

Name _____

Communicating clearly on the Internet without creating misunderstandings is a challenge! One problem is that you don't have any facial expressions, body language, or environment to help you express yourself. Another problem is that there is little "give and take" for developing what you mean to say, or the topic you are discussing. Teacher suggestion: Using a large screen project a sample e-mail response to illustrate points below.

Points to help you:.

Be clear

Make sure the subject line (e-mail) or title (web page) reflects your content

Use only appropriate language

If you have any question on whether or not you are too emotional,

don't send the message, save it as a draft, and review it "later"

Remember: no one can guess your mood, see your facial expressions, etc.

All they have are your words, and your words can express the opposite of what you feel, making for a big misunderstanding.

Don't use ALL CAPITAL LETTERS--it's equal to shouting or screaming.

Be brief

If your message is short, people will be more likely to read it .

Make a good impression

Your words and content represent you; review/edit your words and images before sending.

Be selective on what information

you put in an e-mail or on a web site:

Information on the Internet is very **public**, and can be seen by anyone in the world including criminals, future employers, and governments.

Forward e-mail messages you receive only *with permission of the sender*

Remember you are not anonymous

What you write in an e-mail and web site can be traced back to you.

Consider others

If you are upset by what you read or see on the Internet, forgive bad spelling or stupidity, but...

If you think it violates the law, forward it to the FBI or your state's Attorney General, with your teacher's help.

Obey copyright laws

Don't use others' images, content, etc. without permission.

Don't forward e-mail, or use web site content without permission.

Visit the Library of Congress' Guide on "*Copyright Basics*" for students and teachers.

Cite others' work you use. Give credit to the original writer.

Use distribution lists appropriately and with permission.

Do not send SPAM

SPAM is posting or e-mailing unsolicited e-mail, often advertising messages, to a wide audience (another way of thinking of it is electronic junk mail).

Don't forward chain letters

If you receive one, notify your parent or teacher.

Don't respond to "flames" or personal attacks

Contact your teacher or parent for action and referral.

Adapted from youthhood.org