

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 471 850

CS 511 670

AUTHOR Ashe, Carolyn; Nealy, Chynette
TITLE Beyond Spam! Netiquette in Virtual Teams.
PUB DATE 2002-10-00
NOTE 8p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; Communication Research; Educational Objectives;
*Electronic Mail; Higher Education; Online Courses; Student
Surveys; Teacher Student Relationship
IDENTIFIERS *Netiquette; *Virtual Teams

ABSTRACT

While electronic mail (e-mail) has accomplished an "instructional objective" of the fastest growing method of communication, the backlash can be harmful with respect to workforce productivity. The capabilities of online communications have broadened methods in which instructors and students can interact, business operate, and people converse. This paper uses the findings from management structured online classes of geographically dispersed students engaged in virtual teams. The study in the paper used a case study method to examine experiences and practices of "netiquette" by these students--data were collected from an online survey (n=97) designed to assess four components as they relate to each other and the overall instructional objective. The paper describes online students' experiences and practices of netiquette. Includes survey data. Contains 5 references. (Author/NKA)

Beyond Spam! Netiquette in Virtual Teams

By

Dr. Carolyn Ashe and Dr. Chynette Nealy

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C. Ashe
C. Nealy

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Beyond Spam! Netiquette in Virtual Teams

Drs. Carolyn Ashe and Chynette Nealy
Management, Marketing and Business Administration Department
University of Houston-Downtown

Abstract

The capabilities of on-line communications have broadened methods in which instructors and students can interact, business operate and people converse. This paper will use the findings from management structured on-line classes of geographically dispersed students engaged in virtual teams. The discussion will describe on-line students experiences and practices of netiquette.

I. INTRODUCTION

Electronic Mail (E-mail) was designed to electronically transmit a message instantaneously. It has justifiably obtained this objective with respect to being the fastest growing method of communication. However, one barrier, "spam-junk electronic mail", is continuously examined as to how it may be regulated. Emerging from discussions are effective methods for virtual team communications. Hence, it is essential Business Instructors implement strategies and practices regarding instructional delivery that enables students' to use course applications for professional usage. Moreover, prepare these future business professionals with an understanding of the global business environment in which they will communicate and function.

II. INSTRUCTIONAL and PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The changing workplace as it relates to technological changes has emphasized a need to address the manner in which employees are supervised. A study conducted by the Privacy Foundation released findings that 14 million employees are subject to monitoring of email and Internet use. [1] Even more suggestive are findings by the American Management Association, that nearly two thirds of all companies discipline employees for abuse of email or Internet connections and 27% dismiss employees using this reason. [2]

These findings are relevant in that they provide a framework for instructional strategies. Similar to the workplace colleges and universities most focus instructional methods in preparing current and future workers with technological changes. Thus, investigation of virtual team communications as it relates to the use of netiquette-an unwritten code of behavior for electronic communication is timely in its examination as a regulator for spam.

III. METHODS

The case study method was used to examine experiences and practices of netiquette by geographically dispersed students in management structured on-line classes in which virtual teams was an instructional objective. Data was collected from an on-line survey designed to assess four components as they relate to each other and the overall instructional objective.

Component one focused the concept of virtual teams (students). The questions were designed to assess advantages and disadvantages of using virtual teams as an instructional objective.

Component two will focused the content (on-line communication). The questions were designed to assess theoretical and practical applications of virtual teams. One measure was used to determine virtual teams usage across disciplinary lines.

Component three focused netiquette (on-line behavior). The questions were designed to assess the on-line students pre (current course) and post (after course) experiences and practices of netiquette.

Component four focused professional applications of virtual on-line teams. The questions were designed to assess the linkage of instructional strategies to professional (workplace) applications.

III. FINDINGS

Some instructional and practical implication can be concluded from this study. However, one area that is worthy of mentioning before discussing is sample size. The case study method using two upper level on-line management courses of one instructor provided collection of 97 on-line surveys. Consequently, a standard frequency distribution analysis using the program Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was performed.

Component one virtual teams (students): advantages and disadvantages of using virtual teams as an instructional objective.

Data supports advantages of virtual teams as an instructional tool.

- Experience with virtual teams (samples size depicted experiences and practice of individuals with one semester or less) Data provides feedback with respect to virtual teams as an Instructional tool
- Establish work team trust (majority viewed themselves a members of a team)
- On-line assignments followed a logical format providing feedback on a regular basis (introverted learners)

Experience with Virtual Team

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 sem or less	57	58.8	58.8	58.8
2 sem	25	25.8	25.8	84.5
3 sem	12	12.4	12.4	96.9
3+ sem	3	3.1	3.1	100.0
Total	97	100.0	100.0	

Position in Virtual Team

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Team Leader	7	7.2	7.2	7.2
Member	89	91.8	91.8	99.0
Other	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	97	100.0	100.0	

Did obj for virtual team assignmnt follow logical format?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	88	90.7	90.7	90.7
	No	9	9.3	9.3	100.0
	Total	97	100.0	100.0	

Did virtual instr provide feedback on reg basis?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	82	84.5	84.5	84.5
	No	14	14.4	14.4	99.0
	Undecided	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	97	100.0	100.0	

Component two content (on-line communication): theoretical and practical applications of virtual teams.

Data supports connection of instructional material and practical applications

- The majority of response were from Business students (overall perception was that virtual team experiences and practices can help in their discipline)
- Three instructional objectives were assessed given management focus of multi-tasks abilities (Likert Scale 5 Strongly Agree – 1 Strongly Disagree)

Communication Techniques	24% Strongly Agree	52% Agree
Time Management	28% Strongly Agree	37% Agree
Work Teams	23% Strongly Agree	43% Agree

❖ Future study will determine virtual teams usage across disciplinary lines.

C21

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	82	84.5	85.4	85.4
	Humanities & Soc Sci	8	8.2	8.3	93.8
	Sci & Tech	6	6.2	6.3	100.0
	Total	96	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.0		
Total		97	100.0		

Component three (on-line behavior): pre (current course) and post (after course) experiences and practices of netiquette.

Data supports the need to continue investigating instructional strategies that include discussion of netiquette.

- Pre (current course) experiences with Netiquette [52% No 44% % Yes]
- During the course discussion of Netiquette [54% No 42% Yes]
- Post (after course) experiences with Netiquette [61% Yes 35% No]
- Three practical applications of on-line communications were assessed focusing Netiquette:
 - Courses [77% Yes 17% No]
 - Work [81% Yes 12% No]
 - Personal [72% Yes 1% No]

Component four assess professional applications of virtual on-line teams.

Data supports linkage of instructional strategies to practical applications.

- Applications that are transitional to employment [85% Yes 10% No]
- Instructional Objectives focusing traditional versus virtual work place scenarios [76% Yes 22% No]
- Workplace Virtual Teams (practices) [74% Yes 24% No]
- Enhancement of Virtual Skills (experiences) [81% Yes 17% No]

IV. IMPLICATIONS

The data collect provides assessment as to the extend instructional strategies are able to use students experiences and practices to apply netiquette on-line. Although the study has limitation with respect to sample size, factors examined afford opportunities for expanded research of this topic.

Data supporting the aforementioned implication are depicted in tables below from the background section of the survey.

Have you taken a course on lline previously?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	60	61.9	61.9	61.9
No	37	38.1	38.1	100.0
Total	97	100.0	100.0	

If so, would you take an on-line course?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	57	58.8	58.8	58.8
	No	5	5.2	5.2	63.9
	3.00	35	36.1	36.1	100.0
	Total	97	100.0	100.0	

Another result worthy of mentioning is that of work team concepts. One primary objective is to create a virtual environment of trust. Moreover, avoid challenges of communication barriers created as a result of team members' location, time and culture.

Data from this study shows respondents perceptions at a high level of understanding as it relates to work team culture diversity.

Was your team culturally diverse?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	85	87.6	87.6	87.6
	No	12	12.4	12.4	100.0
	Total	97	100.0	100.0	

The findings of this case study provide data to support instructional strategies with a by-product of professional application (netiquette) with respect to on-line communications. Hence, with the U. S. on-line workforce being an estimated total of 140 million this topic is timely in it's discussion. [3] Accordingly, it provides the current and next workforce population with a valuable solution to perceived interruptions in workplace productivity. A study conducted by Pitney Bowes shows the majority of workers are interrupted by communication technology every ten minutes. The average U.S. worker receives over 200 emails per day, 1,000 messages a week..[4]

Mirroring academic and business concerns about netiquette as it relates to spam (unsolicited bulk commercial e-mail messages), the 106th Congress examined an Unsolicited Electronic Mail Act. Although it did not pass, discussion resumes in the 107th Congress; additionally, many states have enacted laws making it illegal to send unsolicited e-mail messages. [5]

V. CONCLUSION

Ironically, while Electronic Mail (E-mail) has accomplished an "instructional objective" of the fastest growing method of communication; the backlash can be harmful with respect to workforce productivity. Thus, this study examining instructional strategies that enhance the use of netiquette as it relates to on line communication depict findings with implications that support practical applications.

VI. FOOTNOTES/REFERENCES

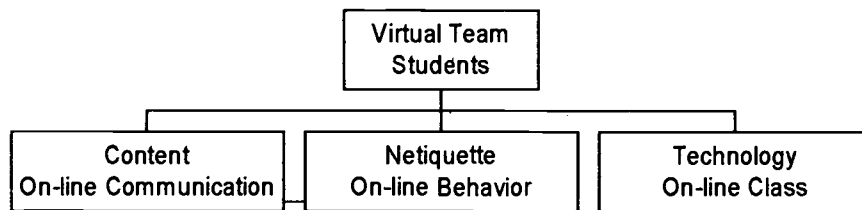
[1] The Privacy Foundation, The Extent of Systemic Monitoring of Employee E-mail and Internet use, July 9, 2001 available at sonic.net/~undoc/extent.htm.

[2] American Management Association, 2001 Annual Survey on Workplace Monitoring and Surveillance, April 18, 2001.

[3] The Privacy Foundation, The Extent of Systemic Monitoring of Employee E-mail and Internet use, July 9, 2001 available at privacyfoundation.org/workplace/technology/extent.asp

[4] Available at: [archive document londonlinks.ac.uk/rliu/northcirc/issue19/other.htm](http://archive.document.londonlinks.ac.uk/rliu/northcirc/issue19/other.htm)

[5] Available at: spamlaws.com/federal/summ107.html and spamlaws.com/state/summary.html





**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
(OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
Reproduction Release (Specific Document)**



I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Beyond Spam! Netiquette in Virtual Teams	
Author(s): Drs. Carolyn Ashe and Chynette Nealy	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date: October 2002

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign in the indicated space following.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents
<p>PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)</p>	<p>PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)</p>	<p>PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)</p>
Level 1	Level 2A	Level 2B
X	<input type="checkbox"/> ↑	<input type="checkbox"/> ↑
Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) and paper copy.	Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only	Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche, or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: <i>Carolyn Ashe</i>	Printed Name/Position/Title: Dr. Carolyn Ashe/Associate Professor/Asst. Department Chair
--------------------------------	--

Chynette D Nealy

DR CHYNETTE D NEALY/ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: info@ericfac.piccard.csc.com
WWW: <http://ericfacility.org>