Learning Community Discussion Guidelines

Your First Post.

The **Main Forum** section within the **Discussion** section is dedicated to **Introductions**. We would like everyone to make their **First Post** a brief introduction to yourself, and the work you undertake. Feel free to include photos or other media to bring your introduction to life!

This welcome activity will help you get to know your community and help create a positive learning environment. If you want to subsequently create an off-topic forum to talk with other community members, just let us know!

Participate.

Do not hide in the background; it is not fair to lurk and let others do all the work. Contribute to discussions to get as much as possible from the course and to maintain your participation grade.

How many posts/ replies on a Learning Topic.

You should aim to **reply to two of the initial questions posed** by the Learning Lead and **one or two additional replies to community members' posts** by the discussion deadline date. Do not wait until the last minute to reply to your community members or they won't have a chance to reply to you! Try to spread out your answers between Monday and Friday.

In addition to your Learning Topic posts check out and reply to **NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTION** posts - don't leave your community members hanging- say hello!

Frequency.

Postings should be evenly distributed during the discussion period (not concentrated all on one day or at the beginning and/or end of the period).

Post Content.

"I agree" is not enough: Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. "I agree" type of answers crowd the discussion board and make it harder for everybody to navigate the discussion.

If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say **why you agree/disagree** by supporting your statement with concepts from your reading or by bringing in a related example or experience. Make each post count! Again, ask yourself whether your post **brings value to the discussion**.

Stick to the point: Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray).

Connect to prior knowledge: Bring in related prior knowledge (work experience, prior training, readings, etc.)

Respond rather than add-on: You will not get credit for any posts such as "I agree with x" or "Great job Y". You're expected to provide real contributions. Build on others responses to create threads.

Innovate, don't replicate: You usually have the choice between several questions. If you're late contributing to the initial posts, try to answers questions than have not been addressed yet, even if they wouldn't have been your first pick. The early bird…

Take it beyond your research: Do quote any research but don't stop there. Do your best to add value to the discussion. Ask questions you really want to find answers to, discuss what you found intriguing, confusing, share your top takeaways.

Ask questions.

If you find something confusing or want to know more, do not hesitate to ask questions. Make sure to post your questions in the appropriate thread.

Do not dominate a discussion.

Share your knowledge, but not to the point of excluding others. If you have something to offer, please share it, but allow everyone to contribute equally to a discussion.

Be tactful.

Be critical of ideas, but remember there are other people involved. Be tactful and kind. You can hurt the feelings of a person reading your post.

Avoid writing in all caps (all caps = yelling)!

Forgive other students' mistakes.

Do not correct others, even if you follow the rules of netiquette and use good manners. Just because you do not agree with a student's post does not mean that he or she is wrong. Instead, offer a different perspective to encourage further discussion.

Read the whole thread before posting.

Read all the posts in a thread before responding so you don't repeat what others have already said. Try to contribute clarifying information or a new idea to a discussion.

Be concise, but not too concise

Make your point clearly and as economically as possible, however ensure you write in complete sentences (no abbreviations please).

Try to only develop one idea per post to facilitate the development of threads.

Reread and check your posts.

Practice professionalism. Be mindful of how you look online; others will likely judge the tone and quality of your writing. Reread your posts and edit for clarity and mechanics.

Cite your sources.

If you use a source, cite it properly. Give credit where credit is due. Include links where appropriate.

Maintain confidentiality.

Respect your community's privacy. Do not repeat the personal information that others share.

Report technical problems.

If the platform is not working properly, please let me know as soon as possible.