

# TELEPHONE AND EMAIL ETIQUETTE BASICS

Please note: these suggestions apply to all situations in which you're communicating with people who are not in your immediate family or group of friends- employers, faculty, agency personnel, and so forth.

- **Know your audience** and choose an appropriate **tone**. It is always best to err on the side of formality until you're sure you are on more familiar terms. Address individuals in a respectful manner (Professor Jones, Ms. Smith); do not use first names until given permission. Do not shorten first names without permission (use Daniel, rather than Dan, for example.)
- **Identify yourself**, on the phone and in email, by your **first and last names**. It's likely that your contact knows more than one person with your first name
- **Use proper grammar and standard English**, orally and in writing
- **Remember your manners** – always say “please” and “thank-you”



## ***On the phone:***

- **Listen to your voicemail greeting.** Is the content of your message appropriate for all callers? Do you identify yourself clearly? Does your voice convey an acceptable image of yourself to prospective employers or to faculty members?
- **When leaving a message** for others on voicemail, **enunciate and speak slowly**. If the recipient has to play your message several times to understand your name or to copy down your number, you've made an immediate bad impression. *Cellphone signals can be unpredictable. If you have left a message for someone, and your call is not returned, call again. Do not assume that the recipient was able to hear your message clearly*
- **Check messages often** and **return all phone calls promptly**
- Remember, **your interview starts the moment you pick up the phone**. Many employers pre-screen applicants on the phone before interviewing them in person. Be professional and courteous

## ***When writing email:***

- **Use your NEU email address or another conservative email address.** Reserve clever or personal email addresses for friends and family
- Make sure the **subject line** relates to the content of your email
- **Exercise caution and discretion when using “cc”, “bcc” and “Reply to all”**
- **Begin the email with a polite salutation**, such as Dear Professor Jones, or Hello Ms. Smith
- **Make requests or ask questions politely**; do not make commands
- Use standard punctuation and capitalization. **Spell-check every message**
- **Avoid profanity and slang**
- **Re-read every message before sending**, checking for appropriate tone and for clarity. If you have written mail in a state of duress, delay sending the email until you are calm and can review tone and content objectively
- **Sign your name with a respectful closing**, such as “Thanks” or “Sincerely”
- Remember that **company email** belongs to the company and is **not necessarily private**. Do not write anything that you would be ashamed to speak out loud
- **Use work email for business purposes only**
- **Save professional emails for future reference and documentation**