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Communicating with Others

SOCIAL MEDIA COMPARATIVE CHART

To get a better sense of what communication channel to use when, review this chart to learn the specific benefits and challenges of using different communication channels, including different social media outlets.

Medium	Benefits	Drawbacks
IN-PERSON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting respectful professional communication and maintaining personal relationships. • Easy to share information spontaneously (e.g., deviating from original message). • Can share nuanced messages effectively using verbal, nonverbal communication methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing a quick message or seeking a simple answer to a question can be tricky, as in-person often requires formalities and may inspire a longer conversation. • Communicating with a group across multiple locations is impossible in-person.
PHONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct respectful communication by personalizing communication. • Phone calls are harder to ignore than texts or emails, so can get a faster response. • Can share somewhat nuanced message using verbal communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to share visual information, documents, or files. • Can be difficult to communicate by voice alone, may lead to misunderstandings. • Phone requires formalities, can be time consuming. • Can be tough to communicate with a large group easily.
EMAIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to share nuanced message using only written communication. • Good for maintaining connection with group more personally than through mass-media platform like Facebook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes time to write a response and easier to ignore than in-person or on phone which can delay a response. • If sender's account is not a familiar recipient, may end up in spam folder.
INSTANT MESSAGE/TEXT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick way of casually sharing text information or finding answers to brief questions. • Good for casually connecting with individual or small group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier to ignore and casual medium, so getting responses may be tough. • Difficult to share complex ideas or deviate from a single message. • Nuanced communication may be misinterpreted.

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TWITTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to gather followers and communicate to mass audiences. • Quick ability to survey diverse materials, viewpoints from people you follow – all across multiple geographic and social boundaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very difficult to share complex ideas or deviate from a single message. • “Busy” interface means messages may become buried or lost amid others’ tweets or messages. • Limited to 140 characters.
LINKEDIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum dedicated to professionalism, maintaining formal network. • Posting updates or content, “liking” others content, and commenting can maintain formal and informal networks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected accounts means it can be difficult to connect with other with whom you are not already “linked”. • Less personal than connecting via email, phone, in-person. • Some people do not actively check their LinkedIn account, so message could be lost.
FACEBOOK, GOOGLE+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both have many different ways of engaging network. • Posting updates or content, “liking” others’ content, and commenting can maintain formal and informal networks. • Built-in chat mechanism for private messages can allow for more confidential chats. • Having a closed group of followers means you have access to a curated list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping professional distance important for business communication. Your contact may not want to share their personal information with you. • Can be concerns regarding protecting personal privacy. • Using a third-party site to conduct professional or business communications may look amateur.
INSTAGRAM, SNAPCHAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing visual information quickly. • Monitoring others informally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing text-based information. • Communicating with professional colleagues. • Have to use hashtags properly, otherwise content can become “lost”.
REDDIT, 4CHAN, QUORA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for engaging large crowd of strangers. • Ability to gather anonymous feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering reliable information can be challenging. • Anonymity can lead to less-than-favourable posts, comments.