

**Advisory Goal 3:****Grade:**

To help advisees identify and develop the necessary attitudes, behaviors and skills to succeed in school, college and life

**12<sup>th</sup>**

**Gathering:** Go-Round (an activity in which students take turns responding to a question or prompt; see Glossary)  
5-10 MINUTES

**Activity/Topic:** Professional E-Mail Etiquette  
25-30 MINUTES

**Closing:** Ticket Out the Door (a closing activity in which students reflect on their experience in the advisory session; see Glossary)  
5 MINUTES

**Materials:** E-Mails Dos and Don'ts sheet (one per student), samples of e-mails (one per student), chart paper, overhead projector (optional)

**Grouping:** Whole group, small groups

**Session Goal:**

Advisees will gain an understanding of the proper etiquette for sending and receiving e-mails, particularly in the college environment.

**Gathering:** Go-Round

What have you accomplished this past week on your College Planning Task List, and what is your goal for this week?

**Or**

Name a bad habit that you have.

**NOTE:** This is a *suggested* gathering for 12th-grade advisories that meet once a week. If you meet more regularly, you may want to use the alternative gathering.

**Activity/Topic:** Professional E-Mail Etiquette

1. Explain that the purpose of today's session is to learn about e-mail etiquette. Ask students what they think e-mail etiquette means. (It means guidelines for professional, effective e-mail communication.) Emphasize that an understanding of e-mail etiquette is essential in the college environment, where e-mail is the most common way they will communicate with professors.
2. Ask students to brainstorm things that might be considered "bad e-mail habits." The purpose of this is to assess how much prior knowledge they have about e-mail etiquette. Write all responses on the board, overhead projector or chart paper.
3. Pass out the E-Mail Dos and Don'ts sheet. Ask students to look at the list and:
  - a. Identify one thing they already knew about e-mail etiquette.
  - b. Identify one new piece of information about e-mail etiquette.Elicit answers from a few volunteers. Answer any questions as needed.
4. Explain that students will have an opportunity to identify the Dos and Don'ts in some sample e-mails.

5. Put students into groups of four. Distribute copies of all four e-mails to each student in the group. Ask each student in the group to choose one of the e-mails to review, identify the Dos and Don'ts and make a suggestion to the writer of the e-mail.
6. After a few minutes, invite each student to share the Dos and the Don'ts he or she identified in the e-mail as well as his or her suggestion with the rest of the small group.

**Debriefing:**

- How comfortable or uncomfortable are you using e-mail as a communication device?
- Do you have concerns about adapting to the role of e-mail in your college experience? If so, what are they?
- What is one thing you know you need to change about the way you currently use e-mail (i.e., your e-mail address, inclusion of "texting" lingo in your e-mail, etc.)?
- What is one step you can take this year to accustom yourself to the role of e-mail at college?

Remind students of the following points:

- No matter how familiar or unfamiliar you are with using e-mail now, in college e-mail is going to play a major role in your life.
- E-mail is the preferred method for contacting professors, classmates, teaching assistants, advisers, and student clubs and organizations.
- People will form opinions about you based on how you conduct yourself through e-mail.
- As helpful as e-mail can be, it can have its drawbacks as well. E-mail is as good as a public record. Your private message to someone can be forwarded to the entire campus by the simple click of a mouse.

**Closing:** Ticket Out the Door

One thing I want to remember from today's session is ...

## E-MAIL DOS AND DON'TS

### Do...

- Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Use a relevant Subject line that identifies the purpose of your e-mail.
- Think about the content of your message before sending it: Is there anything you would regret sending later?
- Be professional. Address adults and professors using titles, such as "Dr.," "Professor," "Mr." or "Mrs."
- Consider to whom you are writing. E-mailing your professor calls for more professionalism than e-mailing your best friend.
- Always sign your name so the receiver of your e-mail knows who sent it. Remember, when e-mailing a professor or other adult, sign your given name (Quinton Jones), not your nickname (Q-Dawg).
- Choose an e-mail address that is easy to identify and appropriate.
- Be brief. People get so many e-mails every day that they don't have the time or patience to read long, drawn-out messages. Say what you need to say politely and concisely.

### Don't...

- Don't write an e-mail as you would write a text message.
- Don't leave the Subject line blank, or use an irrelevant greeting such as "Hi."
- Don't write an e-mail when you are angry or upset. You might end up saying something you can't take back after you hit "Send."
- Don't leave out a salutation. Always include a greeting line, such as "Dear \_\_\_\_\_," ...
- **DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPITALS — IT IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING.**
- Don't forward chain letters, spam, irrelevant messages, jokes, etc., to large groups of people.
- Don't use a brightly colored, hard-to-read font when composing e-mail. Keep it simple so your recipient can read your message without trouble.
- Don't create an inappropriate or suggestive e-mail address — it gives people the wrong impression of you. Examples of poor choices include: `sexylatinagurl14@_____`, or `gangstaDZee@_____`.
- Don't overuse punctuation!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Don't send anything unsuitable, especially things of a sexual nature that others may find offensive or that may be against the rules of your school.

Above all, always remember that anything you send over e-mail can be forwarded to anybody, at any time.

**Sample E-Mail #1**

To: Professor David Williams [david.williams@columbia.edu]  
From: Andre Whitman [andrewhitman92@yahoo.com]  
Subject: (none)

I'm not going to be in class today. Can you get me the notes?  
-A

1. What are two "Dos" of e-mail etiquette that this writer follows?
  - a.
  - b.
2. What are two "Don'ts" of e-mail etiquette that this writer ignored?
  - a.
  - b.
3. What is one suggestion you have for this writer?

**Sample E-Mail #2**

To: Coach Steven McKinley [smckinley@plattsburgh.edu]  
From: Shawna Rodriguez [hotdominicanmommy@hotmail.com]  
Subject: Friday's Game

coach,  
i just wanted to let you know that im not gonna make it 2 the game tommorow. i got real sick 2day i dont know when im gonna be ok 2 play. if u need me to get a note from the health center i can do that. just let me know cuz i can get u a note if you need it.  
L8ter,  
shawna rodriguez

1. What are two "Dos" of e-mail etiquette that this writer follows?
  - a.
  - b.
2. What are two "Don'ts" of e-mail etiquette that this writer ignored?
  - a.
  - b.
3. What is one suggestion you have for this writer?

### Sample E-Mail #3

To: Buffalo State Tutoring Center [tutoring@buffstate.edu]  
From: Colin Jones [cjonesrun@gmail.com]  
Subject: I NEED HELP

I NEED TO COME TO THE TUTORING CENTER BECAUSE I AM FAILING MY CHEMISTRY CLASS. I AM FAILING BECAUSE MY GIRLFRIEND SHE BROKE UP WITH ME AND SHE USED TO HELP ME WITH MY CHEM HOMEWORK. SHE WAS REAL GOOD AT CHEM AND NOW I DON'T KNOW HOW I AM GOING TO PASS THE CLASS WITHOUT HER HELP!!! WHEN ARE YOU OPEN? WHO CAN HELP ME WITH MY CHEM?

THX  
COLIN JONES

1. What are two "Dos" of e-mail etiquette that this writer follows?
  - a.
  - b.
2. What are two "Don'ts" of e-mail etiquette that this writer ignored?
  - a.
  - b.
3. What is one suggestion you have for this writer?

### Sample E-Mail #4

To: Financial Aid Office [finaid@citycollegeny.edu]  
From: Mercedes Brown [jacqlynjones@yahoo.com]  
Subject: Financial Aid Check

I didn't get my financial aid check yet and I keep getting letters from the school saying that if I don't pay they're gonna drop me!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Why didn't I get my check yet??? I filled out the application on time. This school sucks.

Jacqlyn Jones

1. What are two "Dos" of e-mail etiquette that this writer follows?
  - a.
  - b.
2. What are two "Don'ts" of e-mail etiquette that this writer ignored?
  - a.
  - b.
3. What is one suggestion you have for this writer?