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Netiquette for Online Learning

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Netiquette for Online Learning

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Introduction

Communication skills, whether face-to-face or online, facilitates an effective learning experience, and is arguably the most critical (as well as most common act online instructors participate in. Your students' experience can be made or ruined by how well you interact with them.

Students post feedback in an asynchronous discussion board inside the LMS in many online courses.

Some of these discussion exercises are straightforward (for example, presenting an objective response), while others include carefully written responses that show mastery of complex concepts.

Any individual input for students should be entered into the LMS's grade book feature and kept private, so following the guidelines for the online discussion is strongly advised.





Netiquette for Online Learning

Online communication lacks verbal and non-verbal signs such as intonation, movements, posture, and facial expressions which are a normal part of face-to-face communication. The lack of such signs will promptly lead to misunderstandings in the online environment.

What is Netiquette?

Netiquette is online contact network protocol, the do's, and the don'ts. Netiquette covers both common online courtesy and casual cyberspace 'road rules'

Netiquette is a collection of rules that promote acceptable online actions relating to a community's social and cultural norms. Such rules can differ depending on the (informal / formal) environment / context, people (familiar / unfamiliar with each other), activity, and type of technology used. Failure to comply with the Netiquette rule may be viewed as a sign of disrespect

Why do we Need Netiquette Rules?

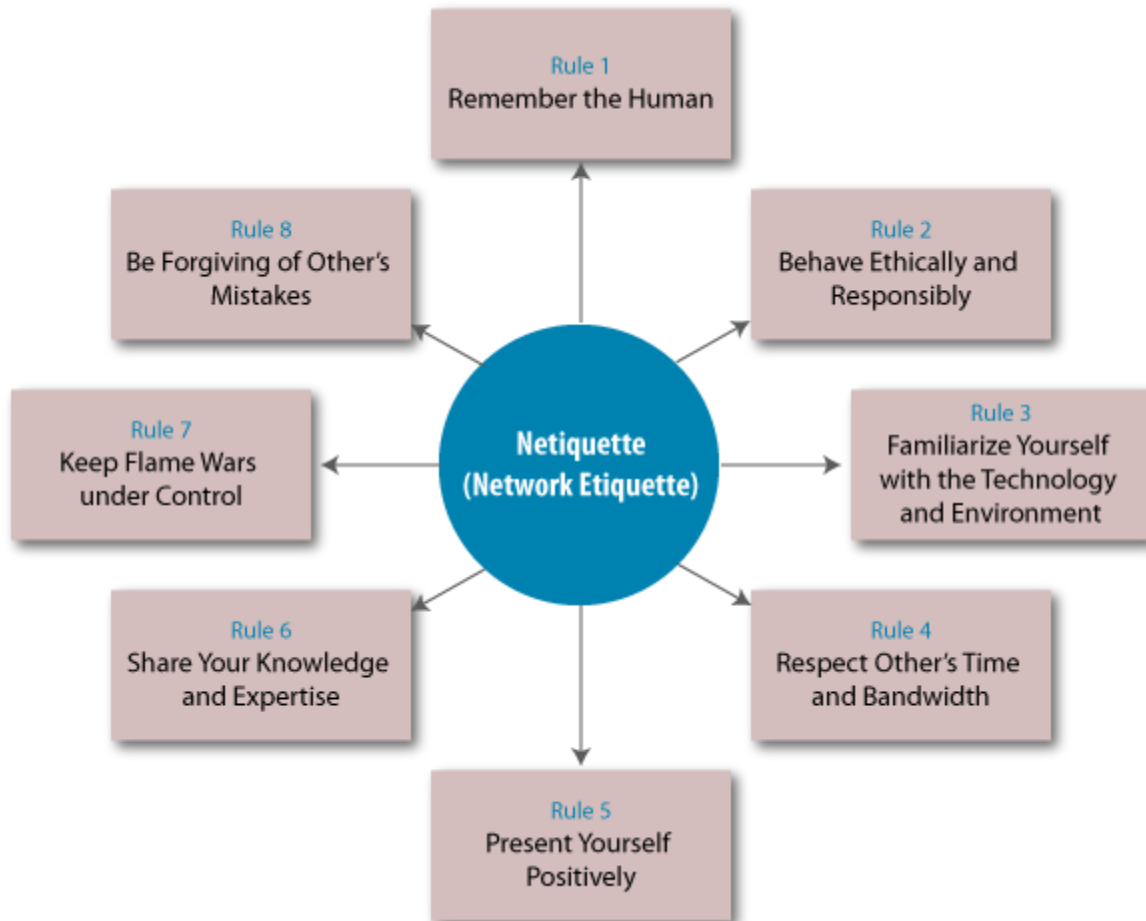
It cannot be assumed that students would necessarily be able to interact in an online world. Netiquette guidelines have evolved to encourage online communication in the absence of visual and auditory signals, which can also be sources of incomprehension, as readers may quickly misinterpret messages. Knowledge of network etiquette discourages disrespectful actions and confrontation online. Class netiquette experiences facilitate social interactions, community building, and trust between participants. It facilitates a secure, engaging, respectful, and collaborative community in which opinion diversity is respected.

Why Should I Incorporate Netiquette Rules in my Online Course?

To raise understanding of its importance, you are encouraged to include a segment on netiquette in your online course syllabus. Netiquette will help students develop their soft skills, avoid miscommunication, help students understand better what is socially appropriate while working and communicating digitally in various environments and ensure that the teaching and learning process is not dissuaded. Netiquette rules can help encourage online professional standards of conduct, as found in the traditional classroom.



Fundamental Netiquette Rules



Rule 1: Remember the Human

- Remember to treat others the way they wish to be treated.
- Introduce yourself and courteously reply to others; use their name.
- Sparingly using emotions to help you display tone when talking in less formal environments.
- Try not to hurt other feelings or cause offense
- Avoid using All CAPS, as you will you seem to scream
- Considering the gender and cultural differences of others; avoid the gender and racial jokes.



Rule 2: Behave Ethically and Responsibly

- Think about it before you hit the Send button — presume your message is permanent.
- Perform according to appropriate social norms.
- To obey the rules of the Internet
- Privacy Policy
- The rules of intellectual property and copyright; credit the work of others
- Complete work on time.

Rule 3: Familiarize Yourself with the Technology and Environment

- Get to know different social and cultural norms.
- Understand that some cultures require a different degree of formality than others.
- To understand that different technologies can require specific guidelines for the netiquette.

Rule 4: Respect Other's Time and Bandwidth

- Concise, important, and informative contributions
- Do not dominate debates
- Recognize that some would think differently
- Don't demand prompt feedback or an emphasis on your efforts at anything.
- Limit emails / posts only to materials related to the course.

Rule 5: Present Yourself Positively

- Become knowledgeable about your topic
- Write simply, in an ordered, logical, and precise manner.
- Run rapid spell check; show professionalism.
- Be friendly and polite; support others whenever possible.
- Value different opinions and viewpoints of others

Rule 6: Share Your Knowledge and Expertise

- Contribute online, and share.
- Be mindful of the beneficial impact of sharing information online:





- It enhances debate and the creation of awareness.
- It helps create online community and trust
- To quote authoritative sources.

Rule 7: Keep Flame Wars under Control

- Recognize that Netiquette avoids tone-dominating "flame wars" and undermines the camaraderie of a conversation.
- Avoid using confrontational words, aggressive language, no intimidation.
- The exchanges online should be positive.
- Demand clarification beforehand because the content may have been misunderstood

Rule 8: Be Forgiving of Other's Mistakes

- Forgive yourself-there will still be new learners online
- Be polite to someone who makes a mistake.
- Using private email when telling others of an etiquette error.
- Note we all make mistakes; be patient.

Make the level of formality explicit!

There are many resources and platforms for online communication. Different online environments can require different rules relating to Netiquette. While students may be very accustomed to informally engaging in social media, the standards and requirements for an educational environment may vary considerably. Therefore, it is essential that you set specific standards for the degree of formality and style of writing that you would like to see in the course.

The WRITE Way to Communicate Online

“The WRITE way includes communicating online in a way that is (W)arm, (R)esponsive, (I)nquisitive, (T)entative, and (E)mpathetic.”





Warmth – “Being warm online is a way of reminding others (and you) that contact is about people, not machines”

Responsive -- “Try returning personal messages as soon as possible and maintaining a routine contact pattern for other responses.”

Inquisitiveness – “It decreases the defensiveness if people ask questions rather than making comments.”

Tentativeness – “A question – posed in a cautious way – decreases defensiveness and can also provide useful knowledge (e.g., 'Don't you think it would be easier if we were to. . .).”

Empathy – “. . .just put yourself in your audience's shoes.”

“A student receives a message open to interpretation, lacks the nonverbal resources needed to help better interpret the message, assigns incorrect attributions to the message and fires back in the classroom with hostility and name calling” (Lewis, 2000).

How does a faculty member prevent or decrease online miscommunication?

To avoid misunderstandings and encourage an online atmosphere where students feel safe, teachers should put in place a policy of netiquette for their online courses.

- Allow learner to complete his / her thought before he / she responds this means don't disturb or interfere with your thought when another is talking.
- Be patient; not everyone has advanced keyboard competencies.
- Do not have side conversations; it is improper not to pay attention to them.
- Signal when a sentence is done [some use a happy face to indicate that they have done their input].
- Signal when you don't understand something; use a question mark to attract the attention of the facilitator.
- Signalize your "reactions" with an exclamation mark (!) (for surprise or with a sad face for disagreement)





- Do not scream [CAPITALS MEAN THAT YOU ARE SHOUTING].
- Do not leave your chair during a scheduled session; if you leave the room, it's impossible to get your attention.
- Sign on and off officially and everyone knows when you're here.
- Keep comments short and timely; the chat box has a maximum of 256 characters per statement; you can keep talking in spurts only.
- Make notes and main points in advance so you can participate in the conversation without having to find out how to translate your comments into sentences.

Here is a quick round-up of these 15 netiquette rules:

- Before posting your question to a discussion forum, verify that someone has asked it already and received a reply.
- Hold on subject. Post no irrelevant links, comments, thoughts, or images.
- Don't type in ALL CAPS! You will look like you are shouting.
- Don't write something that sounds angry or sarcastic even as a joke, because your peers may not know you're kidding without hearing your tone of voice.
- Always remember to say "please" and "thank you" when you ask your classmates for help.
- Respect your classmate's opinions. If you feel the need to disagree with your classmate, do so respectfully and acknowledge the valid points in the argument. When you answer a classmate's question make sure your answer is correct
- Many people respond if you ask questions. Summarize all the answers and post the review for your whole class to benefit.
- When you write a lengthy essay in answer to a simple question, it's doubtful that someone would spend time reading it all through.
- Neither badmouth nor call anyone stupid. You may disagree with their ideas, but don't laugh of the individual.





- If you're referring to something your classmate said earlier in the conversation, quote only a few main lines from their post so everyone won't have to go back and find out which post you're referring to.
- Test the class FAQs or scan the Internet before asking a question to see whether the solution is obvious or easy to find.
- Review the most recent comments before responding to an older comment.
- To forgive. If your classmate makes an error, don't blame him or her for it. Just let it go.
- Run spelling and grammar checks before adding something to the talk.





Appropriate and inappropriate ways to communicate through internet (teacher and student):

Do	Don't
Note that you're talking to somebody ... Not your computer. It is easy to forget that when you are sitting alone working on your computer, there's a person on the other end of the email or discussion group. Be consistent about what you say. Someone can easily misunderstand your purpose. They can't see your expressions or hear your voice tone	Do not say something that you wouldn't say to the face of a human, or that you wouldn't mind reading to Someone. Much as when you write a letter, when you send written words into cyberspace — into email or on discussion groups — you have no influence about where they are going or who will see them
Capitalize terms just to emphasize an significant point or to set a title or heading apart. Capitalizing entire phrases other than names is commonly called SHOUTING!	Don't expect sudden reactions.
Concentrate on one subject per message and always include a relevant subject title for the message, so the user can quickly locate the message	Never give to another person your username or password.
Asterisks that surround a word may be used to make the argument clearer.	If you wouldn't say it face to face, don't tell it online.
Cite all quotes, references and sources and respect the license and copyright agreements.	Do not suppose everyone understands where you come from.
When using sarcasm and humor, be careful. Your joke can be interpreted as criticism without face to face communications.	Don't spam
Examine what you've written and try to interpret it objectively	Don't share your personal details in a public, online forum
Make sure identification is clear in all communications	
If necessary, use the emoticons	
Respect the Privacy of others	
if it's on the web, it's everywhere	
Follow policies	



12 Netiquette Tips for Online Discussion

1- Before writing:

Check the class FAQs or scan the Internet before asking a question

Review the most **recent comments** before responding to an older one

If you're referring to something your classmates said earlier, **quote** a few main lines from their post

2- Be ethical and polite while writing:

Respect your classmate's opinions

Remember to say "please" and "thank you"

Never call anyone stupid

Don't write something that sounds angry

3- Consider:

Run spelling and grammar check

Verify if your question was asked previously & received a reply

When you don't understand something; **use a question mark ?**

Don't type in ALL CAPS! You will look like you are shouting

Get **attention** with a **mention @**



Thank you

