Email:
How to Make It An Ally

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The problem(s) with email

It's mediated communication

It's cue-poor

It's asynchronous

It's info-uncertain

Result: Miscommunication, negative affect are higher for email communication

General rule: with email, anything that **can** be interpreted negatively **will** be

One solution for email

Email requires "hyperpersonal" communication

Politeness is crucial

Terms of salutation

Modes of request

Modes of assertion

Ideal for positive messages, disastrous for negative messages

The challenge for academics

Academics = high Ts, low Fs on Myer-Briggs

Ts: Prize facts, untroubled by conflict, driven by search for logical outcomes

Fs: Prize empathy, disrupted by conflict, driven by search for harmonious outcomes

Academics must be Ts in scholarly arena

Successful email communication (efficacious + relational + outcome-achieving) <u>requires</u> a significant dollop of F communication

Why the "solution" is useful

Walther's (1996) "hyperpersonal" model: low bandwidth media can <u>facilitate</u> social and negotiation tasks beyond what is possible in face-to-face interaction. According to this model, the filtering of nonverbal cues advantages communicators. Communicators are strategically enabled to manipulate their identity, time the transmission of their messages, and plan, organize, and edit their communication in pursuit of relational goals. Such strategic control in CMC can facilitate negotiation, relationship development, and social tasks.