Netiquette

WARM UP

1 **What is the definition of etiquette?**

A the correct way to use sticky labels

B the correct way to behave in social situations

C the correct way to speak a language

2 **Now what do you think the definition of netiquette is? Check the first paragraph to see if you are right.**

The definition of the word 'etiquette' is the expected code of polite behaviour in society or within a particular group. So, when combined with the word 'net', from Internet, it refers to how to behave appropriately in cyberspace, whether it is posting your views on forums and online discussion groups or sending business and personal emails.

It seems that often many of us forget that we are interacting with other people when we are on the Net and our manners go out of the window. Sitting in front of a screen makes things seem impersonal, so it is important to remember that you are communicating with real people, just like you.

It is easy to misinterpret what someone writes as there are no gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice to help convey meaning and feelings. You can use emoticons to help express yourself, but basically you should always be polite and respectful while still expressing your opinions. Remember that what you have written out there in cyberspace can come back and haunt you later. Respect also means being aware of other people's time and therefore not posting the same message several times or sending copies of emails to people when it is not necessary.

Another good rule is to share your knowledge and therefore help other people. You can post answers to questions on a forum, post a review on sites like TripAdvisor or contribute to Wikipedia or even a crowdsourcing project. Finally, while you should endeavour to know what you are talking about, to make sense and to write well, it is equally important to forgive other people's mistakes.

ACTIVITIES

READING COMPREHENSION

3 **BEC Read the text and decide if these sentences are true (T) or false (F). If there is not enough information, choose 'doesn't say' (DS).**

		T	F	DS
1	Netiquette only refers to the use of the Internet for business purposes.	☐	☐	☐
2	People are often less polite when using the Net.	☐	☐	☐
3	Facial expressions and tone of voice can help you to understand what someone wants to say.	☐	☐	☐
4	Emoticons are most commonly used in personal emails.	☐	☐	☐
5	Anything you write or post on the Internet may have an effect in the future.	☐	☐	☐
6	It is a good idea to send copies of emails to a lot of people, just in case.	☐	☐	☐
7	You can use what you know to help other people on the Internet.	☐	☐	☐
8	It is not acceptable to make mistakes in cyberspace.	☐	☐	☐

VOCABULARY

4 **Complete these rules with a word from the box.**

brief • capitals • copies • inbox • out-of-office reply • policy • salutations • spelling

Netiquette rules for business emails

1 Respect company _____ and culture.

2 Use the proper _____ depending on the degree of familiarity with the recipient.

3 Be _____ in order to respect the recipient's time.

4 Do not needlessly send _____ to everyone.

5 Do not use _____ – it is like shouting.

6 Check your _____ and grammar.

7 Use the automatic _____ if you are going to be absent for a while.

8 Check your _____ regularly.

SPEAKING

5 **Discuss these questions in small groups.**

1 How important do you think it is to respect these rules in cyberspace?

2 Which do you think is the most/least important? Why?

3 Do you participate in online discussion groups or post reviews and contributions? Why/Why not?

4 What are the differences between writing private and business emails?