

A simple guide to online communication

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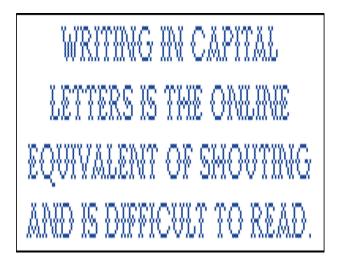
Communication of any kind has some rules and etiquettes that one must follow. Whether you are having a face-to-face dialogue or communicating online, good manners and proper use of language counts everywhere. Just because you are chatting does not mean that English fluency is out of the window. You may not be practicing spoken English, nonetheless, even chatting is a good exercise to English.



Rules of online communication

Given that chatting, most of the times, is informal and friendly, but many times you might be chatting with, say, a client or taking an interview online. In such circumstances, make sure you follow the rules of online communication.

•Avoid capital letters: This is the very first and most vital rule everyone must follow. It is easy to get carried away in the flow while chatting and not realizing that you have hit the 'Caps' button. Now, all the messages you send will be in capital letters. While this is clearly an error on your part, to the person on the other end, it is equivalent to you shouting if you were having a personal conversation! Capital letters must be avoided, unless they are required for grammar reasons. Same applies to bold letters as well. Unless you wish to highlight something, refrain from using capital and bold letters.



• **Be patient:** Many times, you may feel that the person on the other end is not paying attention, or replying on time. Whenever chatting online, give the other person the benefit of the doubt, as it may be possible that the person is facing some technical issues or getting your chats late! If the problem persists, politely ask the

other person if there are any glitches in continuing the chat online.

•Use smileys sparingly: Smileys are cute, and they provide whatever emotional quotient chatting can have. However, an overdose of smileys can make you appear juvenile and immature. Ask yourself, do you really wink or 'laugh out loud' every time you are speaking? If not, then why do so online?



- **Don't leave quietly:** If you have to leave the chat or excuse yourself for some time, inform the person you are chatting to and then leave. Do not simply log off and leave. This is the worst thing you could do when communicating online. Another mistake people do is leave the chat open and leave. Why do you want to leave the other person waiting in vain? You wish to go? Excuse yourself and inform the person you are chatting.
- **Do not hog the conversation:** So, you are proud that you can <u>speak English</u> fluently, and wish to show it off at every instance, you can but do not do so when you are chatting online! Communication is not a monologue. Give the other person a chance to express his/her views as well. There is no worse communication killer than a person who hogs the whole conversation, with no respect whatsoever for the other participants.

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- By Shailja Varma

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