What are E-Mail, Instant Messenger, Texting, and Social Networks?

**E-mails** are messages created in your e-mail account and sent to your recipient. Emails are instant and are a preferred mode of communication by many in the workplace.

**Important Email Information:**

1. Email is the **least formal** of the three common types of business communication: Business Letter, Memo, and E-mail. Even though it is the least formal, there is a certain amount of formality expected when you write an e-mail.
2. Because e-mails are also common outside of the workplace, people often forget to separate their informal e-mail style and tone that is used amongst their friends and family from the more **formal style and tone** that is used in the workplace.
   - Remember that what you write for your company reflects upon that company and the company will be held liable for messages that you send.
   - Jokes that float around emails, chain letters, political cartoons, all of these things that you may send to your friends and family cannot be used in your company e-mail.
   - Remember, e-mails are permanent: once you write it and send it, not only does your company keep a record, but also the company you sent it to and, in the case of many public figures, the public.
3. Before writing an e-mail, follow the same **writing process** that you use in creating other types of workplace documents: plan, organize, draft, revise, edit, proofread, and re-write before you send.
4. Always complete the **subject line**.
5. Always make visible the people you **CC**.
6. **Forwarding** an e-mail without permission of the writer is unprofessional. Never forward without permission.
7. When you add an **attachment** to your e-mail, alert the reader in the text that you have added an attachment.

**Instant Messenger (IM) and Texting** are common in workplace environments. In both IM and Texting, the conversations take place in real time. You compose and send and your reader receives it instantly with a notification device either on his or her phone or computer screen.

1. Many people text their coworkers and most large companies have an instant messenger for just their company.
2. While instant messenger and texting are the most informal of all written communication, you still owe your company the same professional tone and style in these types of media that you exhibit in your other written documents.
3. If there are certain acronyms or certain abbreviations that are common in your company’s instant messenger or texting realm, use them. However, make certain they are standards of the company.

*Note: Like e-mails, instant messenger and texting are forever.*
**Social Networks:** social networks are online communities where people form real and online friendships with friends, friends of friends, relatives, and relatives of relatives, co-workers, and many more. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter are now being used by Universities; the Walton College has a Facebook page, as do large companies. Remember, social networks are public forums, and it is becoming common place for large companies to invest in Internet detective work to find out how their future employees spend their time. If you fill your social networks with inappropriate information, you may not get hired. Remember, in your personal life and in your professional life, practice good internet hygiene so you will prevent a STD or Socially Tainted Disposition.