

## **Email Tips to Keep You Out of Trouble at Work**

Email is once again headline news. Just a couple weeks ago we heard that two former Bear Stearns employees have been indicted by a Federal Grand Jury for allegedly intentionally misleading investors. Company emails allegedly suggest these men were aware of fund hazards while telling investors otherwise. As in other news-making cases such as Enron, it appears we will be hearing more in the weeks to come about potentially damaging emails.

A joint study by the American Management Association and the ePolicy Institute concluded that 1 in 5 companies responding to a survey indicated that company email has been subpoenaed. When you sit down to write an email do you think to yourself that this email might end up in court? Probably something you rarely think about if ever. We can offer lots of tips, which we do in our email awareness course **Think Before You Click**<sup>®</sup>. The following are the main tips to remember.

### **Tip #1 – Be Aware**

Being aware that unintended readers may see your email is our first tip. If you consider that your written words could end up being read by people you never intended to see your email you will naturally begin to choose your words carefully.

### **Tip #2 – Remember that Email is not Private**

In 2007 the American Management Association conducted a survey of 304 companies which showed 43% of respondents store and review employees' email messages.

Every time you write an email imagine the email printed in a newspaper, or that your family reads the email, or that it ends up on a highway billboard. If that were the case would you still send the email?

### **Tip #3 – The Delete Key will not Save You**

Deleting an email from your Sent folder will not eliminate the evidence that you once sent the email. Computer forensics software, electronic logs, and backups can all find email that has been deleted, even years ago.

As ePolicy Institute Executive Director Nancy Flynn said, "Careless clicks can, and do, sink corporate ships".