

# Access

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## Etiquette in the Age of Social Media

Social media has transformed how we communicate and interact in both our personal and professional lives. Social media **etiquette** refers to unwritten rules and guidelines governing appropriate behavior, interactions and communication on social media platforms. Practicing good manners and etiquette online has become increasingly important to maintaining respectful online interactions. Being mindful of what we post contributes to maintaining a positive online environment.

### Respect Privacy

Respect the privacy of yourself and others when using social media. Be very cautious about sharing personal information (addresses, phone numbers, or financial details). Oversharing personal information can lead to privacy and security issues. It's crucial to maintain a balance between sharing portions of your experience, while protecting your personal data. **Adjust privacy settings on social media sites to control who can access your posts and profile information. Limit access to your trusted friends and contacts.**



Avoid oversharing, participating in nasty online arguments or sharing unchecked content. Avoid posting any inappropriate or potentially harmful content. **Spreading gossip** or engaging in public negativity is not a good idea.

### Be Aware of Your Company's Social Media Policy

Employees should be aware of their company's Social Media Policy. Most companies have a policy outlining what is unacceptable for an employee to say on social media. Violating an employer's social media policy could be problematic. This could happen if any publicly shared comments are deemed **inappropriate, offensive, or potentially harmful to the organization's reputation.**

### Be Respectful; Avoid Miscommunication

Words matter. Clear and respectful communication helps avoid miscommunication, especially on social media. Before posting or commenting, take a moment to consider the impact of your words. If you happen to disagree with someone, express your viewpoint clearly and constructively. This shows you value civil, two-way conversation.



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# Manage Your Online and Professional Image

Social media platforms are **considered public spaces**, making them fair game for employers to access. If you apply for a position in the future, your next employer may screen candidates by checking social media posts before making a hiring decision. Certain online posts or extreme political views, even those seemingly unrelated to work, could raise red flags.

Recruiters commonly use social media to vet potential candidates and gather more information about a candidate than what's listed on a resume. If they uncover provocative or controversial online postings, this may eliminate a candidate from future consideration.

## Key Takeaways

Social media is a useful tool for personal use and for building a professional network. However, think through whether sharing certain types of information could harm you in any way. Consider social media postings and your online profile as an extension of your professional resume. Make sure they portray the best version of yourself.

The bottom line? Exercise common sense when posting on social media. Following social media etiquette is key to protecting your privacy and your professional reputation. Social media etiquette helps enhance the online environment and build a respectful digital community.

***If you (or a family member in your household) are having problems with negative social interactions or if overuse of social media is affecting daily life, talking to someone at the EAP can help. Licensed and trained counselors are available at no cost to you, 24/7.***



## Did You know?

Everything you post on social media should be considered **permanent**. Be aware that deleting a post doesn't always erase or remove it permanently. It could still be accessible through screenshots taken by others, cached by the social media platform, or even archived by third-party websites. Deleting a post on social media means removing it from your visible profile or social media feed. **Deleting** doesn't **ensure** completely erasing it from the internet.



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