

How to Create Community Guidelines:

Building communities online is a great way to foster relationships and connections with like-minded individuals, fans, and customer groups. However, without boundaries set for your community, you may expose the group to unwanted behaviour, negativity, and abuse.

Having clearly defined guidelines to moderate your online community is vital in preventing intolerable behaviour like personal attacks, bullying, or trolling from escalating to the point of no return. Community guidelines clearly outline the rules of your group and the consequences that will occur if those rules are broken.

If you feel that your online community is in need of such guidelines, here is a template to get you started:

Community Guidelines

1. Overview:

The purpose of the overview is to outline the goals of your community. What do you hope to achieve with this platform? What does your brand or business value?

Example: The goals of this community are to build meaningful connections and relationships with our fans and current/potential customers. We strive to provide engaging and informative content for our fans.

2. Guidelines:

What are the do's and don'ts of your community? Here is where you will outline what is tolerated and what is not. Be as specific as possible.

Example:

- Treat others online as you would treat them in real life.
- Be tolerant towards others viewpoints; respectfully disagree when opinions do not align.
- Respect the privacy and personal information of other community members.
- Communicate with community members respectfully. There will be zero tolerance for bullying.
- Do not post anything that could be considered defamatory, indecent, hateful, racist, xenophobic, homophobic, sexist, disgraceful, vulgar or inappropriate.

3. Consequences:

What will happen to the community member if they break the set community guidelines? Will the comment be deleted? Will the poster be removed from the page entirely? Outline the consequences as clearly as you can.

Example: We will take action when we see someone violating these guidelines. Sometimes that just means giving someone a warning; other times it means revoking certain privileges or banning accounts entirely. We request that all community members report to us any actions that violate these guidelines.

4. Agreement:

Outline who must follow these agreements.

Example: By engaging with, liking and/or following this page or posts on this page, you are considered to be in agreement with the community guidelines noted above.