

## **Email Etiquette**

(Paraphrased from the USDF GMO Handbook)

Every organization needs good communication and Email can be a vital tool. Email can bring members together or tear them apart. Email etiquette is designed to make communication between the membership effective and efficient without malice or hurt. By following these guidelines, the membership will be ensured the respect entitled to each and every one. Failure to follow these guidelines may mean sanctions from the IEO Board.

1. Always be professional, courteous and kind while making a point. Be mindful of the tone of your Email. Be brief and to the point.
2. Never write a flaming Email. (Flaming is a virtual term for venting emotion online or sending inflammatory Emails. Avoid flaming Emails because they tend to create more conflict and tension.)
3. Do not send an Email you would not want forwarded, especially when referencing the organization. Emails are public documents despite the fact that you may send an Email to someone privately.
4. Emails should not be used for disciplinary action, conflicts or complaints. This should be done formally or in person.
5. Consider these things before sending an Email: Would I say this to the person's face? Am I putting the receiver in an awkward position? How would I feel if I received this Email?

## **Email Committee and Email Moderators**

1. The Email Committee shall consist of three Email Moderators selected from the IEO Board, one of which must be a member of the Executive Committee.
2. The Email Committee shall maintain an Email Log listing every request made for an Email Disciplinary Action. The IEO Board shall have the right to require full or partial disclosure of the Log at any time, with the understanding of confidentiality.
3. An Email Disciplinary Action shall be taken only by agreement of at least two Email Moderators.

## **Email Policy**

1. This Email policy applies to the use of Email for any IEO business, by any person.
2. All Email shall maintain a civil tone and focus on the presentation of facts. When an Email becomes argumentative, expresses anger, sarcasm and/or frustration that may silence the receiver, delivers its message in an unhelpful or contentious tone, or includes any kind of name calling or derogatory reference, then a Request for Email Disciplinary Action may be initiated.

3. Any member of the IEO may make a request to the Email Committee for an Email Disciplinary Action and will be kept informed of the committee's progress and the resolution of the Email Disciplinary Action.
4. The Email Committee has 10 days to initiate an investigation after an Email Disciplinary Action has been requested
5. Any Email Disciplinary Action automatically becomes inactive twelve months after it is issued.
6. The Email Committee shall take one of the following four Email Disciplinary Actions:
  - a. *No Email Disciplinary Action.* The committee decides not to act on this request. If the committee decides to act, disciplinary action begins with a Private Email Warning.
  - b. *Private Email Warning* by the Email Committee. The Originator of the Email will be notified by telephone and USPS Mail that they are in violation of the Email Policy and will be requested to cease and desist. Any further incursions will require Board action, beginning with a Board Email Warning.
  - c. *Board Email Warning.* At or before its next meeting, the IEO Board shall issue a Board Email Warning to the Email Originator. The Originator of the Email will be notified by telephone and USPS Mail. The IEO Board minutes shall indicate this and include a description of the offense. If the Email Originator ignores the Board Email Warning and further action is warranted, then a Board Email Sanction is issued.
  - d. *Board Email Sanction.* At or before its next meeting, the IEO Board shall issue a Board Email Sanction to the Email Originator. The Originator of the Email will be notified by registered USPS Mail. The Board minutes shall indicate this and include the statement that the Originator has committed actions in violation of the IEO Email Policy, which qualifies for membership suspension under the "for cause" section under Article IV (Membership) Section 5 (Resignation, Suspension and Expulsion).
  - e. Any Email Disciplinary Action shall stand for at least 30 days after which the Originator may request a hearing at the next IEO Board meeting, at which time a motion and vote may deactivate the disputed Email Disciplinary Action.