Intro to Email 2: Beyond the Basics

CC and BCC

In the last lesson, we followed along with Amy as she sent emails to multiple people using Reply All and by adding multiple addresses to an email. In this lesson, Amy will learn about two other options for sending emails to multiple people.
These options are the CC and BCC fields.

First, let’s look at the CC field, which stands for “Carbon Copy.” You can also think of it as a “Courtesy Copy.”

This field may be hidden by default, but you can show it by clicking this button.
You can type email addresses in the CC field just like you do in the “To” field, but they are used for different reasons.

The “To” field should be used for the primary audience for a message. The CC field is used for other people that you may want to notify that the message was sent. For example, at work you might CC your supervisor to let them know that a conversation is taking place.
In today’s example, Amy will be using Gmail. Amy writes a short email to her office manager to request some supplies.

She will list her supervisor in the CC field, so he will be notified of the message and receive a copy. However, since her supervisor is not in the To field, he will understand that it is just a courtesy copy, and he probably doesn’t need to reply.
The other option is to use BCC, which stands for “Blind Carbon Copy.”

This is very similar to the CC field. The difference with BCC is that people receiving the email can’t see who is inside the BCC field. Let’s see this in action.
Amy wants to send an email to several people. In the To field, she adds her friend Sandy's address. To Carbon Copy other people, she clicks on the CC link.

Then she types in her other friends' email addresses.
She’ll use the BCC field to Blind Carbon Copy her mother. That way her friends won’t see her parents’ email address.

When she sends the message to this group, her parents’ email address will be hidden from view. This is a great way to protect the privacy of other people’s email addresses when you are sending a message to a group.

Next, Amy types in the subject and the message, and clicks on Send. The message is sent.
Let's see what things look like for the people receiving this email. Here we are in Sandy's account. In this example, Sandy is using Outlook.com as her email provider.

Sandy sees a new message from Amy. When she opens it, we see that there are other recipients as well. Here we can see that Nikki and Mike were CC'd on the email message.

But the BCC email address for Amy's parents doesn't show! That's how CC and BCC work. We can always view the CC email addresses, but the BCC addresses aren't visible to anyone but the sender.
Putting an email in the CC field lets the recipient know that it is a courtesy copy for their records, and they often don't need to reply or take any action. Putting an email in the BCC field keeps the email address private. You can use multiple email addresses in all three fields any time you send a message. Can you think of a time when this would be useful for you?

In the next lesson, Amy is going to learn about Draft Emails.