Info@starklawlibrary.org

Stark County Law Library Association *January 2006*

The email address, info@starklaw library.org really works! TRY IT!!

BEGINNERS The IWS Services

The IWS (Institute for Workplace Studies) Documented News Service <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/research/iws/iws.html> and its related information products were established in 1999. The IWS <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/iws/> is an "interactive think-tank, bridging the gap between academics and the working world through research initiatives, educational programs and forums." [1] It is located in New York City and is associated with the Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR).

The service started out as a service for the ILR faculty, students, and staff and while this remains their focus group, it is now distributed throughout the world as a free resource.

Designed primarily as a "push" email service, this product provides "links to the full-text documentation of government studies, reports, and statistics in 'real time' to researchers, practitioners, and the public interested in workplace issues." [2]

This email service (sent directly to the blogs listed below) provides the following:

(1) **Daily Postings** <http://iwsdocumentednewsdaily.blogspot.com/> "Three to ten emails are produced daily with clear and concise subject headings, content indicators, and links to full-text reports, studies, documentation, and statistics." [3]

(2) **Weekly Bulletin** <http://iwsdocumentednews.blogspot.com/> Lists all the titles and links from the Daily Postings in the previous week. However, content indicators are not provided.

(3) The **International Service** at <http://iwsdninternational.blogspot.com/> Similar to the Daily Postings, but not posted on a regular basis.

To receive the daily, weekly and/or the international e-mails directly, send an e-mail to Stuart Basefsky at <smb6@cornell.edu> noting the service in which you would like to enroll.

A special web site of Freely Available Workplace Resources <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/research/freelyAvailableResources.html> is designed for researchers lacking funds.

A blog is a natural tool to turn to when your topic is blogging because it illustrates the basic features of blogs.

INTERMEDIATE Email Update

Has the "Send" button become your worst enemy? Do you find yourself whipping off scathing emails only to wish you hadn't? Even if you use Microsoft Outlook on a Microsoft Exchange Server and get that nifty "Recall This Message" button, don't be fooled! That button usually sends your message anyway and then makes matters worse by sending the recipient a notice that you're attempting to recall it!

Never fear, there is hope. It comes in the form of a company called Bigstring <http://www.bigstring.com>. With the big string, you can retrieve that hasty email, expire an old message after a certain period of time and even determine how often your recipients can read your messages. Bigstring is a subscription service with various plans ranging from a free version for up to 20 emails per month, to $29.95 for unlimited messages. There is also a business account that offers even more options. Another plus for Bigstring is that you don't have to use it for all of your email, just the sensitive ones.

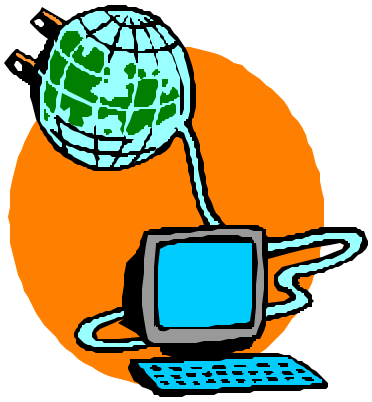
A few suggestions to improve your email are:

1. Use clear and succinct subject lines. Many people decide whether to read or delete email based solely on the message's subject, therefore leaving the subject line blank should never happen. Another never is the use of FYI. The best subject line is informative enough that in many cases reading the email is unnecessary. [4]
2. Write less; Emails are not "epic literature." [5]
3. Fancy fonts, backgrounds and pictures are distractions from effective communication. Avoid HTML-formatted email, some email readers will display a garbled mess, and portable devices can't handle it.
4. Email signature lines should contain enough information that your recipient knows exactly who is writing to them and how to get in touch with you personally. This means at the very least your name, firm and phone number. You may also want to include the URL for your firm's website, a short marketing phrase, your FAX number or email address. But remember, as a rule of thumb, that the entire signature should contain six lines or less.
5. If you use an "Out-of-Office" message, be sure to include a return date and an alternative contact so your contacts will know about when they might expect a reply from you or can choose the alternate contact if they need information before you plan to return. P.S. Be sure to de-activate the message as soon as you return to your office. [6]
6. Turn off auto-check or at least set it to something reasonable, like every 20 minutes, or better yet every hour.

ADVANCED Email Update Concluded

7. Pick the easy emails to answer quickly and BE HONEST—if you aren't going to respond to an email, delete it! [7] If the subject is hard to explain in an email, pick up the phone, or talk it over in person! [8]

ADVANCED



There is not a clear consensus yet on the definition of Web 2.0 making its introduction a bit difficult. It hasn't even made its way to the Webopedia <http://www.webopedia.com/> or Whatis?com <http://whatis.techtarget.com>, my favorite "go to" sites. Of course, the ever up-to-date Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0> offers eight pages of technical explanation, including four basic definitions - take your pick!

From what I have read so far, I like best Tom Mighell's explanation. He demonstrates the differences between our old Web and Web 2.0 by illustration.

> If you have used the new Google Maps (http://maps.google.com), you've already experienced a part of Web 2.0; the ability to literally grab hold of the map and drag it in any direction you want is pretty cool, isn't it? [9]

I think the key to understanding the new Web is the words "interaction" and "service." Interaction between you and the computer, as in the above Google Maps illustration and between different computer applications as in MapSexOffenders.com <http://www.mapsexoffenders.com/>, which combines the sex offeners' database, Google maps and regulations of the information's use. An example of Web 2.0's use of interaction and service is Writely <http://www.writely.com/>, the free web-based word processor which allows you to share your work and to collaborate online. Another Web 2.0 type of service is Gmail, also from Google. It is a new kind of webmail, which allows you to keep all your mail and always be able to find the message you want. [10 & 11]

And finally, a couple of terms for the "techies" out there, after all, this is the advanced section. The acronyms behind Web 2.0 are fundamentally AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript and XML), which allows web pages to constantly be refreshed and API (Application Programming Interface), which allows the easy integration of applications.

FOOTNOTES

[1] "Mission Statement." Institute for Workplace Studies. Cornell University ILR School. 1 December 2005. <http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/iws/>.

[2 & 3] Basefsky, Stuart. "Resource of the Week." The RespourceShelf. 20 October 2005 Gary Price Library & Internet Research Consulting. 1 December 2005 <http://www.resourceshelf.com/2005/10/where-do-you-turn-for-real-time.html>.

[4 & 6, 7] Burney, Brett. "Best Option for E-Mail; Recall and Other Tips." Legal Technology. 29 November 2005. ALM Properties, Inc. 2 December 2005. <http://www.law.com/jsp/ltn/pubArticleLTN.jsp?id=1133188928164>

[5 & 11] "Bill Gates 2.0." The Wired GC. 22 November 2005. Word Press Feed. 5 December 2005. <http://www.wiredgc.com/2005/11/22/bill-gates-20/>.

[8] Merlin. "Five Fast Email Productivity Tips." 45 Folders. February 2005. Word Press. 5 December 2005. <http://www.43folders.com/2005/02/15/five-fast-email-productivity-tips/>.

[9 & 10] Mighell, Tom. "Web 2.0—The Next Generation of the Internet?". Technology. December 2005. Texas Bar Journal. 8 December 2005. <http://www.texasbar.com/Template.cfm?Section=Current_Issue&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=13630>.

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