**4. Contribute to tasks using collaborative technologies**

4.1 I can describe rules of engagement for using collaborative technologies.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Collaboration

Posted on October 18, 2019

Online collaboration is fast becoming a permanent feature of the modern workplace. Companies and organisations are attracted by the cost-effective technology allowing employees to work together anywhere, at any time using any internet-enabled device.

But what are the advantages of online workspaces when compared to traditional methods of collaborative working with colleagues and stakeholders? And are there any drawbacks or disadvantages of online communication on a cloud platform?

The reality is that there are many advantages and disadvantages of online collaboration. Let’s take a look at both sides of the coin.

1. Productivity

Pros: Online collaboration gives team members the tools they need to work with others from any location, [including from home and while travelling](https://www.kahootz.com/how-to-effectively-manage-remote-employees/). This drastically reduces ”downtime” and allows people to be productive when it best suits them. Platforms like Kahootz also send team members automatic updates when documents have been added or amended, ensuring everyone is kept in the loop and projects keep moving at a fast pace.

A [research study](https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/se/Documents/technology-media-telecommunications/deloitte-digital-collaboration.pdf) by Deloitte found that three-quarters of those surveyed believed access to tools for collaborative working would improve productivity and can significantly improve productivity levels by as much as 20-25%.

Cons: Personal contact is reduced, which can lead to confusion over what is expected of team members. They may also feel that being connected 24/7 is blurring the boundaries between their professional and private lives. Online collaboration also requires each team member to be responsible for their own tasks and keep each other accountable, to ensure deadlines are met.

Solution: Make sure team members are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and put effective managers in charge of workspaces. Use task lists and team diaries to assign work and check progress, and set ground rules about when colleagues are expected to be online – and when they are not. Finally, don’t abandon face-to-face meetings – they can still be very useful, if not as essential as before!

2. Efficiency

Pros: Employees typically spend [three hours a day](https://fortune.com/2018/08/21/email-habits-attention-study-adobe/) searching for information and/or writing emails. However, when used properly, online collaborative working tools can eliminate a lot of these redundant emails. With all of the communications in one secure, online platform, it’s simple for team members to login and find the information they need to do their job. This significantly reduces the time spent searching through long email exchanges, meaning more efficient communication.

Cons: An online collaboration tool generating just as many (if not more) emails as it reduces, can be counter-productive. On a daily basis, email inboxes can quickly get cluttered with the vast amount of notifications from an online collaboration tool.

Solution: To control the number of emails each team member receives, ensure the correct settings and permissions are enabled for each project on the online collaboration tool. This way, a notification will only be sent when absolutely necessary, and employees will spend less time looking through emails in their inbox.

3. Cost

Pros: Online collaboration is highly cost-effective compared to traditional methods, and is within reach of all sizes of organisation. Software like Kahootz offers flexible [pay-as-you-go licensing](https://www.kahootz.com/pricing/), ensuring you only pay for the exact amount of users you need and not tied down to large bundles of licences. Also, because [collaborating online](https://www.kahootz.com/collaborative-working/) allows employees to work from home or other locations, you can potentially cut the cost of office overheads such as equipment, electricity and space.

Cons: You need to choose an online collaboration package offering a fair pricing structure. Some will force you to buy licences for users you don’t need, so be wary. On the other hand, a “per user per month” pricing model may lead organisations to limit the access to only selected users. This, in turn, can cause a disparity in transparency and communication across the workplace.

Solution: Shop around for the best deals and work out projected costs before signing up for any cloud collaboration package. Some vendors will provide a calculator on their website to help you do this.

4. Audience

Pros: With the right software, you can reach far beyond the ”usual suspects” within your organisation and start working closer with external stakeholders, such as your key clients, partners and suppliers. Because it is cheap and easy to bring individuals working together into a workspace, you can increase community engagement with your external stakeholders more than by using traditional methods such as meetings, phone calls, paper surveys, press advertisements and similar. This brings diversity to your collaborative working – resulting in more creativity and the creation of stronger relationships.

Cons: It can be tempting to widen the number of people you collaborate with, without properly assessing the reasons why you need to engage with them. This can lead to a diffusion of focus and a slowing down of the collaborative process.

Solution: Always assess why you want to collaborate with teams or individuals in other organisations before deciding to invite them to share your collaborative online workspace.

Choosing a flexible and customisable tool like Kahootz allows you to use the platform for more than one purpose. Common use cases include client portals, collaborative procurement, project management and many more.

5. Security

Pros: The most trusted online collaboration platforms have many safeguards in place to protect their users’ data. By having encryptions, password protection, two-step authentication and firewalls; users can have the peace of mind knowing their sensitive data is secure and safe.

Cons: As online collaboration typically functions on a cloud-based workspace, securing the safety of information is vital on all levels. Although the original concerns associated with these tools have been resolved, there are still a few people with the mind-set that storing data in the cloud is not as secure as keeping it on their personal servers.

Solution: Any online collaboration software vendor should be able to provide evidence of their [security credentials if asked.](https://www.kahootz.com/security/)

Looking at their list of clients also provides insight. If security-conscious organisations, (from the public or defence sectors for example) trust them to host their data, then that can only be a good sign.

6. Project Management

Pros: One of the major advantages of a collaborative working online workspace is that they ensure [all project materials and communications with external parties are kept within the same workspace](https://www.kahootz.com/collaboration-and-project-management/). This means you don’t have to worry about keeping track of emails and different versions of attachments – online workspaces in Kahootz retain archived versions of every document, and team members can add comments and tasks to each file. With a full audit trail of every ‘person’s interaction with the workspace, combined with team calendars and [task lists](https://www.kahootz.com/task-management-tips/), managing any size project with users across multiple organisations becomes much simpler, quicker and cost-effective.

Cons: A project is only as good as the way it is managed. Plan outcomes before inviting colleagues to join a workspace and appoint effective managers to oversee progress.

Solution: Make sure that team members are clear about expectations, milestones, goals and deadlines. And don’t be afraid of using traditional methods such as face-to-face meetings and conference calls if it helps keep a project on track.

As you can see, cloud collaboration software brings many advantages to your organisation and improves working together across teams. There are some drawbacks, but most can be overcome by good planning, strong management, and combining online work with traditional collaborative working methods where appropriate.

Information from Kahootz

[ADDICTION](https://www.verywellmind.com/addiction-overview-4581803)

[ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS](https://www.verywellmind.com/addictive-behaviors-overview-4581802)

[INTERNET](https://www.verywellmind.com/internet-addiction-overview-4581782)

10 Basic Netiquette Rules

By

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The rules of etiquette are just as important on the Internet as they are in the real world—and poor netiquette (online etiquette or Internet etiquette) can stick around to haunt you for much longer. Follow these basic rules of netiquette to avoid damaging your [online and offline relationships](https://www.verywellmind.com/sex-relationships-4157190) and protect your reputation.

1

Make Real People a Priority

Nothing is more irritating than trying to have a conversation with someone who is [engrossed in their phone](https://www.verywellmind.com/constantly-checking-your-phone-4137954), tablet, or another electronic device. This is especially important if the other person is your date, partner, or child.

Constantly checking your email, voicemail, or [Facebook](https://www.verywellmind.com/facebook-addiction-how-to-control-the-social-media-habit-4108138) sends the message that you don't care about them. It can also be annoying and hurtful to be with someone who is having a conversation that you are not part of.

If someone is trying to talk to you when on your cell phone, tablet, or computer, stop what you are doing and look at them. Whatever is happening in the online world can generally wait.

If you are expecting an important call, email, or text, let the person you are with know upfront and apologize for the interruption.

Continue to make real people a priority while in public places such as restaurants, public transit, stores, elevators, and libraries. You can do this by not having phone conversations when in these shared spaces, as well as by silencing your audible notifications.

2. Use Respectful Language

Name-calling, cursing, expressing deliberately offensive opinions—if you wouldn't do this to the face of anyone who might conceivably see what you write, don't write it. This goes for social media sites, forums, chat rooms, and email messages. If you think it can't be traced back to you, it can.

Using any sort of [verbal abuse](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-recognize-verbal-abuse-bullying-4154087) online can get you banned from your social groups. At a minimum, your remarks will likely be removed as one in three online comments are rejected by page moderators.1

Keep in mind that it's not just what you say that may be considered disrespectful, but how you say it. Text in all caps is generally perceived as yelling, for instance. Either use the shift key for capital letters or write in all lower case—but don't use caps lock. Don't forget to say please and thank you as appropriate.

3. Share With Discretion

Don't [sext](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-sexting-22345) naked pictures or post drunk pictures, drug use pictures, or other statements about your private life online. Once these images and statements are uploaded to the Internet, they are there for the rest of the world to see.

Even if you try to remove these posts later, it might be too late. Some posts may even trigger disciplinary action from your employer, such as if the post is deemed discriminatory in nature.2

One way to avoid sharing too much private information online is to ask yourself if you would have a problem with your boss, parents, or kids seeing that post now or at any point in the future. If the answer is yes, don't post or send it.

The same guideline applies when having phone conversations in public places. Any time you are talking out loud, others can overhear you. This provides them access to your private information, so don't overshare.

Oversharing and Identity Theft

Although it can be fun to play along with social media posts that share your favorite color, first car, and the street you grew up on, these can be used by scammers to steal your identity and private information. Have discretion with any information that can be used as answers to security questions on your private accounts.

4. Don't Exclude Others

When it feels like you're being left out, it can lead to both [negative emotions](https://www.verywellmind.com/embrace-negative-emotions-4158317) and a sense of lost control. While these effects can occur in males, they tend to be more prominent for females.3

If you have an in-joke to share, send it in a private message. Additionally, don't post an obscure comment to your Facebook, a forum, or Instagram story as this can leave others feeling as if they are excluded from whatever it is you are talking about.

The same goes for laughing at a text, social media meme, or email when you are in the presence of others. If you don't want to share what you are laughing about, save it for later so it doesn't feel like you're excluding the person you're with.

It is equally important to be mindful of who you decide to include as some people prefer to not be added to large group texts or social media groups. Good netiquette involves getting their permission first to ensure that they're okay with it.

5. Choose Friends Wisely

It can be insulting to be dropped from someone's social media friend list. So, think before sending a [friend request](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-make-friends-as-an-adult-4769076) or accepting an invitation. If you don't want to stay in touch with someone long-term, good netiquette is to not add them in the first place.

To stay in touch with a colleague without adding them as a friend, tell them you only use Facebook for close personal friendships. Suggest that you connect on LinkedIn or another professional networking site to stay in touch.

The obvious exception to this netiquette rule is if you "friend" someone while you are getting along and then have a [disagreement](https://www.verywellmind.com/conflict-resolution-mistakes-to-avoid-3144982). It is perfectly acceptable to unfriend someone if the relationship is beyond repair. Just don't torture them (or yourself) with on-again-off-again friending.

Video Meeting Netiquette

When meeting with colleagues online, following a few general guidelines can help keep your interactions professional. Proper online etiquette for [video meetings](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-cope-with-zoom-fatigue-5079533) include:

* Checking your device's audio and video before the meeting to ensure that they work
* Creating a background that is uncluttered so it isn't disruptive, or selecting a background offered by the video meeting platform
* Choosing a professional screen name (your first and last name is a good option; avoid nicknames or any screen name that could be offensive or unprofessional)
* Joining the meeting on time
* Muting yourself when you're not speaking
* Not talking over other meeting participants

## 6. Respect People's Privacy

Don't forward information sent to you without checking with the original sender first as doing this behind their back can create [mistrust](https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-build-trust-in-a-relationship-5207611) if they find out. This includes copying and pasting texts or sending screenshots.

If you are forwarding an email message, use BCC (blind carbon copy) rather than CC (carbon copy) when sending it to more than one person. This helps protect the privacy of all the other email recipients.

You might think that we are all friends online, but some people don't want their names or email addresses publicized to those they don't know.

The same respect for privacy applies when uploading photos or videos online that include other people, whether to a public space or on your private social media page. Remember that if you tag people on Facebook, others can access these photos, unless the people in them have adjusted their privacy settings.

Finally, don't sign up for newsletters and other communications using someone else's information. It's simple enough to set up your own email account or supply your own number for texting and can protect you from irritating friends by having them receive emails or texts they don't want.

7. Fact Check Before Reposting

That cure for cancer might sound pretty impressive, but it will just cause upset if it is a hoax. Urban myths, fake retailer coupons, and other forms of misinformation also add to the noise of the Internet and waste people's time.

And if you think that fake online information is more the exception than the rule, think again. Research indicates that Facebook users alone engage with some form of [misinformation](https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-misinformation-effect-2795353) around 70 million times each month.4

If you aren't sure of the facts behind an online story or social media post, check with someone who does know or can find out. Another option is to do a search on Google or snopes.com to see if the post is true or if it is a scam.

8. Don't Spam

The term "spam" applies to the receipt of any unwanted message. In the online world, spamming can refer to an unwanted email, text, or social media message.

Most of us are familiar with spam calls or spam emails from companies we didn't give permission to contact us. But we can also get spammed by family and friends, such as when they repeatedly contact us asking to take part in their latest business venture.

Avoid doing this to your contacts and it can help keep your relationships intact. If you want to share information with your contacts, ask before sending it. Taking this one step can keep you from being blocked.

Plus, many of the worst [computer viruses](https://www.verywellmind.com/handling-computer-stress-and-frustration-3144731) in history have been circulated via mass emails.5 So don't open an email or social media message from someone you don't know. If the message contains a download, double-check with the sender before opening it to make sure it wasn't sent by someone pretending to be them.

9. Respond to Emails and Texts Promptly

By all means, ignore and delete spam, unsolicited messages, and crazy stuff. You don't owe anyone a response if they are sending you something you didn't ask for in advance.

Otherwise, have the courtesy to reply to a message within a few days, especially if that message is from family or friends. If it is going to take longer, that's okay. Just tell them that so they know and aren't waiting for your reply.

If the message is something you don't want to deal with, know that [avoiding it](https://www.verywellmind.com/avoidance-coping-and-stress-4137836) not only won't cause it to go away but may even create more stress. Don't allow this to happen to you by responding as soon as you can.

## 10. Update Online Information

Don't leave inaccurate information online just because you can't be bothered to update your social media profile or, if you own a business, your company's website.

If you are going to be unavailable, for example, don't leave your hours of operation online indicating you will be available. If you can't keep your website up to date, take it down.

Following this netiquette guideline is even more important if you're actively [looking for a job](https://www.verywellmind.com/psychology-careers-4157173) online. If prospective employers find outdated information on your professional networking page, they might assume that you don't care enough about getting work.