent” in the subject of the email, for urgent messages. It is often better to visit or call the addressee for urgent matters.



Choose the recipients

- ✓ Question the relevance of copying a person
 - Who are the persons really concerned by my message?
 - Why should I copy this person?
 - Would it be better to send a separate email to a specific person?
- ✓ Avoid the use of « bcc » (= blind carbon copy). Prefer to forward your email with a short summary
- ✓ Avoid copying the superior systematically to put pressure
- ✓ Keep the environmental impact of a heavy email to numerous recipients in mind!

Spend some time on the tutorials available on the [EPFL Staff Training Service](#) website



InBox

- ✓ Leave enough time to the addressee for answering and avoid calling right after sending your message
- ✓ Respect the confidentiality of the messages received
- ✓ Treat the email upon opening (execute the task, move the email to a task list, archive or delete the message). The use of colors can be useful for the follow-up of your messages.
- ✓ Avoid printing emails



Event announcement

- ✓ Enter the announcement to the Memento and send ONE announcement by email
- ✓ Avoid sending reminders by email



An email does not serve to:

- ✓ Cover yourself
- ✓ Get rid of a duty
- ✓ Highlight that you work
- ✓ Make a long report

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