

NETIQUETTE

Netiquette is an informal code of conduct for electronic communication. Although you're not legally obligated to follow proper netiquette, doing so will help you communicate more easily with others. Consider these rules adapted from Virginia Shea's [The Core Rules of Netiquette](#).

RULE 1: REMEMBER THE HUMAN

When communicating electronically, treat others as you would like to be treated. Remember your written words are read by real people, all of whom are deserving of respect. Remember the Golden Rule before you send or submit.

RULE 6: SHARE EXPERT KNOWLEDGE

Users both access and share information on the Internet easily. Make your own contributions by sharing intelligent answers to questions as well as posting resources and references about your subject matter expertise.

RULE 2: BEHAVE APPROPRIATELY

People are typically polite during face-to-face interactions and standards of behavior should not be lowered in the virtual world. You should act within the laws and ethical manners of society whenever you inhabit cyberspace.

RULE 7: CONTROL FLAME WARS

While passionate comments aren't forbidden in virtual communication, flame wars occur when two or more people exchange angry posts. Don't feed the flames; extinguish them by guiding the discussion in a more productive direction.

RULE 3: KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Acceptance of certain communication styles can vary depending on your location in the virtual world. You may acceptably use abbreviations such as LOL while texting a friend, but such slang would not be appropriate in a business email.

RULE 8: RESPECT PEOPLE'S PRIVACY

Private and personal information should be handled with care. Err on the side of caution when discussing virtual communications to avoid embarrassment, hurt feelings, or other negative consequences of not respecting others' privacy.

RULE 4: RESPECT PEOPLE'S TIME

People lead busy lives and don't have time to read or respond to frivolous communications. It's your responsibility to make sure that the time spent reading your words isn't wasted. Make your writing meaningful and to the point.

RULE 9: DON'T ABUSE YOUR POWER

Power in cyberspace may come from expertise in technology, years of experience in a particular subject area, or time spent participating in a community. Having this type of power creates a responsibility of not take advantage of others.

RULE 5: MAKE YOURSELF LOOK GOOD

People are represented by the quality of their writing in virtual communications. Present yourself in positive light by checking all communications for spelling and grammar errors, understanding the topic you're writing about, and clearly stating your message in a pleasant way.

RULE 10: FORGIVE MISTAKES

Experience varies among participants in the virtual world and not everyone knows the rules of netiquette. Try to let minor offenses slide. If you feel compelled to address concerns, do so with kindness and forgiveness through a private email rather than a public forum.