



Intellectual Property Conference for Legal Professionals

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International Etiquette

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CM01

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9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

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Lost in Translation: The Platinum Rules of International Email Etiquette

- 1) If you are the first one to email someone from another culture, follow [Robert Hickey's](#) guidelines for names, titles and forms of address. Use Mr., Ms., Dr., and Mrs. depending on the culture.
- 2) When replying to an email, mirror and match the sender's style and format. Use their surname and title if they use it in introductions of emails.
- 3) With a new introductory email, use an *email handshake* with a personal introduction. Use polite conversation to establish rapport such as inquiring about the weather.
- 4) In time conscious cultures, consider including the degree of urgency in the subject line. For example, 'action required' for urgent matters and 'action needed' for important matters. Write a clear, specific subject line in the destination & English language.
- 5) Consider style: the 'new brutal' or the 'old courteous.' New trend is to begin email with name only, which most internationals find demotivating. However, in Eastern Europe & parts of Asia, very polite email is considered non-priority and placed on hold. Avoid 'would you mind...could you' and instead use direct requests such as 'Please send the Board Meeting Agenda by...'
- 6) Select the best closing phrase for the destination culture: *Kind regards, Sincerely, Best regards.*
- 7) Respond to Germany, Israel, Switzerland and the U.S. within 24 hours, with information or simply 'Thanks for your email, we will respond with details at a later time.'
- 8) Many countries use a 24-hour clock (which is known in the U.S. as military time) instead of the 12-hour clock. For example, 7:00 p.m. in 12-hour clock time would be written as 19:00.
- 9) Eighteen (18) Countries use the 12-hour clock: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, El Salvador, Honduras, India, Ireland, Jordan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia and U.S. (although the military uses the 24-hour clock).
- 10) Understand that dates are written differently worldwide. The following partial list is helpful:
 - a. ISO8601 International Standard: year-month-day, 2020-04-30
 - b. Asia Pacific: year-month-day, 2020.04.30
 - c. Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada: day-month-year, 30/04/2020
 - d. The U.S.: month-day-year, 04-30-2020
- 11) Consider email using the Celsius temperature and Metric system conversions. (only Liberia, Myanmar & U.S. use Imperial measurement system) Most countries use the metric system.
 - a. 0 degrees Celsius = 32 degrees Fahrenheit
 - b. 1 kilometer = 0.621 miles
 - c. 1 liter = 0.264 gallons
- 12) Humor is culture specific, meaning that most jokes tend to be funny only among people who share experiences in that culture. For instance, an Inuit may not understand a joke about the desert. Jokes referencing Western culture, stereotypes and slang may be misunderstood in an email.

- 13) Most of us have experienced copying or replying to the wrong person. Copy or reply to necessary persons only. Be careful with cc: and bcc:
- 14) Organize the email by priorities. Utilize bullet points or numbers; most important items first. Categorize related information.
- 15) Avoid using capital letters. *Italics* are preferable. Color meaning varies across cultures.
- 16) Avoid writing with intense emotion. Walk away and return with a clear, calm mind.
- 17) Make sure your email is succinct, clear and to the point by doing the following: Use one thought per sentence. Write short sentences of 15-20 words. Start each new topic with a new paragraph.
- 18) Include your contact information such as phone, Skype, and website.
- 19) Proofread for proper tone, overall flow, spelling, and grammar errors.
- 20) Ask the recipient to include questions in their reply email.

LIST OF COUNTRIES USING 12-HOUR CLOCK

Africa:

Egypt

Asia:

Bangladesh

India

Jordan

Pakistan

Philippines

Malaysia

Saudi Arabia

Central America:

El Salvador

Honduras

Nicaragua

Europe:

Ireland

North America:

Canada

Mexico

U.S.

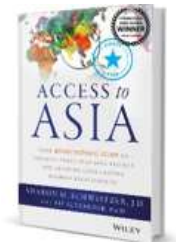
Oceania:

Australia

New Zealand

South America:

Colombia



**ALA Intellectual Property Conference for Legal Professionals
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA & CANADA QUIZ
September 15, 2016**

- ____ 1. Canada is one of the top five energy producing countries in the world.
- ____ 2. In the U.S., English is the official national language.
- ____ 3. 10% of the world's forests is in Canada.
- ____ 4. There are three U.S. territories: American Samoa, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. There are two U.S. commonwealths: Puerto Rico and the Northern Mariana Islands.
- ____ 5. Individualism impacts business relationships, decision-making and negotiating in the U.S.
- ____ 6. In U.S. business, 'Mrs.' is an inappropriate courtesy title.
- ____ 7. There are 10 Canadian provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan.
- ____ 8. The U.S. is an achievement-oriented culture as opposed to an ascription-oriented culture.
- ____ 9. Canada has the world's tenth highest GDP.
- ____ 10. The Canadian Head of State is the British monarch Queen Elizabeth II.
- ____ 11. In the U.S., wardrobe varies by industry and geography; business-casual and professional attire are both common.
- ____ 12. The United States has the 16th fastest internet speed in the world and Canada the 24th.
- ____ 13. The U.S. is one of only three countries still using the Imperial system of measurement instead of the international metric system.
- ____ 14. The U.S. is a rules based society, as opposed to a relationship based society.
- ____ 15. Canada celebrates Thanksgiving on the same day as the United States.