



LLC Netiquette Guidelines

Welcome to the Community of “Lifelong Competences – informal learning in social fields”. The use of our Community platform is free of charge and available for those users who have registered and who have been accepted by the Community Administrator. We are committed to make this community a great place for people to interact and meet other people who share the same interests. Therefore we have set out some Community Guidelines to make sure that everyone who joins us will have a positive experience. Many of these guidelines also apply to “offline” communities and are therefore not new. However, we feel it would be helpful to restate them so that everybody can be clear about what is acceptable. We also want to include guidelines for successful forum discussions to help you getting the most out of them.

- Everyone is welcome in the LLC community: people of all ages, races, religions, genders, national origins, sexual orientations and points of view. Please refrain from using profanity or expressions of obscenity, sexism, racism, and other types of prejudice. Please also be aware that what is funny in one culture can sometimes offend another.
- You are responsible for all your activities while participating in discussion forums including the quality and content. Our entire community should be a friendly, helpful and supportive place.
- Be considerate. Don't ridicule others for their lack of knowledge regarding the new medium. Take the time to share what you know. If someone makes a mistake, try to help him or her out politely.
- Give and receive. Don't hesitate to ask questions, but also be sure to contribute whenever you have information that can help another member. After all, the free flow of ideas is what makes the online community such a dynamic place.
- Introduce yourself. When you feel comfortable it is a good idea to introduce yourself, e.g. when you first enter a forum to give those around you a little information about yourself and how you're connected to the topic.
- The Forum postings should have a subject heading which reflects the content of your postings.
- Don't interrupt the flow of ideas by making persistent off-topic comments in discussions.
- Our discussions are for networking and sharing support and information, not for e-commerce. Please, no postings selling anything either for profit or not.
- Don't "spam." To spam means posting repetitive and irrelevant messages to one or many different discussion forums.
- For your own safety, don't give out personally identifiable information (such as Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, driver's license numbers) to strangers online.
- Don't "shout". Unless you intend to emphasise a point, refrain from typing words or phrases in all caps. IT LOOKS AS THOUGH YOU'RE SHOUTING! Besides, it's annoying and difficult to read.
- Ask for permission of the author before you upload a document of an other person into the platform. We also recommend to link to the website where you can find the original document.

- If you refer to the opinion or statement of an other person note this and list the correct citation.
- All documents uploaded in the platform are used for the purposes of the project “Lifelong competences – informal learning in social fields” only.

If we all follow the above guidelines, our community will be a friendly, comfortable place for everyone!

Guidelines for Forum Moderators and Participants

Forums are places for on-line discussions of areas of shared interest among the community. Forums may be devoted to a specific topic or may be used to bring together individuals with a shared field of interest or from a particular geographical region such as “Latin America.”

Moderators are individuals (or groups of individuals) whose job it is to look after the running of the forums from day to day. They have the right to edit or delete posts and lock, unlock, move, delete and split topics in the forum they moderate. Generally moderators are there to “guide” the discussions, to prevent people going off-topic or posting abusive or offensive material. These guidelines for successful Forum Discussion contain useful tips of how to moderate an online Forum.

A new Forum should open with a Welcome message. This message is normally written by a “moderator” who has accepted the responsibility of keeping an eye on the discussion and make sure that it stays productive. The role of the moderator can be taken by a participant who has a special interest or knowledge in the specific discussion topic or someone who wishes to make a special contribution to the community.

The welcome message can:

- Introduce the subject by focusing on a topic or problem. In this way during the discussion contributions that are deviating from this subject can be redirected.
- Invite participants to take part in the discussion and motivate them to send their contributions.
- Prompt people to ask for help if they experience problems with the technology. Frustration with the technical aspects of using the Forum is usually a big problem that inhibits newcomers in contributing to the discussions.
- A moderator may decide to prompt people to introduce themselves briefly when they contribute to the Forum for the first time. It varies from person to person, but a personal introduction can help participants to identify commonalities among them and thus feel more comfortable in participating.

A forum discussion can go on forever and it is easy to deviate from the topic of interest or confuse people who cannot figure out the relationship between the stated discussion topic and the content of the contributions. Therefore the moderator can.

- summarise the arguments regarding the initial discussion from time to time and report this summary in the forum.
- suggest opening a new discussion forum for the topics that deviate from this topic.
- direct participants to other discussion forums that are concerned with similar topics.

During inactive times in a Forum the moderator should invite participants to contribute and motivate them to continue writing. If there is no further interest in continuing a discussion

forum on a particular topic, there is no reason for its existence. In this case it is suggested that the moderator should,

- summarise the contributions.
- announce the closure of the forum and ask the participants to respond if they have any objections.

The moderator may then

- identify aspects or new topics that are of interest and need to be discussed further.
- ask people if they would have interest in discussing these subjects in another forum discussion.
- open other forum discussion according to interest.

It would be good if a forum moderator can keep an eye on what is going on in other forums to identify common subjects share ideas and insights and assure the connectedness of the Community.

If there is no further interest in contributing to the topic the moderator should close the forum and summarise all arguments and results of the discussion.