

Working Without a Net

What can impact your bottom line, financially or your reputation – at home or at work.

Everything you post online will be used to determine what type of person you are, so make sure your sending the right message. Essentially, the internet is your resume.

Email – everyone uses it, but not everyone should.

Email is a legal document.

Remember that when writing an email, no one can see your face or hear your voice so the two most commonly used senses to help us understand communication – are missing. This is why it is so easy for miscommunication. It's not so much what you say, it's the perceived tone.

- Do not use all CAPS unless you are emphasizing – it is a form of yelling
- Do not click on links in emails
- Do not open attachments you aren't expecting
- Do not forward or send emails that include rumors, are angry or are untrue
- Email are backed up and retrievable
- Email can be forwarded without your knowledge

Emails with hoaxes, good luck chain letters, too good to be true etc. may seem harmless, but these emails waste millions of hours of time, and take up expensive space on servers everywhere. Forwarding bogus emails can harm your personal reputation and spreading harmful misinformation can be dangerous. Before you forward that email, check out the sites below.

Hoaxes, rumors, urban legends and more

www.snopes.com – focuses on email hoaxes. Read carefully researched analyses of any popular email message floating around on the web. Urban legends, political myths, folklore, plain old misinformation.

www.about.com – a commercial “portal” features a search engine and a number of general channels like religion and business – usually solid well-researched information.

www.truthorfiction.com – quick and easy information about eRumors, warnings, offers, requests for help, myths, hoaxes, virus warnings and humorous or inspirational stories that are circulated by email.

Healthcare Information

www.mayoclinic.com – a wealth of information on supplements, natural care and more.

www.medlineplus.gov – National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. Extensive information about drugs, medical encyclopedia, interactive patient tutorials and latest health news. Before trying any of the latest healthcare fads, experimental surgeries, herbal miracle cures or drug company claims – take a moment to surf this non-commercial, government site.

www.webmd.com – contemporary and comprehensive commercial site on health issues, supported by sponsor revenues. *Keep in mind to check with your doctor before following any advice from here.

Political Fact and Fiction:

*Always read several sources to get a broader bi-partisan view since anyone can have a political orientation.

www.factcheck.org – claims to be non-partisan, nonprofit, “consumer advocate” for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics. They monitor TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews and news releases. They strive to provide an ethically and politically balanced view of the political world.

www.cjrdaily.org – a real-time critique of journalism and a continuing discussion and analysis of where journalism is as a craft and a business, and where it’s going. Operating under the auspices of the Columbia Journalism Review, the focus is on three areas: political journalism; the larger forces – political, economic, technological, social, legal – that affect journalism; and the business and financial press.

IM – Instant messaging

- Messages are kept and backed-up just as email is
- People can cut and paste and resend your messages
- If it’s private – go outside, make sure your alone and say it – don’t IM it

Blogs

- It’s an open online diary, make sure you want the world to read it
- Is it illegal?
- Is it unethical?
- Too much drama?
- Is it offending?
- Is it embarrassing to you or someone else?

Social Networks

- Check all your profiles, log out and see what everyone else can see
- Make profiles private if possible

Cell Phones/PDA's

Workplace

- Turn off or set to vibrate in meetings – your time is not more valuable than all the other people in the meeting
- If a call/message comes in, glance and make decision, if it's truly urgent, excuse yourself and take the call
- Employers generally do not pay you to IM with friends, chat with family, or shop all day

Outside of work

- If it's important and you are in ANY social situation, even with your family, excuse yourself and take the call/message etc. Do not sit at the dinner table, restaurant, or in the movie and take your call. I promise you your life is not as important or interesting as you seem to think to all of the rest of us and we did not pay to listen to you.
- If you are in line at the grocery store or bank and it's your turn – hang up or ask the person on the other end to hold, take care of your business and then resume your call. Unless the call/message is urgent – if you continue on, you are simply rude – not important.

Google

- Google yourself to see what's out there – your potential employees and dates will
- Schools will google you as well
- Most will check results for at least 3 pages
- Search using your full name, with quotation marks and without

Additional Tips:

- Don't share personal information anywhere online unless it's a trusted source
- Learn about the capabilities and limitations of virus software
- Never click on links or run programs from your email
- Get a separate credit/debit card to use online, only transfer enough funds to cover the transactions
- Always read a web site's privacy policy before giving any personal information.
- Make sure that a web site offers a secure connection before giving credit-card information.
- Use email appropriately
- Use phones appropriately