

The NET HELPMSG command will decode Windows error codes, at least the simple ones

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Raymond Chen

A quick and dirty way to convert Windows error codes to strings is to use the `NET HELPMSG` command.

```
C:\> NET HELPMSG 2
```

```
The system cannot find the file specified.
```

```
C:\> NET HELPMSG 8242
```

```
An invalid dn syntax has been specified.
```

The command is not infallible, however.

- It operates only on Windows error codes. It doesn't decode `HRESULT` or `NTSTATUS` values.
- It doesn't support messages with insertions, presumably because it doesn't pass the `FORMAT_MESSAGE_IGNORE_INSERTS` flag.

If you pass a message with an insertion, such as `ERROR_ WRONG_ DISK`, then instead of getting

```
The wrong diskette is in the drive.  
Insert %2 (Volume Serial Number: %3) into drive %1.
```

you get¹

```
C:\> NET HELPMSG 34
```

```
34 is not a valid Windows network message number.
```

```
More help is available by typing NET HELPMSG 3871.
```

Still, it's better than nothing.

¹ As a bonus insult, if you type the suggested command, you get this:

```
C:\> NET HELPMSG 3871
```

```
*** is not a valid Windows network message number.
```

Yeah, um, that really didn't tell me anything new.

Raymond Chen

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