RULES OF NETIQUETTE

Netiquette is a term used for Network Etiquette, or Internet Etiquette. As the online social presence continues to grow, so does the need for rules of conduct to reinforce respect, kindness, and understanding in this growing platform of communication.

Many are aware with some of the basic Netiquette rules such as:

- **Avoid typing in ALL CAPS:** Typing in bold, all caps, or other formatting style conveys emphasis and emotion. All Caps is considered shouting. Use with caution.
- **Be kind:** Avoid posting comments or opinions that you would not feel comfortable speaking to someone directly and keep comments and subject matter appropriate. The Internet is a very public forum.
- **Don’t troll:** Through forums, comments and other feedback options, it is considered bad form to hijack conversation threads for personal gain, steer conversation towards off-topic subjects, or post inflammatory controversial rants or personal attacks towards another user in effort to provoke and spur emotional responses.
- **Privacy sensitivity:** Always limit your audience to a need-to-know basis – don’t assume Reply to All is a useful tactic – and never disrupt chain of command. While these things seems obvious, they happen frequently.
- **Limiting the spread of spam:** Spam is the equivalent of junk mail that clogs email inboxes and offers little professional or personal value while potentially opening up the users to hacking.
- **Be mindful of copyrights:** Just as copying someone’s writing is considered plagiarizing, so is the act of using someone else’s photo, comic, joke, or quote without giving proper credit to its creator or author.
- **Write using proper spelling and grammar:** Though many liberties are taken with online word use, not all can follow a comment or conversation with little or no respect to the written word. Save acronyms, web jargon, and shorthand for its prospective audience if it must be used at all.

With more social dialog taking place across the Internet on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and various other social networks, the rules are rapidly changing and while some rules apply in some settings, others may not.

For instance, many users of Twitter will hold accounts under alias to allow for some personal anonymity. The rules here are different that that when using company email to professional colleagues as well as addressing close friends on your Facebook timeline. Regardless of anonymity or not, it is always vitally important to be mindful of your comments and responses as the written word conveys a much different message and allows for greater misunderstanding.

To remedy tone, many have taken to the rampant use of emoticons, though it should be cautioned that there is rarely a place for them in a professional work setting and should be reserved for casual interactions and not be overused in any context at the risk of credibility.

While it may seem that the rules of netiquette are intense or stifle personal expression, we should be mindful that while we cannot see each other, we are still dealing with other people. In a time when more and more people use the Internet than ever before, it’s a good thing to remember to be forgiving of others for their grammatical and spelling errors, misunderstandings, and opinions. You never know
who may be reading what you wrote, including employers, potential job opportunities, and other networking peers.

**SOURCES:**


At the end of the document, type the web addresses for the sites you used as references.