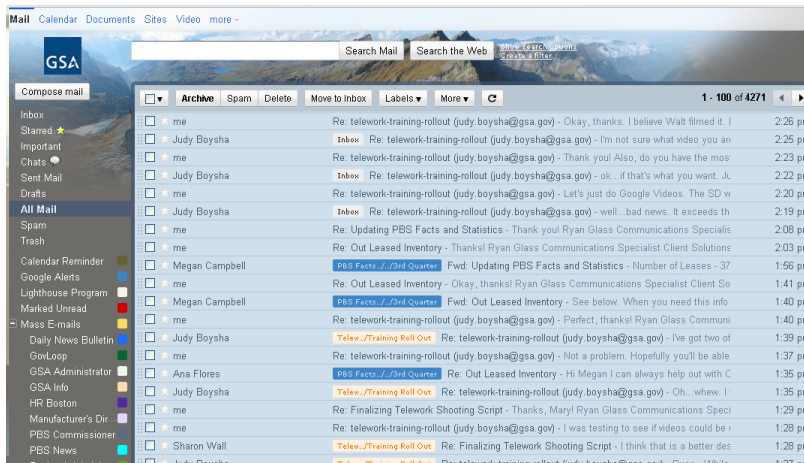# E-mail Etiquette
Perfect Customer Experience Best Practices

Thank you
Try to limit unnecessary emails by eliminating unnecessary "reply alls" when thanking an individual.

Would a meeting be more effective?
If an issue generates more than four emails, hold a conference call or meeting (face-to-face, video conference, web-meeting, etc.) in order to resolve the issue effectively and efficiently.

Do I really need to send this to everyone?
Avoid Reply to All – use this feature wisely

You're just a cube/call away…
Many times taking a short walk to someone's desk or making a call is quicker than relying on email. Use email to convey basic informational needs (meetings, quick updates, etc.) or sending documents.

Front Page News…
Before you send an email or GChat take a moment for reflection. How would this email appear to our customers and to taxpayers if it ended up in tomorrow's newspaper?

Read your email before sending.
Before you hit send, read your email to yourself. Is the message clear? Are there spelling or grammatical errors? Did you remember to use the email protocols?

Plz Don't Abbrvt.
Using abbreviations in emails such as "U" instead of "you," or "2" instead of "too," may be fine for personal emails, but business emails should be more formal. Frequent business abbreviations such as Mr. and Mrs., FYI, inc., and etc. are fine to use.

Spell out Acronyms
Assume that people outside of your immediate working group do not know your acronyms. Try to always spell out terminology with the first use, include the acronym in parentheses and then you may repeat the acronym throughout the message.

CAPS!
Do not type in all capital letters. A message typed in all capital letters is the electronic equivalent of shouting.

Subject Lines
Do not leave blank. Change if topic of original e-mail changes during replies.

Signature Block:
Name
Title
Division
Public Buildings Service
New England Region
U.S. General Services Administration
Address
City, State, Zip
Desk Number
Cell Phone Number

Respond to emails within 24 hours
Email sent between normal business hours (typically 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM) will be returned within 24 hrs. If you do not have an answer, at the very least, let the sender know you are researching the issue and will get back to them shortly with an answer.

Response examples include:
- "I received your inquiry and it will take a few days to research. I will call you next Thursday after I have reviewed the file and we can discuss specifics."
- "I am still researching the issue. I'll give you a call in two days – even if I haven't made any progress. Sorry about the inconvenience."

Out of the Office
If you will be unavailable for an extended time, be sure to create an "out of office" automatic response so that people sending messages to you know when to expect a reply.
- Set if on leave, AWS, holiday, when email reception is questionable, travel, or when training will prevent reviewing email greater than 1 business day
- Requires Subject Line
- Message should include alternatives
-

Out of the Office Example:
Subject: John Smith is out of the office

I will be out of the office starting 12/1/2011 and will not return until 12/15/2011. I will respond to your message when I return. If you need assistance prior to that, please contact Suzy Smith at susan.smith@gsa.gov or 617-565-6585.