## **Giving E-Mail A "Tone"**

## Liven Up Your E-Mail, Avoid E-Misunderstandings

(NAPSA)-Most people rely on e-mail as a mode of communication in their work and personal lives, but e-mails are often misunderstood because, unlike speaking. e-mail has no "tone." Something that's intended as a joke can be taken seriously and vice versa. Observing e-mail etiquette can help avoid misunderstandings and can noticeably improve the quality of your communication. The next e-mail vou send can be more clear and memorable for whoever you're "talking" with if you keep in mind a few simple guidelines:

- Include a short, relevant, easily understood subject line.
- Keep your message simple and to the point. Don't ramble.
- Answer any and all questions from the message you're responding to.
- Use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation, just as you would in a letter.
- $\bullet$  Don't misuse the "high-priority" button.
- Don't write in CAPITALS—it's the equivalent of shouting.
- Read your message before hitting the "Send" button. Type the recipient's e-mail address in last so you don't inadvertently send something off before it's ready.
- Try to avoid "flaming"—obviously angry e-mails. What you write can't be taken back. Before venting in an e-mail, ask yourself, "Would I say this to this person's face? Will he or she understand the point I'm trying to get across?" Try just sending the e-mail back to yourself to reread it.
- Avoid potential miscommunications by using emotions (emotional icons) to help get your point across. Emoticons can give your email a "tone," just like speaking. A "wink" or a "laughing" emoticon,



Lively emoticons can make your e-mails more attractive and easier to understand.

for example, can get a point across much quicker and more effectively than the subtleties of the written word. Everyone knows just what you mean when you use an emoticon, especially if you have a lot to choose from.

- · You can access a huge gallery filled with thousands of emoticons. as well as attractive backgrounds, ล11 of which are free. www.incredimail.com, E-mail notifiers—characters that appear on vour screen to tell vou that new mail has arrived—and cool sounds to accompany your e-mail messages are also available there for free. In addition, users can download unique desktop wallpapers and screensavers with a new product called Magentic, also available at www.incredimail.com.
- Other add-ons available at www.incredimail.com that turn Plain Old E-mail (POE) into a multimedia experience include 3-D effects, movie themes and handwritten signatures.

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