

Etiquette and Guidelines Examples

Within your community, you will need to reinforce with your members that they are part of a community and therefore need to respect and get along with the other members. To foster a positive sense of community, here are some guidelines to follow plus links to other resources for ideas.

Basics

- Respect copyright, fair use, and financial disclosure laws.
- Protect all confidential and proprietary information.
- Write in the first person and identify yourself by name and internet address. Speak for yourself, not for the company.
- Protect your credibility. Correct your mistakes, and don't alter previous posts without indicating that you have done so.
- Respect your audience. Lively discussions are always encouraged, but never resort to insults, slurs, or obscene language. Steer clear of unrelated topics that could be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion.

Rules of Behavior

adapted from [Wikipedia:Etiquette](#)

- Treat others as you would have them treat you - even if they are new. We were all new once...
- Be polite, please!
- Keep in mind that raw text is ambiguous and often seems ruder than the same words coming from a person standing in front of you. Irony isn't always obvious - text comes without facial expressions, vocal inflection or body language. Be careful of the words you choose - what you intended might not be what others perceive, and what you read might not be what the author intended.
- Work toward agreement.
- Argue facts, not personalities.
- Don't ignore questions.
- If another disagrees with your edit, provide good reasons why you think it's appropriate.

- Concede a point when you have no response to it, or admit when you disagree based on intuition or taste.
- Be civil.
- Be prepared to apologize. In animated discussions, we often say things we later wish we hadn't. Say so.
- Forgive and forget.
- Recognize your own biases and keep them in check.
- Give praise when due. Everybody likes to feel appreciated, especially in an environment that often requires compromise. Drop a friendly note on users' talk pages.
- Remove or summarize resolved disputes that you initiated.
- Help mediate disagreements between others.
- Avoid deletions whenever possible, except in cases of clear vandalism.
- Remind yourself that these are people you're dealing with. They are individuals with feelings and probably have other people in the world who love them. Try to treat others with dignity.
- Remember the Golden Rule: "treat others as you want them to treat you."

Useful Links & Resources

IBM's Social Computing Guidelines: <http://www.ibm.com/blogs/zz/en/guidelines.html>

Nancy White's Sample Online Interaction Guidelines: <http://www.fullcirc.com/community/sampleguidelines.htm>

Clearstep's Guidelines: <http://www.jivesoftware.com/clearstep/docs/DOC-1065>

PC World's Community Standards: <http://www.pcworld.com/resource/community.html>

Macworld's Community Standards: <http://www.macworld.com/info/standards.html>

Flickr Community Guidelines: <http://flickr.com/guidelines.gne>

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Intel's Social Media Guidelines: http://www.intel.com/sites/sitewide/en_US/social-media.htm

Community Members: Please add links to your own or other resources