



YOUR ON-LINE PRESENCE: *BEING RESPONSIBLE, PROFESSIONAL, RESPECTFUL, ETHICAL, AND PRIVATE*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

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EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Be responsible, professional, respectful,
ethical, and private

THE BASICS

- Have an appropriate email address, not “SmartLawyer@” or “BlondeAmbition@”
- Have an accurate signature – “J.D.” or Juris Doctor when you graduate, leadership titles while in law school
- Think twice about using quotes – they can be misinterpreted or may not be well-received by employers
- Always include a greeting and capitalize all first letters in the greeting: “Good Afternoon Ms. Smith” “Dear Dean Jernigan” (Use titles until invited to use first name)
- Have professional closings – and capitalize only first word “Kindest regards,” “Respectfully submitted,”
- Don’t cc, reply all, or forward unless absolutely necessary – protect other people’s privacy!

IMPORTANT TIPS

- Don't add the recipient's email address until you are ready to send – this prevents accidentally sending before you were ready, and gives you a chance to think twice about tone and sounding as professional as possible
- Start with a summary of your conclusion... a lot of people don't read through
- Call or visit instead of emailing if subject is sensitive – email is impersonal ***and discoverable***
- Assume everyone will see your emails, and write only what you'd be ok with everyone seeing
- Use a relevant subject line, and change it as needed as the discussion progresses – this makes it easier to find for you and the recipient later

IMPORTANT TIPS CONT

- Don't use slang or abbreviations – like “Portfolio Meeting F/ Up” – that was intended by a student to mean “Follow Up” but none of us got it. We thought it meant “F Up”
- No emoticons until you are on really close terms
- Watch out for exclamation points and ALL CAPS unless you are on very close terms
- DON'T give legal advice unless you're licensed, insured, and emailing a client – it's unauthorized practice of law when you're a student, and it creates an atty/client relationship when you're licensed!
- Keep a personal email address for personal email
- Convert attachments to PDF so others can't alter them and attribute their work to you

The background is a gradient of blue shades, transitioning from a lighter blue at the top to a darker blue at the bottom. In the four corners, there are white line-art illustrations of circuit boards or digital networks, with lines and small circles representing components.

DIGITAL DIRT

Find it,
Clean it, and
Bury it

FIND THE DIRT

Google yourself, and also search your name using metacrawler and dogpile (which give results in a different order than Google)

- and then -

Create a Google alert

CLEAN THE DIRT

- Remove questionable comments, photos, and links
- Don't allow others to post or tag to your social media
- If you get notified of tags, remove them if you don't want your name associated with the picture – once you're tagged in a picture, it will come up in "images" if someone googles your name, even if you didn't add it to your page!
- Contact the source to remove inaccurate or unflattering things

BURY IT

Add good stuff to push the bad stuff further down the search results page:

- Add professional blogs & websites, where you control the content and it's all POSITIVE
- The longer the pages exist, the further up the results page they appear
- The more you edit or add, the further up the results page it appears

LAST RESORT

The “disclaimer” on the résumé:

Ex: “I am not the John Smith from Bradenton, Florida who was convicted of money laundering and racketeering in 2007.”

(This is a *last resort*, for when you you’re unfortunate enough to share the name, region, and age range with someone who has serious negative press associated with the name you share.)

FACEBOOK:

BE RESPONSIBLE, PROFESSIONAL, RESPECTFUL, ETHICAL, AND PRIVATE

- Your profile pic is always public
- Use privacy settings to prevent people from posting and adding tagged items to your page
- Try not to use FB for professional connections, but, if you must, create a “friends” list and a “non-friends” lists to control who sees what
- Pics you’re tagged in on other peoples sites are easily found in images when people Google your name... untag yourself!
- In all likelihood, professional connections will see it: At least watch content, spelling, and punctuation

LINKEDIN (FB FOR LAWYERS)

- Try directing professional connections here rather than FB
- Start with a professional photo
- Create a good summary statement
 - Use key industry words in the summary statement
 - Use summary statement of a lawyer you admire as an example
 - Update it regularly

LINKEDIN CONT

- Don't overstate qualifications, and match them to what you list on résumé
- Don't get involved in "recommendations" – there have been ethics questions raised in other states re recommendations as endorsements
- Personalize invitations to connect and send nice notes to people who invite you
- Congratulate others in your network when they get promotions and new jobs
- Join undergrad, law school, and bar association groups - PROFESSIONAL groups only
- Don't solicit your contacts
- **Be responsible, professional, respectful, ethical, and private**

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Please contact us:

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Thank you for attending!