Effective Communication Policy - Approved 2/24/19

Illinois Theatre Association (ITA) policy on Electronic Communications

The power of the internet to send and receive correspondence immediately has become a way of life. Any email conveying or pertaining to an issue involving the Illinois Theatre Association must always convey the professionalism of the organization. Although this communication policy refers specifically to email, the same approach should be considered when communicating on behalf of the ITA in any manner (phone calls, social media, texts, postal mail, etc).

When sending an email on behalf of the Illinois Theatre Association, consider these pointers:

Fit for Email? - Email's speed and effectiveness beats voicemail, but is it the best way to deliver a message?

Email is suited to sending a short committee update suite.

Responses riddled with questions and clarification requests would be best served by a phone call or a face-to-face.

Made for Mass? - Resist the knee-jerk reaction to hit "Reply All."

Take a moment to scan over the distribution list and CCs and delete those uninvolved in the response.

Utilize "BCC" to protect the privacy of one's personal email address.

It is inappropriate and potentially damaging to use "BCC" to involve another individual over conflicts.

Spice Up the Subject Line - There are only forty characters to stand out in an overcrowded inbox.

Use a simple comment or action as a lead into the message.

If possible, convey the email's entire message in the subject line.

Keep It Concise - The briefer the message, the likelier it will receive an immediate response.

Crisp, simplistic language gives the reader the ability to skim for relevant information.

Bullet points and patches of white space are easier on the eyes and help organize the message.

Sloppy speech can be avoided by double checking the text before hitting "send." Read for accuracy of names, titles, dates, etc.

Break the Chain - Don't assume the recipients have been keeping up with the email conversation.

To clarify the thread of an ongoing conversation, cut and paste the last pertinent point and go from there.

Keep it Professional and Positive - Once an email is sent, privacy and confidentiality are nonexistent.

Make sure all messages are suitable, appropriate, and legal.

Avoid sending email rants. It could end up to be damaging down the road.

To avoid misinterpretation, don't send emails that contain confidential, sensitive, or private information. Mails/topics to avoid:

Sending a social security number

Sending financial information (credit card or bank routing number)

Disagreements between committee members, staff, board, ITA Members, and any other constituency involved with the ITA

Reasons for decisions regarding casting or placement of volunteers and/or staff

Discussion of an individual's gender, race, sexuality, and/or political preferences

Promoting any negativity about the ITA, its programs, and/or its members

Add Attachments - Avoid sending emails without the referred attachments.

To avoid this common email blunder, every time a document is mentioned, immediately attach it to the email.