EM@IL ETIQUETTE

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In today's world, it is a safe bet that you receive anywhere from five to 50 emails a day, many of them junk, but a few that are from friends, family and coworkers. After filtering out the spam, you may notice common threads in some email that defy explanation, whether it is the subject matter or the 'FWD' abbreviation repeated multiple times. In this article, I will outline some of the common etiquette offenses and offer solutions to improve the reading experience for all recipients.

Clean Up Emails Before Forwarding Them

The most common email etiquette breach is probably the multiple forward. If you are at the end of such a shared message, you'll quickly see why cleaning up emails before forwarding them is essential: messages that have been forwarded multiple times often contain '>' and other quotation characters in all the wrong places, lines are broken in even worse places, and email addresses of people you don't want to know are everywhere.

Cleaning up such a mess can take a few seconds, but keeping an email clean that you forward initially is easy. First, make sure you're sharing the email, not the addresses in it by deleting all other email addresses from the forwarded message.

Next, clean up the message itself if it contains unnecessary '>' characters or messed up line breaks.

How you say a sentence can carry a lot of its meaning. Which words you emphasize and when you briefly stop often alters the message expressed completely.

In writing, punctuation carries much of this suggested interpretation of the mere words. If you omit it completely, alter it or place punctuation marks sloppily, the reader can be puzzled or, without much pondering, misinterpret what you write all too easily.

Of course, mistakes can happen; there's nothing dramatic about that. The absence of rules should just be the exception, not itself the rule.

Polite Punctuation

Try to follow the rules of punctuation as if you were speaking or writing a letter by hand, this may help the reader's benefit and understanding.

Avoid repetition: Is it really more that much more effective to use multiple question marks??????

Professional emails are usually not the right place for many exclamation or question marks. Strive for very few exclamation marks, and don't reduplicate other punctuation marks.

WRITING IN ALL CAPS IS LIKE SHOUTING

When you write in all capital letters, this looks to many a recipient as if you were yelling. This is why you should use all caps
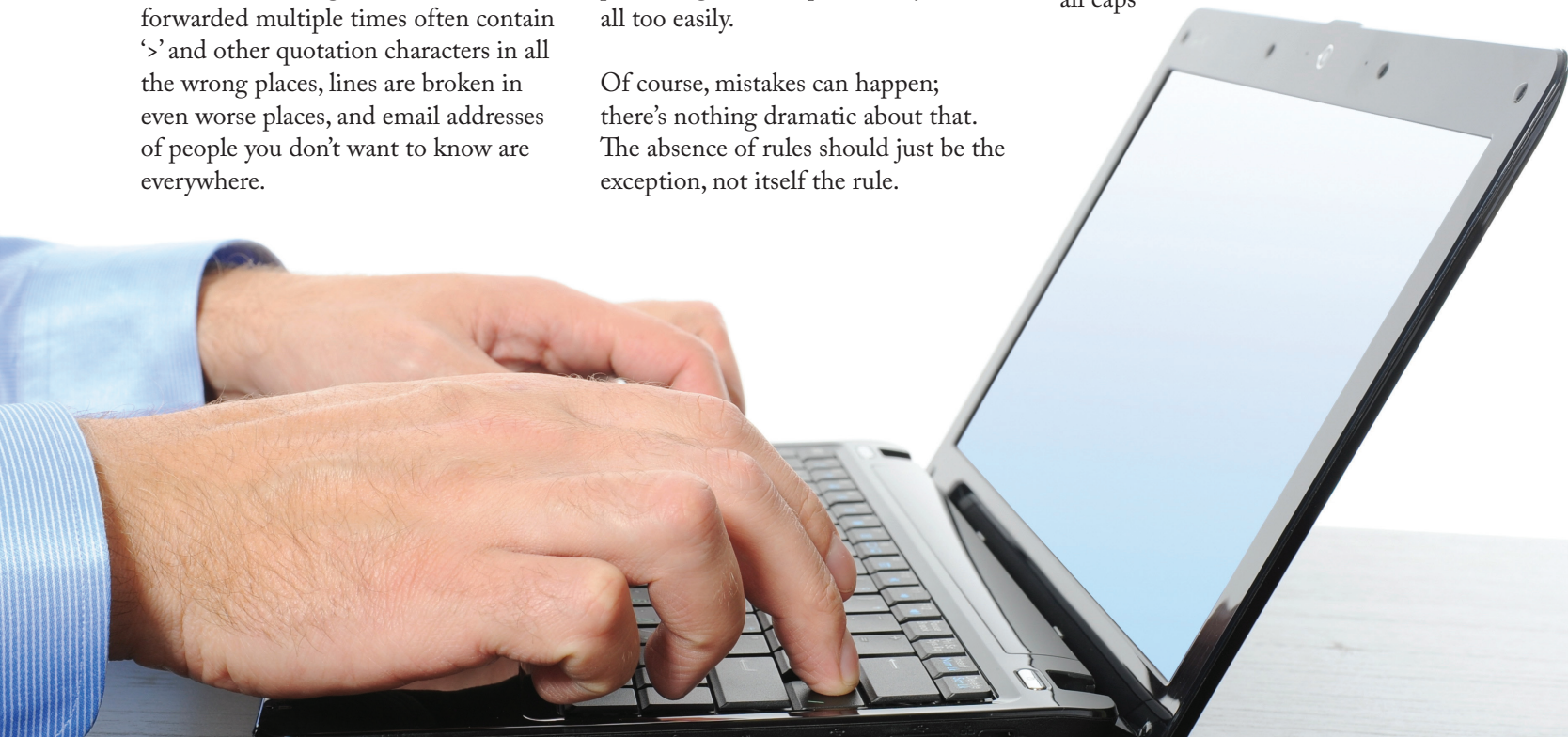
sparingly. It is a strong effect, and it should be avoided in most cases.

Text in upper case is significantly more difficult to read than lower and mixed case text.

using lower case only?

if you type in all caps because you find it faster and more convenient, consider using lower case only. you will annoy some people, of course, but composing in lower case seems more widely accepted than all caps. **DOES THAT MAKE SENSE???**

Check the Spelling

Spell checkers are handy, but they do not alarm you when you substituted one homophone for another, though, or when your reaching for the wrong key accidentally formed another entirely correct word that just means something completely different. Misplaced commas are another point spelling checkers usually do not touch.

Depending on who you mail and how important the message, you may get away with a typo or two. Sometimes, you feel you wouldn't, however, or maybe you despise all spelling mistakes — especially your own.

Catch Typos by Printing Your Emails

When trying to find your own misspellings in an email, just reading it usually won't do it. What really makes a difference for some people is reading in print.

To catch typos in an email you are about to send: Print the message you are composing and proofread the printed copy. If your email program does not allow you to print the message, highlight all the text, copy and paste it into a text editor or word processor document, and print that. You may be amazed by the errors you catch by using this method!