

## Online etiquette

In any social situation there are norms about how to behave. This is clearly true in the physical world – how do you feel when someone interrupts you when you are talking, or pushes you out of the way in a queue? It is also true in the virtual world. Online etiquette is often referred to as netiquette. Here are 10 rules for how to ensure that online interactions proceed effectively:

- **Treat other people as you would like them to treat you**
- **Be positive**
- **Adopt an informal, friendly, yet professional tone**
- **Thank, acknowledge and help others as much as possible ('I agree ...', 'Thanks for that ...', 'Welcome to the forum ...')**
- **Acknowledge before disagreeing ('I think you meant ... My own view is that ...')**
- **Speak from a specified perspective ('I think ...', 'My view is ...')**
- **Read and think before you respond – if upset or angry wait 24 hours before posting**
- **Be clear about your intent (before posting be clear about your purpose *and* the readers' views, expectations and level of knowledge of the subject)**
- **Criticise actions not individuals ('I think that what John said/did is ...' rather than 'I think John is ...')**
- **Be careful about copyright and permissions. (Do you have permission to post that content? If so have you acknowledged the source?)**

There is extensive advice about netiquette on the web, see for example:

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/guides/about-netiquette>
- <http://www.alexandrasamuel.com/world/25-rules-of-social-media-netiquette>