Starting a Terminal Window

Before starting I would like you to know the **difference** between the **terminal** and the **shell**.

The terminal refers to a wrapper program which runs a shell while the shell which I will discuss later is the program which actually processes commands and returns output.

Ways to launch a terminal window:

1) By pressing 'Ctrl+Alt+T'.

2) Or go to your Dashboard and click on the Terminal icon.

3) Or go to your Dashboard and in the search bar and type terminal. Then click on the terminal icon.

The terminal window is your control panel for the system. Almost everything that follows is done using this simple but powerful text tool. A terminal window should always show a command prompt when you open it. Once you launch the Terminal, you would find something as "mo@**my.server:~$**" written on it.

1) The first part of this line 'mo' is the name of the user.

2) The second part '**my.server**'is the computer name or the hostname which we added during the installation. The hostname helps identify a computer over the network. In a server environment, the host-name becomes important. You can use this command to check your hostname 'echo $HOSTNAME'

3) In some linux distributions you may see a colon after the hostname. This ':' is a simple separator.

4) The tilde '~' sign shows that the user is working in the home directory, you can check using the pwd command. If you change the directory this sign will vanish. For example, If we moved from the mo /home directory to /bin using the 'cd' command. The '~' sign will be changed with the current directory name. It will appear again when moving back to the home directory either by using the command cd /home/username or by typing the command cd only or by typing the command cd ~ and pressing Enter.

5) The '$' sign suggests that you are working as a regular or standard user. While working

as a root user by typing the 'su –' command and pressing enter followed by the root password the '#' will be displayed and the username will be changed to root.

To disconnect from the system in graphical mode, you need to close all applications. After that in the terminal window you can type "**reboot**" to reboot or "**shutdown**" or "**poweroff**" to shutdown the system as needed.