GIRL GUIDES VICTORIA

GG 48

GOOD EMAIL GUIDELINES

Policy number	GG 48
Subject	Good Email Practice
Policy	This policy seeks to provide guidance to members and staff when deciding to use email as a communication tool. Email has revolutionised the way we communicate, but like all tools its effectiveness depends on how it is used. Here's a checklist to run through before you hit "Send"
Principles	N/A
Procedures under this policy	**i. Subject Line** a) Is the subject line filled in? Many virus emails don't have a subject line, so people trying to protect their system might delete your genuine message. b) Does it accurately represent the contents of your email? Ask yourself what you would expect if you saw that subject line in your own in-box. c) If applicable, include words like "Urgent" or "Response needed by 4pm Wednesday". **ii. To, CC and BCC** a) If an email is only for someone's information and they do not need to take any action, add them as a CC (carbon copy) not a direct recipient. b) BCC (blind carbon copy) means names and email addresses won't be visible to any other recipients. A legitimate use of BCC is when an email is going to a large number of people; the header won't take up as much space, and it protects others' email address privacy. **iii. Message body** a) Start with a salutation such as "Dear Mary" or "Hi Bill". b) Don't rely on formatting like bold, italics, underlining, tabs and bullets. They might not work if your recipients use different software to you. c) Turn off caps lock. It looks like shouting and is difficult to read. d) Be careful using SMS text speak and abbreviations as they can be misunderstood. e) Keep sentences and paragraphs short and put a blank line between each paragraph. f) Have you attached your attachment? g) People in a hurry tend to read only the first and last paragraphs of a long email. Put a short, specific description of anything they need to do (and when they need to do it by) at the start or end, or both if it's critical. If it's only for their information and no action is required, say that in the first line; they'll appreciate your courtesy.

h) Be very careful how you express yourself. Email has no tone of voice or body language to help your recipients understand whether you're being sarcastic or funny.

iv. Responding and Forwarding

a) Choose carefully between the 'Reply' and 'Reply All' options. Does everyone need to see your response, or just the original sender?
b) Never email angry. Write your response, save it in the 'Draft' folder and walk away for at least ten minutes.

v. Housekeeping

a) If you won't be checking your email for a while, use the Out Of Office assistant available on most programs to send a message back to people letting them know when you will be able to respond and who else to contact if the matter is urgent.
b) Clean out your inbox regularly. Many Internet service providers have a total file size limit, which includes both incoming and saved outgoing messages.

vi. Is email the right tool?

a) While a difficult message might be easier to convey to someone without having to face them, at least in person or on the phone you can use body language and tone of voice or adjust mid-sentence if they are taking it the wrong way.

vii. Is this email I've just received spam?

There are a number of ways to identify whether an email you have received is spam:

a) If It Ends Up In Your Spam Folder
Unless you accidentally categorized legitimate emails as spam, you can be pretty sure that all the emails you need will appear in your inbox. Sometimes emails from certain websites end up in the spam folder. You must deal with those on a case-by-case basis to determine whether or not they're legitimate.
b) Look at the Email Address
Legitimate companies send emails through a server based out of their company website (for example, support@microsoft.com). If you see a long string of numbers in front of the @ sign or the name of a free email service before the .com (or any other domain), you need to question the legitimacy of the email in question.
c) Look at the Content
Keep an eye out for emails that say you need to do something right at that second or within a certain number of hours. Also, be wary of any emails that include links. Most companies tell you what to do, but they

	never direct you to where to do it with a link. Finally, rampant grammatical and spelling errors within the body of an email are good signs that its spam. Spammers don't care enough about the actual messages they're sending to take the time to make them make sense. d) If It Asks for Personal Information Most institutions you deal with come right out and say they're never going to ask for personal information in an email. They don't need to ask you for your personal information anyway because they usually have it on hand. So, if you get an email that asks you for any personal information, no matter how legitimate it might seem, delete it right away. e) If it Addresses you Informally When you receive a genuine email, the sender addresses you directly, using either your first or last name. If you receive an email where they refer to you as a Valued Customer or as a member of some company, its spam. Senders of your genuine emails want to get your attention, so they always address you directly.
Definitions	N/A
Related policies	GO-41 Privacy Policy GP-41 Privacy Procedure GG-35 Guidelines Social Media Respectful Behaviour Charter Code of Conduct

Version Information

Version Number	Content Updated	Person Responsible	Date Updated
1.1	Updated GGV Guidelines	P&P	January 2020
1.0	Original GGA / GGSA Guidelines		June 2015