

# Netiquette ;) )

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## *Netiquette*

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<http://www.google.com/search?q=netiquette>

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# Conclusion

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Fortunately the basic sets in the online etiquette have already been described and accepted as its official rules:

**To the list of the intransient things** we do every morning there are gradually included some more, which we don't think often about, and namely the looks at the screen of the phone, organizer, PDA, e-mail. The communication means in our everyday life become more and more in numbers, types and quality. Within the business hours we are accompanied by phone calls, e-mails, faxes, short mobile scripts (SMS). We more and more rarely write the good old letters on paper. In the search of information or in order to exchange information we find ourselves in the so called cyberspace, which nowadays we can easily identify with the Internet (the Web). The term "cyberspace" is an idea of William Gibson and once it has been used to unify all private networks and multiuser systems for data and messages exchange (BBS, FIDO, UseNet etc.). Nowadays it is mainly identified with the Internet.

## Cyberspace or How to communicate online

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Fortunately the basic sets in the online etiquette have already been described and accepted as its official rules:

**“In Rome, do like the Romans do!”** What to do, however, if the Romans are invisible and separated to ethnical groups with different habits and customs?

The cyberspace is a similar Rome. Most people use the means of the Web basically for communication through e-mail, discussion groups, forums, chat, ICQ and similar, video conferences etc.

All types of communication in electronic way, with some exceptions, suffer from one and the same thing – the lack of immediate feedback of the visual and/or sensuous contact, which helps us “balance” in the communication just as we are walking on the ground. In order to avoid the possible problems, originating from the lack of feedback, in the electronic environment there has been established a set of simple rules, known as the netiquette.

# What is netiquette? About the need of netiquette

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Etiquette – manners, required by the good education or implied competently as compulsory in the social or official life. The etymological stem of the word of French origin literally means “ticket” and “etiquette” in this case – entry ticket for a particular group or society.

Main Entry: net • i • quette

Pronunciation: ‘ne-ti-ket’

Function: noun

Etymology: blend of net and etiquette

Date: 1988

:etiquette governing communication on the Internet

Netiquette means the etiquette in the Web). Most of its rules the netiquette has taken from the etiquette in the real world. Part of them are based on the former purely technical limitations of the Web. Others result from the already established practice.

Frankly said:

**The netiquette is “our first seven years” in the Web.**

Although following the same rules, the online manners could vary seriously between the different virtual points. The basic rules of the netiquette, however, are observed almost everywhere. The easiest approach towards learning them for a particular place is spending some time only as a spectator.

# Basic rules of the netiquette

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Fortunately the basic sets in the online etiquette have already been described and accepted as its official rules:

## 1. Remember the human.

Never forget that you communicate with a human, who you can injure emotionally.

- - - It is not good to injure the others' feelings.
- - - Say only that, what you would say when you are facing the other.
- - - Warn, when you do flaming.

## 2. Hold to the standards of the real world.

- - - Be ethic.
- - - The non-observance of the rules is bad netiquette.

## 3. Remember where are you online.

- - - The netiquette varies according to the location.
- - - For some time remain only a spectator.

## 4. Respect the time and the connection of the others.

- - - It's OK to think, that what you are doing at the moment is the most important thing in the world, but do not expect from others to agree with that.
- - - Address your messages to the right place.
- - - Try not to ask nonsense/stupid things at public places.
- - - Read the FAQ section!
- - - Where it is proper, use personal correspondence.
- - - If you don't agree with what is developing as an activity at a certain place, withdraw instead of show loudly your disapproval.
- - - Take care for the connection of the others.

## 5. Have a nice online look.

- - - - Check your messages for spelling and grammar mistakes before posting them.
- - - - Be informed what you are talking about and be sensuous.
- - - - Don't flame. Argue with arguments.

## 6. Share expert knowledge.

- - - - Try to help others.
- - - - When members of a group discussion help you by means of personal correspondence, generalize the results and send them in the group.

## 7. Be careful with the fire.

- - - - Don't answer flames.
- - - - Don't criticize the spelling of the others.
- - - - Bid your excuses, if you have flamed someone.

## 8. Respect the privacy.

- - - - Don't read the others' personal correspondence.

## 9. Don't misuse your authorities.

## 10. Forgive the others' mistakes.

- - - - Everyone has ever been a novice.

# First steps

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**The initial impression**, which an electronic text can leave in the others, is similar to the one which the outward appearance creates. The readers of the message shall draw their conclusions about you according to what they first see and then read. This is equally valid for the direct e-mail, for the mailing lists and for participations in public discussions (forums).

It is inevitable that the electronic communication should be accompanied with a certain dose of bias from the part of the users. It is again related to the netiquette with regard to the following things:

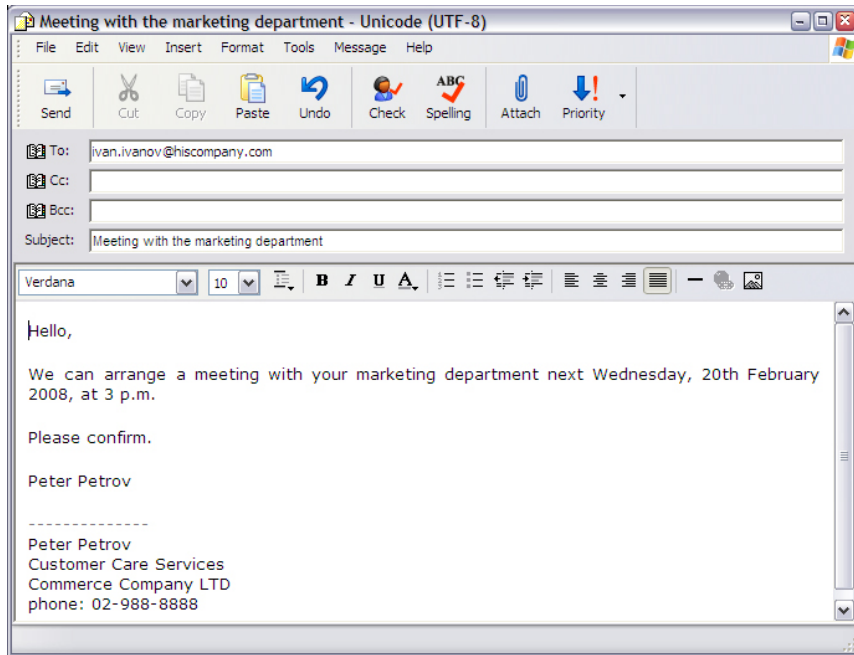
- - - - The address of the sender, the format and the language of the message.
- - - - The tone and the punctuation within the frames of one single message.
- - - - The quantity and quality of the content.
- - - - Hyperlinks (links).
- - - - Attached files.

**Observing some specific rules** for writing of an electronic text is important and influences directly the impression, which you are creating:

- - - - In case of business correspondence it is important that every e-mail shall be on one single topic. If you have to say multiple things, make it in separate e-mails.
- - - - Of importance is even the address, from which the particular e-mail has been written or the nickname behind a public post. Choose them carefully. Avoid the numbers (radka77@hotmail.com, esek6 etc.).
- - - - Use the correct alphabet. If you write in Bulgarian, do it in Cyrillic alphabet. If you are not sure whether the recipient shall be able to read your message, double it in Latin alphabet.
- - - - Check carefully every letter for spelling and stylistical mistakes. Do not rely on the programs for checking.
- - - - The use of Re: (Regarding:, in Reply to:) and Fw: (Forwarding) in the topic, when you answer or forward a message, is mandatory.

# Topic

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The topic of the letter should be able to be understood even out of its context. When a user reads his/her personal mailbox, he/she fully depends on the topic in order to find his/her bearings. Provided that the topic is absent or it is not known to him/her, there is a possibility that he/she should delete the message without having read it.

**Usually before an e-mail gets opened,** there is only its name (subject) to be seen. The writing of successful topics isn't hard, but is an important element for having an adequate correspondence. The entire message could lose its sense by a wrong or missing title. The latter must provide the nature of the message and meanwhile must not be longer than several words.

Recently, with the big quantity unwanted mail (bulk, spam, junk mail) it is necessary for the users to ignore topics as "Profitable offer!", "A tool that's so easy to use" or "Live, Online Teaching!". Such e-mails are often deleted automatically by the recipients, since they look like advertisements. Try to make your topics not sound/look like that.

# Greeting

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Be careful when sending a business offer to vladimira@company.net, since the mailbox could belong for example to Vladimir Alexandrov and not to a woman with the first name Vladimira.

**Just like the phone conversation has its “Hallo”,** the electronic posting, too, has a greeting and a form of address in its beginning.

If you are writing to someone who you don't know or if you are posting for the first time in a discussion, it is good to introduce yourself. This could be done both by means of the signature at the end of the text and by means of a short explanation in the beginning.

An usual practice is that from the second mail on the message should start with a personal addressing to its main recipient. For example:

*Sasha,*

*I do accept your opinion with the following remarks ...*

**There are no fixed rules** for beginning (and end) of the message. The greetings are often complied with the gender of the recipient and his/her social status. In Bulgaria one can easily specify the gender of the recipient on his/her family. So the addressing “Mister” or “Madam” could be easily obtained if you know the family of the recipient.

# Response

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When you answer questions from previous correspondence, extremely useful shall be citing of the rows, for which you provide an answer. For example:

- > *According to me in the document, which you have sent to me,*
- > *the main topic has been very slightly touched.*

*I don't think that in this particular case we should touch this issue hard.*

# Style in the electronic text

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The specific possibilities of the format “electronic message” allow to a particular sender for a very short time to reach multiple recipients or, provided that a particular sender participates in the so called mailing list, to receive a big amount of messages. That is the reason why the time, which is spent for checking and answering the e-mails, gradually increases.

Meanwhile the possibilities of the mail, which otherwise has a very basic technology, hide some risks just like rapid distribution of viruses, exchange of unsolicited messages (spam), exhaustion of server resource, dedicated for the particular user or a group of users.

Usually in the office one spends as little time as possible to a message, quite less than the sender supposes and/or would like to. This applies even more to the e-mail. We cite parts of rules #4 and #5:

## 4. Respect the time and the connection of the others.

- - - It's OK to think, that what you are doing at the moment is the most important thing in the world, but do not expect from others to agree with that.
- - - Address your messages to the right place.
- - - Try not to ask nonsense/stupid things at public places.
- - - Read the FAQ section!

## 5. Have a nice online look.

- - - Be informed what you are talking about and be sensuous.

*“Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler!”*

The above mentioned thought is Einstein's and is absolutely valid for every e-mail or posting. An important pre-condition is that the text of the message should be a short and easy to assimilate. Some experts advice that the letter should not be longer than 50 rows and that every paragraph should have no more than five sentences.

## What to avoid

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**Remember, that the bad effect of one message which is not in compliance with the netiquette, is being always multiplied by the number of recipients, to which it gets. Here are some things, which it is good to be avoided, when one writes to a group of people.**

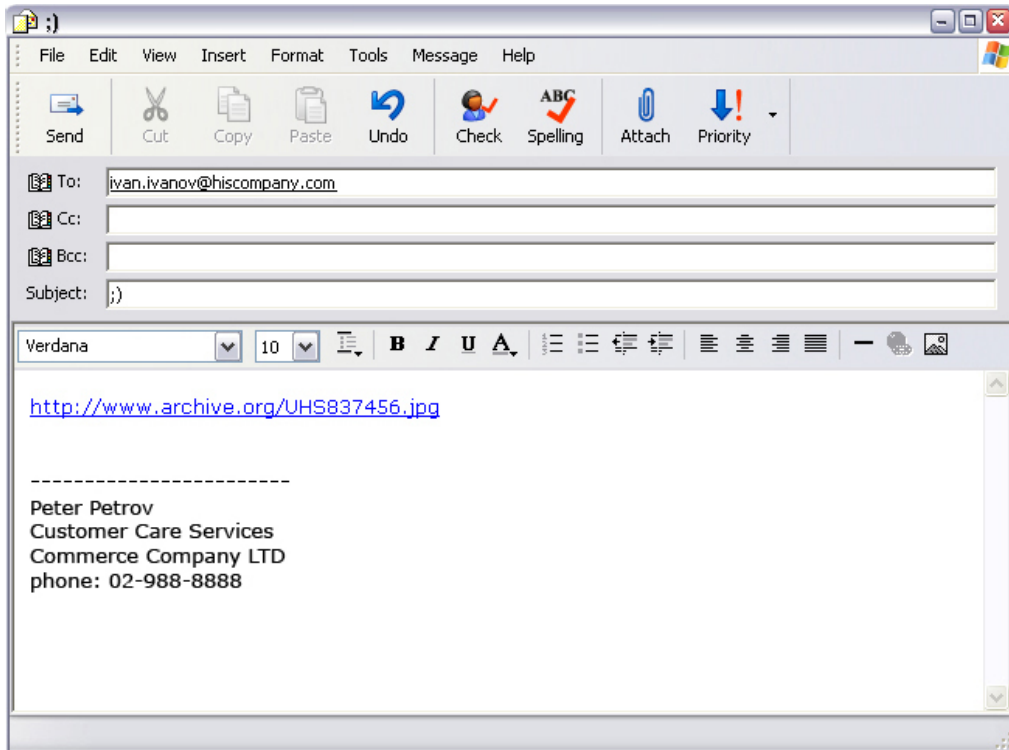
- - - An irrelevant or missing subject of the message: the recipients shall either directly neglect such a message or shall open it from pure curiosity. Once they have opened it, they either shall find something, which concerns them, or to the contrary, they shall pass on frustrated. In this way a part of the message shall reach non-interested persons, and a part of the right recipients shall overlook it and/or delete it, i.e. the focus shall be moved with a risk of negative reactions. In most users groups (mailing lists) the practice of the specific sections exists, which are written within square brackets, for example for the list for hardware support: [mac] [pc] [general] [offtopic].

- - - The non-availability of the written text (specific jargon/slang): not everyone must understand what you are talking about. More probably one can even expect, that a big part of the readers shall not respond to the individual level of slang and emotional hue of the message. Try that the level of the text should make it understandable for everyone; expect if you really know in detail all recipients.

- - - A wrong structured text: avoid long introductions or side text, where it is appropriate. Start with a short resume of what shall be talked about in the message. One or two sentences are completely enough. This allows the people to assess how much time they are going to spend for the message, so that there should be a minimal loss of time.

- - - CAPITAL letters: except in urgency, consider them as prohibited. The normal letters mark normal tone of expression. According to the practice everything written with capital letters is considered as the highest degree of accent, i.e. “shouting”. There are other ways for specifying something important, too, for example separation of a text in its own paragraph, the well known “NB:”, \*marking a text with asterisks\* (try it in Word), marking with bold font, underlining between the words.

Use capital letters where they are normally used – in the beginning of the sentences, names etc.



- - - Empty links: there is nothing more annoying than a message with the subject “funny”, which contains nothing more than a unknown link. If the link transfers to an article, copy the contents of the article or a part of it under the link and send the mail in this way. If the link transfers to an interactive page (flash, shockwave, test etc.), specify the subject. If the link concerns a picture, be sure that the file is not too big and attach the picture itself to the message.

- - - Big sized attached files: take care for the connection of the others! The practice requires that no attached files should be sent to mailing lists. The reason is that the different users connect to the Web at different speed (kbps). A message which is big in size most often blocks the access to the entire incoming mail of the user until it has not been downloaded by its mail client. In a corporate environment this rule is less applicable, as depending on the technology used (pop3/imap) it could be ignored sometimes. In order to learn more about the attached files, please read “Size does matter” below in the text.

- - - Length of rows: many mail clients allow writing more than 80 characters in a row. This is dangerous because of the possibility of text chaos, since in the Internet most e-mails are automatically formatted to 80 or less characters in a row. In this way the long rows shall be discontinued and it shall be very hard to follow them.

Example:

*It's often occurred to me that many people don't seem to understand the clear distinction between correlational variance and causal relationships.*

Imagine that you must read whole pages, formatted in this way? If you don't make the settings of your program so, that there should be no more than 80 characters in a row allowed, the people shall receive e-mails in such way and most of them shall delete them, instead of take pains to read them.

## Viruses

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**A common fact is that the technology provides possibilities,** but it can also be used with a bad intense. Some viruses use the e-mail as a spreading environment. The protection against them is subject to a whole separate document, but when you are sending e-mail, there are several ways to save the others' concerns and to make a good impression, too.

- - - Specify in the subject what you are sending: as an alternative variant you can mention, that you are attaching a file as well as what one can find in the file. So the recipient can always find the message at a later stage just by the title. Have in mind that in some mail viruses there is specified what the attached (infected) file contains.

- - - Send files, which cannot transfer viruses: as with the real viruses, there are ways for transfer of electronic viruses, too. The computer viruses are distributed by means of files (in a mail, attached or input). The dangerous types are usually EXE, COM, PIF, as well as DOC. Avoid DOC and use instead the analogical RTF or use the pure, but unformatted TXT. As a last resort try to transfer the content of the DOC file to a HTML message.

## Other attached files

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The attached to a e-mail files grow by 30% bigger than their original size.

How big is a big file?

In fact this depends on the connection of the recipient, provided that the connection has a speed of 6 Mbps an attached file with a size of 3MB shall be downloaded for 2 to 3 minutes via the e-mail.

### Size does matter.

- - - One of the worst existing mistakes of the users is sending of pictures in an uncompressed or improper format, which usually results in huge physical sizes of the files. Try to assess for what purposes the image you are sending shall be used. If it is for someone's screen, i.e. it won't be printed, check if it fits your own screen (except if you are working with a very high resolution).

- - - For images you should use JPG and GIF instead of the uncompressed BMP, TIFF and TGA. If you are sending screen images, try to achieve a size between 50 and 200 KB.

- - - Don't send MP3 files to mailing lists!

- - - If you are sending multiple or big sized files, try to send them in an archive. Popular archivators for this purpose are WinZIP and WinRAR for Windows, Stuffit for MacOS. The users of Unix/Linux/\* enjoy a wider variety of applications.

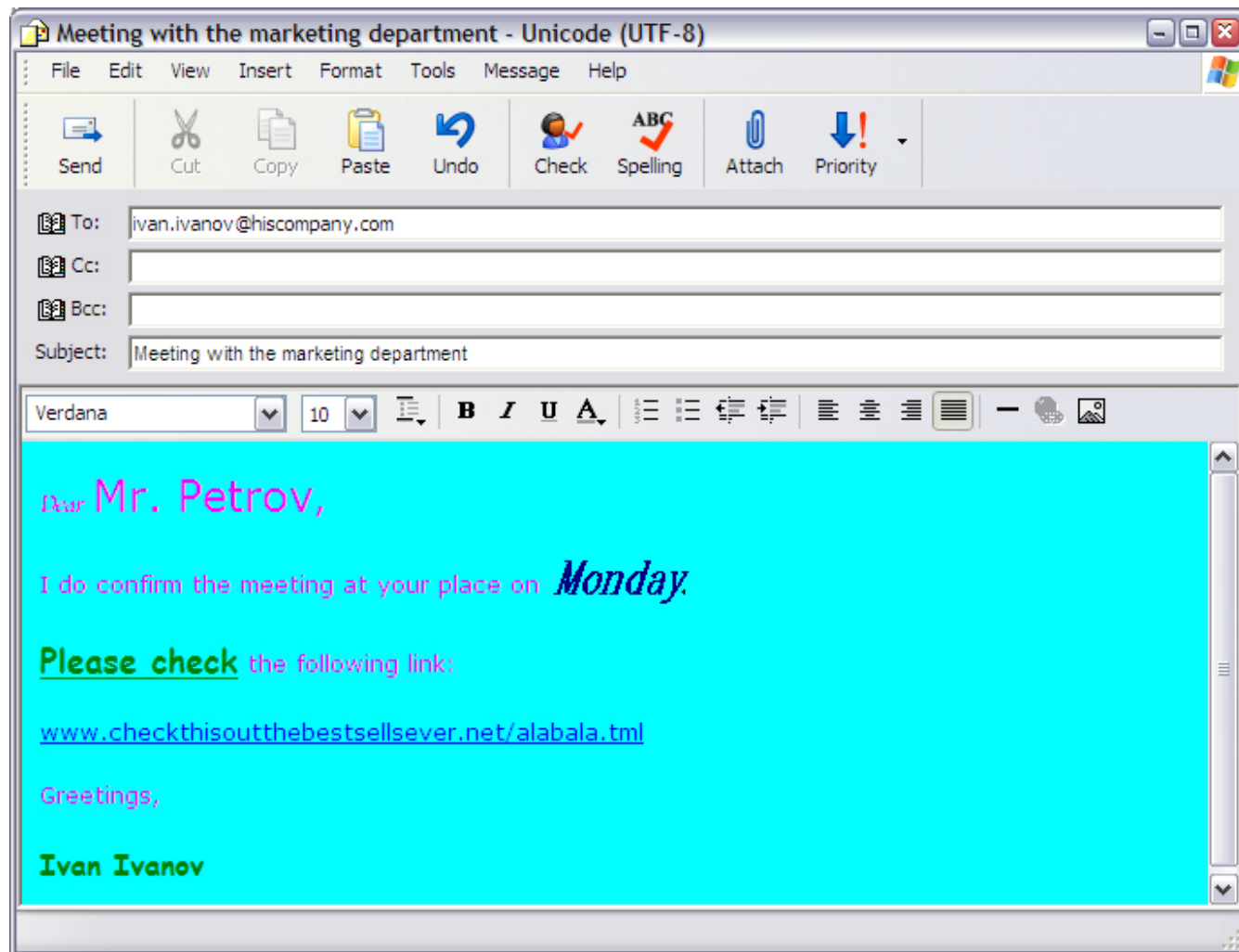
## HTML mail

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The popular mail clients, as well as the popular e-mail websites, support HTML format of the messages. This allows a better distributed on the screen text, colouring and different fonts, but puts also traps for the colourful clumsy e-mails.

The weak sides of HTML are in the bigger size of the messages, as well as in the possibility that a code could have been input there, which could present a risk for the user's PC. In an environment, which is free from viruses, HTML is recommendable because of its better readability. Unfortunately a safe environment is very hard to be achieved, even when it looks safe at first glance. After you assess the risk of infections, here are some tips for HTML mail:

- - - Write with a normal (black on white) colour, do not use page background.
- - - Use bullets for structuring within the different subtopics, point out the most important things first.
- - - Use bold and italic only when this is really necessary.
- - - Use hyperlinks, but do not let your message turn into a portal webpage.
- - - Write with a readable font, which won't turn the recipients away.



## Spacing between the rows

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**Generally said, if the text of a message has been divided in paragraphs, it is many times easier to read this text.**

For example:

*Our mission is to provide more available, more efficient, easier and user friendlier communications. In this way we create efficient conditions for a transition to a new information society in Bulgaria. That's why the Orbitel experts find cross points between the global technological tendencies and the communication needs of the business and the society. Orbitel offers: national and international talks, internet access, virtual private networks, registration of domains, hosting and e-mail, consultations.*

vs.:

*Our mission is to provide more available, more efficient, easier and user friendlier communications. In this way we create efficient conditions for a transition to a new information society in Bulgaria. That's why the Orbitel experts find cross points between the global technological tendencies and the communication needs of the business and the society.*

*Orbitel offers:*

- National and international talks.*
- National access to the Internet.*
- Virtual private networks.*
- Registration of domains, hosting and e-mail.*
- Consultations.*

**Obviously the second text is to be read much easier than the first one.** When you are writing an electronic message, try to separate the text in paragraphs. By this you shall make it easier for the reader, and even for yourself, provided that it is necessary to read again the text at a later stage.

# Language, cyrillic alphabet and encoding

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**Our official language**, including the one we have chosen to write the current text on, is the Bulgarian. Not quite a good practice, but one which has got its way is that in the electronic communication one should use the so called Methodian alphabet, which consists of writing the Bulgarian letters with their analogues from the Latin alphabet or the keyboard order “qwerty”.

Here is how the above mentioned paragraph in Methodian:

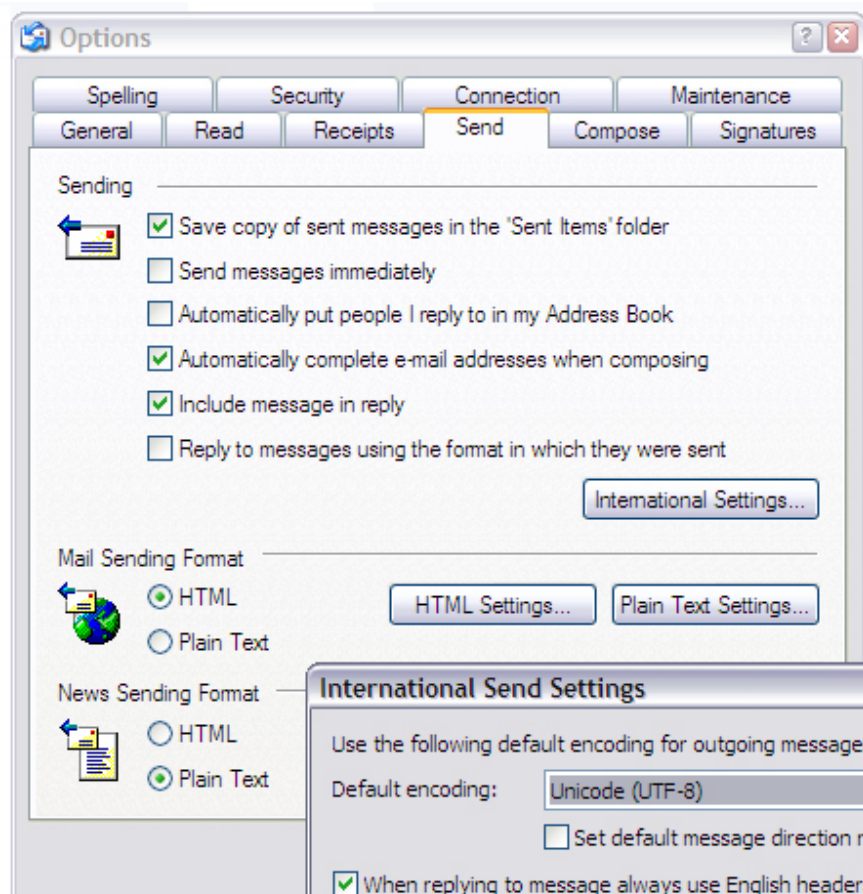
*Nashiqt oficialen ezik, vkluchitelno tozi, na kojto izbrahme da napishem i nastoqshtiq text, e bulgarskiqt. Ne osobeno dobra, no nalojila se praktika e v elektronnata komunikacij da se izpolzva t.nar. “metodievica”, koqto predstavljva izpisvaneto na bulgarskite bukvi s tehните syotvetstviq ot latinskata azbuka ili klaviaturnata podredba qwerty.*

The first paragraph is more readable for all, who understand Bulgarian.

By the moment, however, the Cyrillic alphabet still creates problems in some e-mail messages, since there is no full guaranty, that the mail client of the recipient shall visualize the message correct. For the right visualization in the system fields of the mail message one enters the definition for the so called “encoding”.

Here are some tips, if the e-mail recipients are Bulgarian:

- - - - Write in Bulgarian and with Cyrillic alphabet, when appropriate and possible: consider this as a must. In this way you make things easier for the recipient, you save his/her time and last, but not least, you show respect.
- - - - Double the content with Methodian alphabet, when necessary: in case that you don't write in UniCode and you send a message to multiple users, it is recommendable to double the content with Latin letters, as you explicitly refer in the beginning of the message that everyone, who cannot read the text in Cyrillic, can find a copy in Latin hereafter. Converting programs are available in the Internet. However, if you must write in Methodian, do not replace “ch” with “4” and “sh” with “6”. This is considered to be bad style.



- - - - Use UNICODE or correct encoding. The Unicode system contains more than 34000 symbols from 24 alphabets in a unified electronic order. It significantly enhances its antediluvian ancestors just like KOI-8, Windows 1251 etc., which are more narrowly orientated usually towards one single language. From the time of Windows 98 on Unicode is supported in every actual operation system, including \*X, Mac OS etc. Usually Unicode is suitable enough for sending of e-mails. However, if you still have doubts, use Windows-1251 for Cyrillic alphabet.

**To more than one user and from different nationalities try** using the language understandable for as much people as possible, even if in the mail you are addressing personally someone, who should understand it regardless of the language. This is a manifestation of good taste. As a standard in the international communication you can accept the English language.

# Signatures

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The signature of a message serves for identification of its sender.

**The signature can contain additional information, links and even images.** It is accepted that the signature shall start only with "--" on a new row. The signature must be as short as possible.

There is a rule according to which at the end of the message there is no signature placed, unless the text is at least twice bigger than the volume of the signature. Bring this in conformity with the corporate rules of the place, where you are working.

If you are sending messages to a group, there is no need to sign in detail all of them. Some people could even react hostile to such a thing.

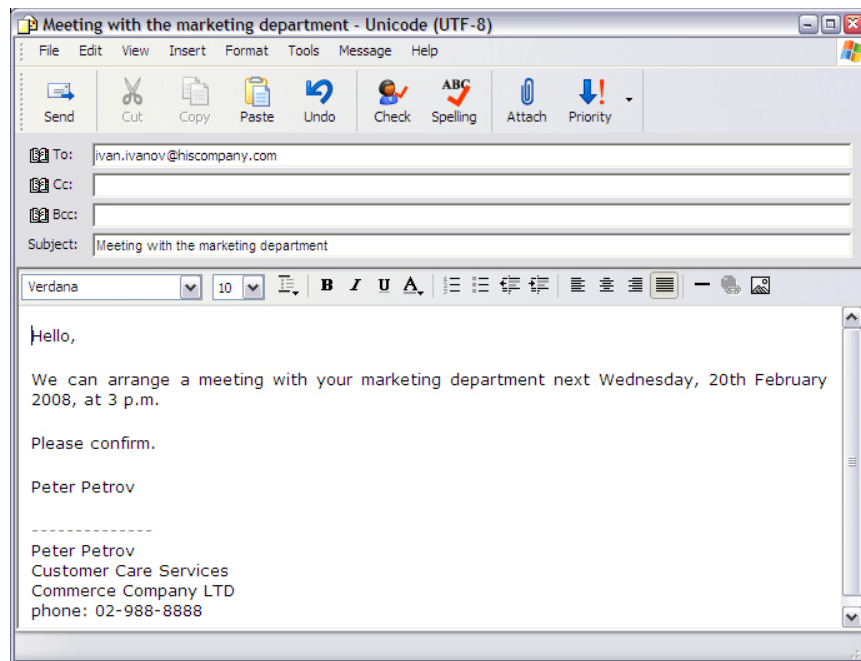
## Signatures and corporate identity

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**Corporate identity** is the way, in which a company introduces itself to the world and its customers. The way we introduce ourselves to the world, the customers and the partners. These are documents, brochures, posters, visit cards ... outgoing e-mails.

One of the most important things, which are easiest to reach the customers and the partners, is the signature. Once established, it is normal that its vision should be changed as rare as possible and only within the frames of the advertisement message, which it brings with itself (if any).

# VCF vs Signature



Sign your messages with a signature, not with a VCF file. The possibility that everyone should be interested of full details of this kind is almost equal to null.

**VCF (vCard File) is the standard e-visit** card of Microsoft Outlook. It allows entry of phone numbers, postal and e-mail addresses, birthday, anniversary, nickname, name of spouse, job, office, branch, manager, assistant and a bunch of other details.

The e-visit card can be send as an attachment with every e-mail, which you send. However, it remains an enhanced and interactive version of your e-signature. In most cases its use has no specific sense.

Many users get annoyed by the attached VCF file. Don't forget that the symbol for attached file always changes the visual priority of the message. Provided that in your signature there are your personal phone, fax and job position included, then the value of the e-visit card drops drastic. The other information could be given by you on request.

# Some tips for the mailing lists

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## If you must subscribe for the first time to any mailing list or if you are a recent member of such a list, here are some rules, which could be useful:

- - - - Prior to become a part of the mailing list, make out to which extent it is appropriate for you. You can check this by reading the short information about it, which usually is offered without need of subscription. Many mailing lists have detailed websites. It is not reasonable to subscribe to a list, where the topics are obviously on a more professional level than yours or where there are topics discussed in a language you don't speak.
- - - - Be quiet and learn. Wait for several weeks before taking part with an opinion in a particular discussion. Be sure that you know and understand the principles, trends and specifics of the new community. Investigate which topics are unwanted or even prohibited.
- - - - Save the welcome message you have received with your joining. It contains basic things and the behavior you have to observe.
- - - - Look around before "attacking". Remember, that the message shall be received by tens, hundreds, thousands, even ten thousands people! Think before sending something. Be sure that your message has been updated.
- - - - Do not send spam! Sending one and the same message to multiple mailing lists usually with the purpose of announcement is called crossposting. The latter is very close in its nature to the usual spam, therefore many users consider the crossposting as spam. Avoid it.
- - - - Share your knowledge. This, besides being an year-long practice in the Web, makes the world a better place for living. When you have information, which could be of use for everyone, post it in the list.
- - - - Turn off the options "request read receipt" and "auto-responder", when you are participating in mailing lists. They are obstacles in front of the proper functioning of the list and annoy the other participants.

# E-mail vs IM vs Voice vs Live

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There is no synonymous criterion for whether we should call somebody on the phone, write him/her an e-mail or meet him/her in person.

The personal meeting and the phone prevail, when the sought effect is big. If you want to be taken seriously, arrange a personal meeting. Don't arrange meetings for things, which could be achieved easily by other methods of communication – you could lose time and confidence.

This part concerns the moment, when one must adequately choose a method of communication, by means of which some information should get to its recipients or to a person should cooperate for taking decisions.

Some factors, which should determine the choice of a “channel”, are:

- - - How much time do we have.
- - - What is the priority of the task.
- - - What is the possibility to receive an adequate response.
- - - Is the format appropriate in order for it to serve the information.
- - - What is the sought effect.

**The e-mail is a proper way**, when things “go according to the plan” or when there is simply no plan. The e-mail helps us classify the information and provides us with the opportunity to react many times prior to sending a message. Provided that a mail is well written, the copy in its archive becomes a valuable aid. Bad written mails, on the other hand, could be confusing, could lose the time of their recipient and even make him/her angry.

You can tag an important e-mail by means of indication Importance: High. Do this only as a last resort. Avoid Importance: Low

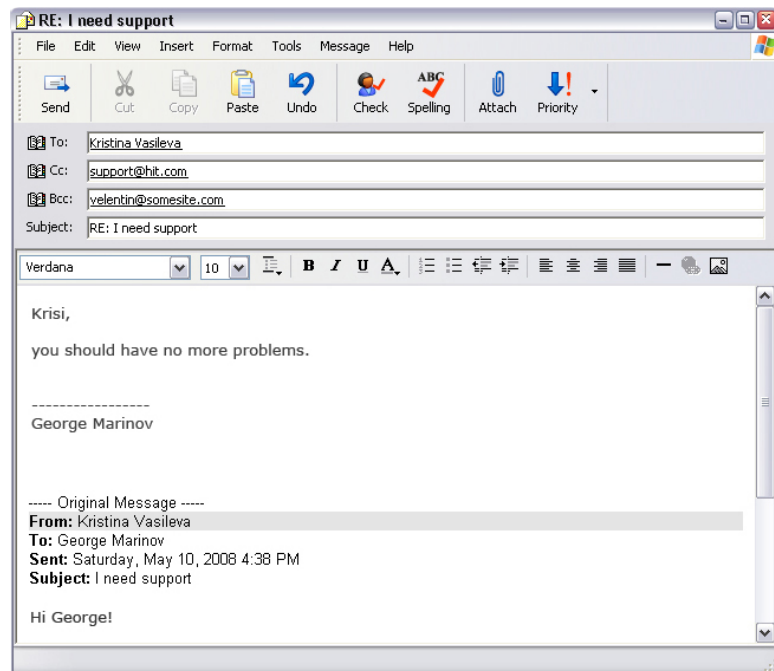
**The phone call** usually is appropriate for urgent situations, which makes it a preferable and usually the only choice in such cases. The phone call, on the other hand, requires time and full attention of the participants in the moment, when it is held. Not all said things are easily remembered and the details sometimes get lost.

**The personal meeting** and the teleconference require biggest amount of time and are particularly detailed as information carrier. Usually the price for this is the impossibility for them to be archived; therefore usually the results of such meetings are summarized by e-mail. The need of arrangement in advance adds a specific clumsiness.

It is often met, especially within one and the same office, that important things are said in one direction, without the person who says them taking into consideration the moment and the possibility for the others to receive these things as information. This is a bad practice, which is quite well replaced by the e-mail, because of the possibility to store it as an assigned automatic reminder.

**Short message texts** are appropriate for specifying the details with regard to already discussed things or for arranging of meetings. When the situation is urgent, the short message of course is followed by the phone call. Remember, that the short messages are not a reliable carrier. Very often because of technical reasons they do not reach their recipients.

# Addressing the messages



The e-mails have three address fields:

- To: - it marks the recipient of the e-mail.
- Cc: - a copy of the message (Carbon copy).
- Bcc: - a hidden copy of the message (Blind carbon copy).

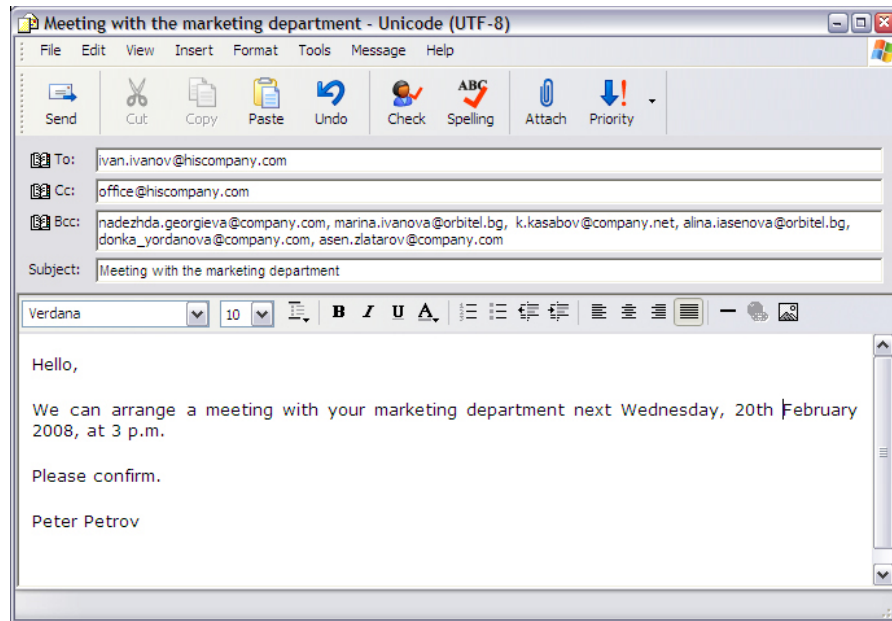
All fields allow the entrance of more than one user. It is

- - - Subject: the topic of the e-mail.
- - - To: all persons, who have direct relation to the subject.
- - - Cc: persons, who are indirectly related to the subject, but from which there is no specific action required, who have no direct relation to the particular e-mail, legal observers etc.
- - - Bcc: all outside beholders or recipients, about whom you do not wish the others to know.

**An often met practice** by sending spam or with the mailing lists is the entry of all recipients in the field Bcc:, as the field To: remains blank (undisclosed recipient). Use Bcc: with extreme caution. The function “Reply to All” in Microsoft Outlook automatically fills in the fields To: and Cc: according to the recipients of the message you are answering.

# Sending an e-mail to multiple recipients

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Every mail client (program) allows sending a copy of the e-mail to other recipients, as their e-mail address remains hidden for the main recipient (Bcc). This is a good option, provided that it is specified for more people.

**It is not pleasant,** when you want to send the e-mail to a big number of people and their address appear in the beginning of the e-mail. We have often received an e-mail with enumerated e-mail addresses on multiple rows. For keeping the privacy of the other recipients one can use a blind copy (Bcc:). Not all recipients agree that their e-mail address shall become available for other people.

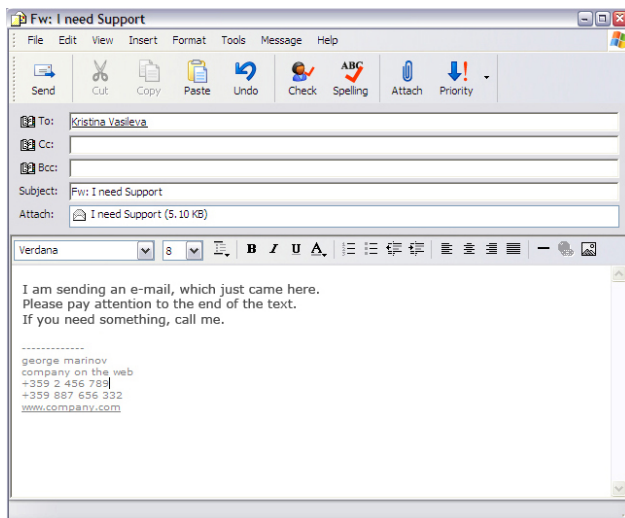
Some people consciously set their e-mail programs to automatically respond to all mailing lists to which the letter has been send. This might lead to a mass and avalanche-like sending of letters, unwanted by the receivers.

**In the times of the carbon paper** from one original there were produced not more than five readable copies. Think about these times and be aware to whom you would like to send them. Value others people time.

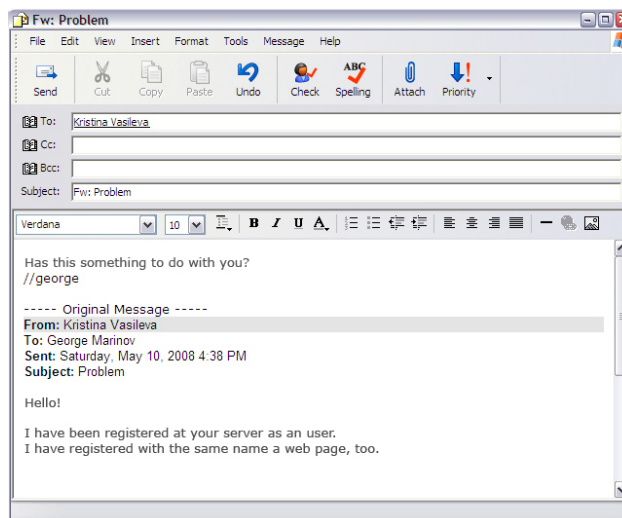
# Fwd attach vs Fwd as Text

Mail clients offer two ways of forwarding of messages.

- - - Forward as text: a copy of the message's body is included in a new message to a different recipient. Most of the system information gets lost. The attached files are attached to the new mail or get lost, depending on the individual settings.
- - - Forward as attachment: an entire message is attached as an attachment to a new, empty mail. The system information and the attached files are stored.



fwd as attachment



fwd as text

**The difference between the two types of forward** mainly concerns the need of opening an e-mail and then another one within the first. Therefore:

- - - Use Fwd as Text for all e-mails with short contents, as in case of attachments present check whether they have been attached again or not. The copy of the text makes it immediately available for reading, which avoids an interruption of the logical flow of information of the new message.
- - - Forward attached e-mails, when the original e-mail has complex structured contents or when you wish to keep it absolutely unchanged.

# Use of abbreviations/acronyms

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**In our everyday communication** we use many slang words and even abbreviations, in order to make your speech simpler. We use also a big amount of foreign words. Once accepted the English as a “buzz” (buzzword: “modern”, frequently used word), it is useful to use acronyms, too. The acronyms usually are 3 to 4 letter combinations, for example:

BTW - by the way

FYI - for your information

IAE - in any event

IMHO - in my humble opinion

RTFM - read the fine:] manual

F2F – face to face

IRL – in real life

HTH - hope this helps

TIA - thanks in advance

TYVM - thank you very much

10x – thanks

## Emoticons

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The remote access terminals have been and still are seriously used with regard to the Web. Once they have been strictly submissive to the text standard ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange). The latter in its original version, contains only 127 symbols, as it is even today one of the most popular standards for text transfer.

**The emoticons are almost a fixed part** of the electronic written communication and up to now they have been added to the so called ASCII-art. Quite often an emoticon is in state to change completely the meaning of a whole sentence or paragraph of text. The emoticons are extremely many in numbers, nationality, types and origin. The most commonly used, however, are several very well known:

:-) :	smiley, happy face / short variant
:-( :(	sad face, unpleasant fact / short variant
:] :[	cyber variants of the above mentioned
:>	sarcastic laugh
;) :	wink
:-D :D	a fit of laughter
:-( :'	cry
:  :-	indefiniteness
:* u :{}	they mark variants of a kiss
[] u\и (((u\и)))	hug

**The use of the emoticons can vary** according to the established habits of particular group. It is possible to see \_o/ or \o\_ as a hand lifting, for example, \o/ in its specific meaning etc. The variants of popular emoticons, used in Bulgaria, are:

~	variable, so-so
:/	trouble
>[:]	robot
>[[]	TV

Sometimes the emoticons can consists only of specific parts such as:

;	;;	намузгане
)	))))	smile

**All emoticons**, which can be “reversed” as a mirror image in the horizontal, have their reversed variants:

(: [ : <<: etc.

To the newest emoticons one can count:

]]	remoteness
] [ ) (	more remoteness, parting
} {	face to face
()	harmony

The emoticons can decorate emotionally the message, where this is admissible, proper or necessary. They can both close sentences and can be included in the natural words flow of the letter.

**Consider the emoticons as a spice.** When overdone, they can result in an unpleasant effect. Use them moderately and in their proper places, when possible. With simple words, do not finish any sentence or paragraph with an emoticon.

# Netiquette vs. business ethics

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**In the practice there is the following case known:** an employee of a company couldn't agree with a recently taken decision. He had a short phone conversation with one of the directors, where he succeeded in obtaining all reasons for the decisions, which were in accordance with the corporate policy. Then he posted a detailed opinion in a public discussion, which contained a resume of the specified reasons and a detailed disproof of every aspect of them.

It is clear, that such a thing can be done according to all rules of the netiquette. Is this, however, a good practice? It is rather not. In the companies, which have access to external electronic resources for information exchange (forums, mailing lists, chats), the business etiquette becomes a part of the netiquette. Before you post information in the form of an e-mail or a posting somewhere in the "clubs", you better think whether this shall be good for the company you work for.

## Personal attitude

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We often get annoyed with regard to an e-mail, usually because of two reasons: either the expected e-mail doesn't come or in the e-mail there is something which we don't like. The netiquette on the topic:

### **The need of response**

We are writing tens of e-mails every day. For some of them we expect an answer, because on this answer there is another task depending, others we completely forget. The answer of an e-mail is extremely important, because with which a cycle is being closed. Even if there is a simple yes/no answer expected from you, don't neglect it. You could have done the task or the favour you have been asked for, but how the others should know about this?

## Flaming

Flaming is often met bad practice in the texts of the e-mails, although almost everyone would deny maintaining such a practice. On the other hand it often happens that the receiver “should have deserved it”. Before writing or sending any strong emotional message think about whether you would say everything, which is written there, if you would talk face to face to the person. If your answer is rather negative, skip the message. There is no need to make a fool of someone in public, if you want to point out the incorrect spelling in his/her message. Make this in person, but not in front of the others. Do not say anything for a person, which you cannot support with facts.

Maybe the most horrible thing you could do to someone, respectively one could do to you, is the combination of non-justified personal attack in front of many people, followed by a personal (non-public) excuse. This cuts sharply across the principles of the netiquette. If you initiate something like this, have in mind that this could seriously harm your personal image in front of a virtual group. Provided that you are in the position of an injured person, demand public excuse, for which you naturally have right. Generally, be careful to avoid passionate personal wars in front of public.

Usually when you communicate somewhere in the cyber space, the word remain written. When you have no control on them there is a risk that after a certain period they could come back to you :) Here's one more reason not to be offensive online.

## Right of personal correspondence

To rummage the personal belongings of your colleagues when they are absent, to read their letters and documents on hard copy and to check their e-mail are three analogous things. With this the topic is exhausted. Do not do this!

# Useful links

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- - - - Netiquette by Virginia Shea

The netiquette “bible” is available online in its full variant and comprehensive elegance, in English:

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>

- - - - A Beginner’s Guide to Effective E-mail

Where the Re: comes from, why is it good to avoid pronouns in the first three rows of an e-mail and how should we write good e-mails at all. Available in English with a German translation:

<http://www.webfoot.com/advice/email.top.html>

- - - - Online conversion of Cyrillic to Latin alphabet

<http://www.mashke.org/Conv>

# Conclusion

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This document, taken by itself, only sets the frames for a type of behavior, which has been formed in the Web for many years - since the very beginning of its existence. In order to be efficient, the netiquette should acquire a status of social order. Do not forget, that besides reproaching someone's behavior, which is not in conformity with the netiquette, you could also show how the harmful effects from it could be avoided.

Success and good luck in the Web!

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*Cyberly yours,*

*Orbitel netiquette team:*

*Valeria Angelova*

*George Marinov*

**PS: the word “Cyberly” isn't included** in Merriam-Webster English Dictionary, wher we believe there are all official Anglo-American words.

This could mean one of the following two things:

1. Provided that the signature starts with “cyberly yours”, it contains most probably a spelling mistake.
2. The netiquette is a set of limitations. Step over its borders only if you are certain, that you know it in detail and you know what you are doing.

I.e. cyberly speaking, “cyberly” is a valid word :)