

# Email tip: Just because you get answers when you misuse a mailing list doesn't mean you should continue to misuse it

 [devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090224-00](http://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20090224-00)

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A few years ago, there was a question on a mailing list for topic X, but the question was about unrelated topic Y. The question was nevertheless answered by the people on the topic X mailing list out of the kindness of their hearts (above and beyond the heart-sourced kindness that powers most mailing lists in the first place). I pointed out that the question really had nothing to do with topic X, and consequently the Y-Users list was a better place for the question.

The person responded,

| Yes, I know, but X-Users always provides a quick reply and a quick solution.

In other words, the person was sending questions to the X-Users mailing list knowing full well that the question was not appropriate for the mailing list, but just relying on the fact that the members of the X-Users list are kind-hearted people who will help out even if the topic lies outside their area.

I pointed out, “You can call 9-1-1 to get driving directions quickly, but it’s probably not the right things to do.”

Raymond Chen

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