



MANAGING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Digital skills 4 all

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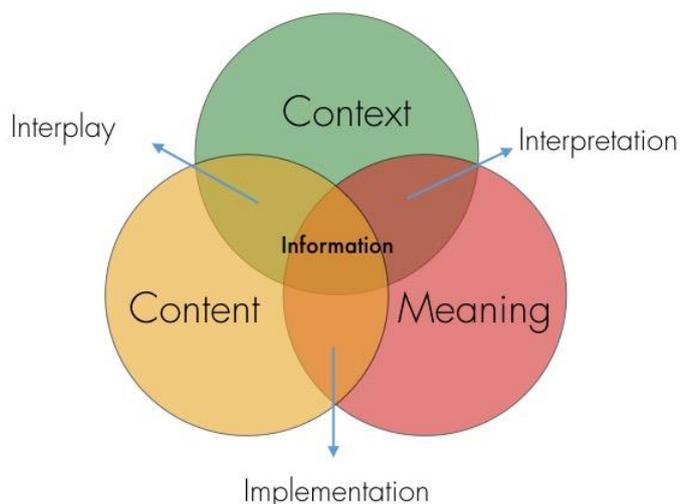
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1. Managing information

Simple definition of information is facts about a situation, person, event, etc. According to Darren Fleming, there are three types of information that we deal with every day. They are:

- Context – Big Picture
- Content – nuts and bolts
- Meaning – the impact.

The interaction between Content and Context is *interplay*. The Context will inform the content, and the content proves or disproves the context. Knowing this will show you what forces are at play in decision-making. The interaction between Context and Meaning is *Interpretation*. How beliefs, values, experiences and expectations change what someone understands. The interaction between Content and Meaning is *Implementation*. This exposes driver of behaviour.



1.1 Digital footprint

A digital footprint is a trail of data you create while using the Internet. It includes the websites you visit, emails you send, and information you submit to online services.

There are two different footprints – passive and active digital footprint:

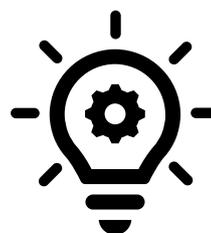
- A "**passive digital footprint**" is a data trail you unintentionally leave online. For example, when you visit a website, the web server may log your IP address, which identifies your Internet service provider and your approximate location. While your IP address may change and does not include any personal information, it is still considered part of your digital footprint. A more personal aspect of your passive digital footprint is your search history, which is saved by some search engines while you are logged in.
- An "**active digital footprint**" includes data that you intentionally submit online. Sending an email contributes to your active digital footprint, since you expect the data be seen and/or saved by another person. The more email you send, the more your digital footprint grows. Since most people save their email online, the messages you send can easily remain online for several years or more.

Whether or not your information is shared intentionally, it's being gathered by advertisers, employers and companies from which you shop. This information is called your digital

footprint—and it's becoming more important than ever in today's digital economy. While there's no official definition of the term "digital economy," it can be summed up as the entire ecosystem built from our online connectivity. In this newfound era, your digital footprint can no longer be ignored.

Other popular ways to expand your digital footprint are:

- publishing a blog;
- posting social media updates;
- tweeting on Twitter;
- status updates on Facebook;
- every photo shared on Instagram etc.



The more you spend time on social networking websites, the larger your digital footprint will be. Even "liking" a page or a Facebook post adds to your digital footprint, since the data is saved on Facebook's servers.

Everyone who uses the Internet has a digital footprint, so it is not something to be worried about. However, it is wise to consider what trail of data you are leaving behind. For example, remembering your digital footprint may prevent you from sending a scathing email, since the message might remain online forever. It may also lead you to be more discerning in what you publish on social media websites.

! While you can often delete content from social media sites, once digital data has been shared online, there is no guarantee you will **□** ever be able to remove it from the Internet.

How to manage your Digital Footprint?

A surprisingly large percentage of people have never even heard the phrase, let alone thought about how to manage theirs responsibly. Just to make it clear once more: a digital footprint is the record or trail left by the things you do online. Your social media activity, the info on your personal website, your browsing history, your online subscriptions, any photo galleries and videos you've uploaded — essentially, anything on the Internet with your name on it. Digital natives like today's students rarely think twice about putting their names on things online, so their footprints can be wide and large.

Luckily for us all, most of the major sources of personal information can be changed so we share only certain things with the general public. There are even some third-party bonus tools available to manage the parts of our digital footprints we might not know were there.

Tips on how to manage your Digital Footprint:

1. Be kind, helpful, and understanding

Or put another way, demonstrate digital citizenship.

This may not seem like a way to practically 'manage your digital footprint,' but part of managing your digital footprint isn't just about privacy and anonymity. In large part, one of the most effective ways to 'manage' your footprints is to make sure that the prints you do leave are good ones.

Digital citizenship means communicating with respect, respecting other's privacy, seeing things from another perspective etc.

2. Use privacy settings

Facebook has 1.3 billion monthly active users and there's practically no other website that contains such a breadth and depth of personal information. The most important step toward helping you manage your digital footprint is to put all social media accounts, including Facebook and Instagram, on a short leash.

3. Keep a list of accounts

Then delete the ones you no longer use. For example, myspace page you don't use anymore- don't just forget about it, find it and delete it.

4. Don't overshare

As much of an alien concept as it may be to people these days, the only sure-fire way to avoid digital footprint trouble is for them to keep quiet about anything they wouldn't want the world to know. This includes usernames, aliases, passwords, last names, full-names-as-usernames, pictures, addresses, and other important information but also their moods and boyfriends and girlfriends etc.

5. Use a password keeper

This is more of a security thing, but the worst kind of footprint is the one you didn't make that contains all of your sensitive information. It's too much work to remember 50 different passwords, and every site has their own unique rules.

Until someone solves this problem, the best solution is likely a password keeper.

6. Google yourself

You may be surprised what you find.

7. Monitor linking accounts

When you link your Facebook or Twitter account to that new site (whatever site that might be), you may not realize—or care at the moment—what you’re giving it access to. It’s usually safest to use a secondary email address to sign-up for new sites rather than granting this kind of access.

8. Consider using an anonymous secondary email

Whether you’re communicating with someone new or signing up for a new social media platform, it can be useful to have a secondary email address.

9. At least skim the terms and conditions

Few people read every word of every Terms & Conditions page – and even if you did, you may not understand them all and how they can and might impact you. But to not even have the slightest idea what you’re agreeing to when you do ‘accept’ those terms and conditions only has the potential to harm any legacy of your use of a site, platform, or page (i.e., your digital footprints).

10. Know that sending is like publishing—forever

Every time you send a message, post, or picture, you’re publishing it the same way CNN does a news story. And the internet never forgets.

11. Understand that searches are social

There’s another side to your digital footprint, too — it’s not always information that you choose to make public. Remember, with or without privacy controls, Facebook still records and uses every scrap of information it gets to better determine its users’ marketing demographics.

Google pulls the same trick with search and browsing habits. If you are logged into your Google account, the service tracks every keyword they search, every web page you visit, and every time you visit YouTube.

There are ways, however, to control the bits of deep data that we leave strewn around. First of all, even though Google is practically an official synonym for “web search,” it isn’t actually the only game in town. Less profit-motivated search engines like DuckDuckGo.com and Bing may take a little getting used to, but they can sometimes make clearer efforts to protect users’ browsing privacy.

12. Use digital tools to manage your digital footprint

A host of browser extensions and app add-ons can also limit the surreptitious capture of personal information. VPNs and browser tools and website opt-outs, to name a few.

How is your digital footprint used?

Your digital footprint is often used to obtain personal info about you, such as demographics, religion, political affiliations or interests. Information could be gathered using cookies, which are small files websites store on your computer after your first visit to track user activity.

Cookies also allow you to hold items in a shopping cart, store preferences or login information and make personalized suggestions based on your location or interests. Your digital footprint is used by advertisers to target you with customized ads. For example, if you look at a pair of shoes online, you may later see ads for those shoes or similar items.

Your digital footprint is also used by employers—both current and prospective. It is especially important to care for your digital footprint if you're job hunting, as Googling is now a central part of the hiring process.

An online background check by recruiters and employers is a common practice these days. In worst-case scenarios, individuals could lose their job offer if employers come across something inappropriate.

Fortunately, there are proactive ways how to manage your digital footprint. For example:

- **Google yourself:** Take inventory of what's out there. Search for your name every few months, so you're cognizant of the information others have access to.
- **Set up Google alerts:** it is recommended to set up a Google alert for your name. The tool will then send you occasional alerts of every post that has your name on it.
- **Protect your personal data:** Don't disclose your personal address, phone number, passwords or bank card numbers. Consider using a nickname instead of your real name.
- **Keep login info under lock and key:** Never share any of your usernames or passwords with anyone.
- **Think before you post:** Never put a temporary emotion on the permanent internet. Anger is temporary; online lasts forever. Pause before you post: Think twice, post once.
- **Nix the pics:** Any photo you post could be dug up some day. Limit your sharing of questionable images. Fifteen minutes of humor is never worth a lifetime of potential humiliation.

Benefits of a digital footprint

When done wrong, your digital footprint can be detrimental, but it's not all doom and gloom. When they're done right, a digital footprint can provide you with a great first impression. You're now aware that employers are following your trail, so take advantage of it. There are many ways you can leverage your digital skills to land a job.

“A strong online presence, or digital footprint, can be a career asset in today's competitive job market. Many employers are performing online searches—in addition to reviewing resumes and cover letters—in an attempt to learn about prospective hires, including their interests, industry involvement and, more important, their ability to market themselves effectively.”

Diane Domeyer, career expert and executive director of The Creative Group.

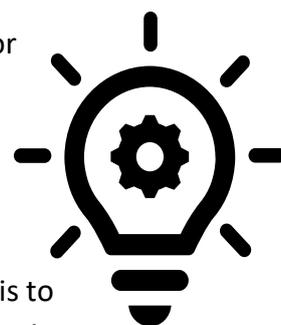
With the digital economy now driving much of the workforce, reinforcing your technical prowess with a strong digital presence can be helpful to job seekers. Your digital footprint is now a reality of life. If you want to do anything big in the world, you're going to have to understand how to craft your footprint and use it. The digital world isn't going anywhere anytime soon—so think of it as a lifelong development. Take advantage of the platform to present yourself in a good light and show off your best qualities. After all, you never know who will be looking in our newfound digital economy.

1.2 Search engine

A search engine is a web-based tool that enables users to locate information on the World Wide Web. Popular examples of search engines are Google, Bing, Yahoo etc. Search engines utilize automated software applications that travel along the Web, following links from page to page, site to site. The information gathered, is used to create a searchable index of the Web. Every search engine uses different complex mathematical formulas to generate search results. Search engine algorithms take the key elements of a web page, including the page title, content and keyword density, and come up with a ranking for where to place the results on the pages. Each search engine's algorithm is unique, so a top ranking on Google does not guarantee the same ranking on Bing.

In order to speed up your Internet search, there are some tips and tricks for that:

- **Use unique, specific terms** - You should include keywords that best describe what you're looking for. That means you should use as many keywords as you need—the more the better, in fact. You see, one of the most common mistakes made by casual searchers is to use too few keywords. These searchers don't enter enough information adequately describe what they're searching for.



to

- **Search for either one word or another** - Google automatically assumes the word "and" between all the words in your query. That is, if you enter two words, Google assumes you're looking for pages that include both those words—word one and word two. It doesn't return pages that include only one of the words. You can expand your search by looking for web pages that include either one word or another, but not necessarily both. To do this, you need to alter the default Google query by using the OR operator between the two words. And when you use the OR operator, be sure to type it in all uppercase, or Google will ignore it as a stop word.
- **Include Stop words** - small common words, such as "and," "the," "where," "how," "what," and "or" (in all lowercase), are called stop words, and Google automatically ignores them when you include them in a query.
- **Use quotes to locate a specific phrase** - Probably one of the number one thing you can do to save serious web search time is the simplest - and that's searching for a phrase by putting it in quotes. When you use quotation marks around a phrase, you are telling the search engine to only bring back pages that include these search terms exactly how you typed them in order, proximity, etc. This tip works in almost every search engine and is very successful in bringing back hyper-focused results. If you're looking for an exact phrase, put it in quotes. Otherwise, you'll come back with a huge jumble of results. For example, if you search for "short haired cats" your search will come back with these three words in proximity to each other and in the order you intended them to be, rather than scattered willy-nilly on the site.
- **Use Google to search within a site** - You can use Google to search within a site, and since most site search tools just aren't that great, this is a good way to find what you're looking for with a minimum of fuss. This is a great way to easily find what you're looking for. Simply use this command within Google's search bar to search within a site: the word "site", then a colon, then the URL of the website you'd like to search within. For example: **site:www.lifewire.com "how to find people"** plugged into Google will bring back search results only from this domain that are related to finding people online.
- **View the cached version of a website** - If a site or even just something on a page has been taken down, you can actually see it. Google keeps a cached copy of most websites handy. This is an archived version of the website, making it easy for you to see information or pages that have been taken down (for whatever reason). It's also a handy feature when the website is suffering under too much traffic, so it won't render correctly.
- **Find particular file formats** - Google doesn't just index Web pages, written primarily in HTML and other markup languages. You can also use Google to find virtually any kind of file format available, including PDF files, Word documents, and Excel spreadsheets. A useful tip is to search by file type using the **filetype:(type)** command,

replacing (type) with the extension for the file type you want to find. For example, if you wanted to search for only PDF files that referenced "short haired cats" your search query would be: **filetype:pdf "short haired cats"**

Privacy friendly search engines

As came out of "how to manage your digital footprint", Google is not your only option for search engine. Less profit-motivated search engines like DuckDuckGo.com and Bing may take a little getting used to, but they can sometimes make clearer efforts to protect users' browsing privacy.

Data privacy concerns are on the rise. Facebook has received a lot of heat recently, causing many individuals to start questioning their own privacy. This area is one that DuckDuckGo really shines. In fact, the way DuckDuckGo handles data is what set this search engine apart from the beginning. According to DuckDuckGo, it never stores your personal information or search history. It doesn't follow you with ads or track you across the Internet. DuckDuckGo's mantra is simple, "no tracking, no ad targeting, just searching." It calls out Google on its site by pointing how much Google is tracking you and using your data for ads.



<https://www.searchenginejournal.com/duckduckgo-seo/252165>

DuckDuckGo states that it gets its results from more than 400 sources, ranging from crowdsourced websites to its own crawler, DuckDuckBot. It also pulls from other search engines, including, Bing, Yahoo, and Yandex. Similar to Google's ability to provide an answer in search results, DuckDuckGo has its own instant answer. DuckDuckGo will, depending on the

query, provide an answer directly in the SERP. Because DuckDuckGo focuses on privacy, it does not know exactly where the searcher is located.

1.3 Downloading and saving info

Downloading means to receive data from the Internet that is to be opened and stored. Downloading should not be confused with copying or saving, which are used to handle files that are not on the Internet (e.g., copying files to another drive). Also, a download is not the same as an upload, which is sending a file from a computer an online storage medium.

 Files on the Internet may contain viruses or malware. The best way to protect your computer is to ensure that you have an antivirus and anti-malware program installed and that it is up to date.

Downloading from different browsers, is quite similar. Mainly the process goes likes this:

- To initiate a download from a website, you must first click on download link.
- A link is usually denoted by different-coloured text, underlined or it may also be an icon or button.
- After clicking a link to a file, the browser should either start the download or ask what you'd like to do with the file (it depends which browser you are using)
- Once you've opened your download with the appropriate program, you may save it.

Downloading may differ for various download types:

- **Apps or programs** – One of the most popular types of downloads is downloading an app or program that can be installed on your computer. For PC users these files are .exe files, on Apple computers they are either .dmg and .app files.
- **Audio files** - Some sites offer an MP3 download link. You can save the MP3 by right-clicking on the link and choosing the option to **Save link as**, **Save target as**, or the **Save linked content as a link**. Once the file is saved, it will appear in your downloads folder.
- **Movie files** - Downloading a movie file (e.g., an MP4) from a link is similar to all other file downloads. However, you can also right-click on the link and choose **Save link as**, **Save target as**, or the **Save linked content as**. If the movie is embedded in the web page with an arrow pointing down next to the audio controls, you can use that link to download the movie.
- **Pictures or images** - Any picture or image on the Internet can be saved to your computer (downloaded). Right-click on the image. From the drop-down menu that

appears, select **Save image as...** or **Save Picture as**. Choose the location in which you want to save the image.

- **PDF files** - A PDF file can be downloaded like most programs. Upon selecting a download link to a PDF file, most browsers open the contents in the browser window rather than downloading them. Below are the steps on how to download a PDF to your computer instead of only viewing it. Right-click on any link that opens a PDF. Click the **Save link as**, **Save target as**, or the **Save linked content as** option. Choose where you want to save the PDF file.
- **Documents** – a document can be downloaded by clicking any link pointing to the file.
- **Spreadsheet or CSV files** - A spreadsheet can be downloaded by clicking any link pointing to the spreadsheet file (.xls, xlsx).

1.4 Credible and trustworthy information

Not all written sources are reliable, no matter how sound their arguments may appear to be. To evaluate the reliability of a piece of writing or a website, you must consider several issues related to the subject and to the person or publisher that presents it:

- Is the information current?
- Is it related directly to the topic it discusses?
- Does it provide sources for supporting ideas?
- Are these sources reliable?
- Is the purpose of the information to inform, to persuade, to sell, or even to entertain?
- Has the information been written and published recently?
- Does a date of publication appear?
- Finally, who is responsible for the information? Is an author or publisher listed at all?

Some topics (such as medical research and new technical information) must be up-to-date to be valuable to readers. However, bias and opinion compromise even recent information, keeping it from being objective and trustworthy. Certainly, any organization or individual is entitled to a perspective. However, that doesn't necessarily make the perspective one which reader can rely on.

One person's opinion is not necessarily informed. Likewise, some organizations, particularly companies who want sales or politicians who want votes, want readers to agree with their views. Few advertisements present credible supporting information for the positions they present! In general, objective information with a listed author and/or presented by a reliable publisher is far more credible than anonymous information published by a commercial or an anonymous source.



It's up to you – as critical reader – to determine the bias and the source of what you read.

For example, many Web pages are published anonymously by individuals. Are the views of individuals as reliable as those of experts from universities or from the government which cite sources?

As a reader, you must be careful about what you consult as a reliable source of information. That a source is in print or posted on the Web does not automatically make it trustworthy. You can always find information on any source. As a critical reader, you deserve the best, the most current, and the most reliable. Be sure to screen what you find to make sure that it is reliable.

Practically anyone can create a website: schools, businesses, government entities, churches, and libraries create websites so people can learn more about what they do. Individuals can create personal sites or blogs to write about their families, friends, work, or any other subject. Corporations can make websites to promote their products, and political activists can publish websites to promote their cause. Anyone with an idea and internet access can create a website and fill it with just about any content they want.

Website owners can print anything they want, true or not, without worrying about the consequences.

As a result, life online has undoubtedly changed the procedures used to gather and assess information forever. Even in the cut-and-paste Age of Wikipedia, evaluating sources based on their authority, relevance, and accuracy is still a requirement for serious writers. Bad sources, like bad seeds, can bear bitter fruit for those who use them. Fortunately, the oceans of data and globe-spanning inter-connectivity of the internet make verifying sources easier than ever as well.

There are time-honoured practices of using primary sources, identifying their authors, and verifying the accuracy of the information they provide. But writers can use additional tools to keep their sources credible and authoritative. The future of written communication is surely set not in stone, but in the glowing ether of cyberspace.

Yet as long as humans continue to rely on the written word for the exchange of information, wisdom, and insight, effective and compelling writing will demand sources that are credible, authoritative, and accurate. With so much content and so little oversight, determining which information is reliable can be a daunting task. But failing to do so could leave you looking foolish or worse. Thankfully, there are some easy steps you can take to evaluate the credibility of a website.

Tips for Checking the Source

- **How did you find your source?** Top results in Google are often won by commercial websites with big budgets. Sources found via social media have the same problem. Read the tips below to get an idea of what to look for online.
- **Start with Sites You Know** - If you want to know the results of last week's election, visiting your favourite news outlet's website is a great place to start. If you want tips on investing, pick an investing company you respect and see if their website provides

the information you're looking for. There may be better information out there, but starting with a company you already trust is a good way to narrow your search. Then if you do decide to look up information from other sources, you can compare it to what you found first.

- **Check the Date** - Another helpful tip is to look at the date of an article as well as the dates attached to studies and resources within an article. If an article cites a study done 10 years ago, it brings into question the reliability of the information. This is especially true if there are more recent studies available on the subject.
- **Check broken or "dead links"** - Many website articles include links that visitors can click on for more information (like those at the bottom of this page). If those links don't go anywhere, chances are the article is old. One dead link is probably nothing to worry about, but a bunch of them should raise a red flag. The creator of a legitimate website will take the time to keep links up to date so visitors can learn more. The presence of dead links is a good indication that the website is no longer maintained.
- **Check Credentials** - One of the best ways to evaluate an article or other type of content published online is to check the author's credentials. If you're looking for information about toothaches, a certified dentist who has been practicing for over 20 years is a more reliable source than a hobbyist with a blog. If the author provides a list of references to validate their credentials, even better. Remember, you can write anything you want online, so just because someone says they're a dentist doesn't mean they actually are.
- **Check the TLD and Domain** - One of the simplest ways to determine the credibility of an online resource is to look at the purpose of the website, which can often be learned from the ending of the site's address. Every website ends in a Top Level Domain (TLD). This is the bit after the last period in the domain name.
 - For instance, website that ends in .com, lets you know that this is a commercial website. Make sure to start with those trusted sources, and then look for any potential bias. Businesses often use .com for their sites, and in most cases, those sites are created to help them sell a product or service.
 - Alternatively, an address that ends in .edu belongs to an educational institution such as a college or university. A visitor may find an article there written by a professor who is an expert on a particular topic. The professor may include their credentials at the end of the article as well as citations. These elements serve to make the website a more reliable online resource. As a note, students are also able to contribute to many .edu websites. It's a good idea to look for citations when dealing with a student's writing to ensure credibility. Also, if you're searching for information for a research paper, you probably need to look for peer-reviewed articles. Just because a professor publishes something on a .edu website doesn't mean their peers have reviewed and validated the information.
 - The TLD .org was originally intended to be used by non-profit organizations, but any organization can register a .org address. Much like .com sites, you should expect that anything you read on a .org site will have a bias toward that particular organization's mission or goals.

While these unique TLDs may prove useful when you are looking for a particular type of service, they can't guarantee the credibility of any content. It's always beneficial to read all online articles with a critical eye.

- **Digging Deeper** - If you're still not sure, do a little snooping. Read other articles on the site, particularly ones written by the same author. Do you trust their opinion on other topics? Is the writing consistent and strong? Do articles seem unbelievable or even made up? Reading other articles may also help you detect a website's biases — nearly all sites have them — so you can better judge the information they're presenting. The presence of many misspellings on a website is also a clue that it's not a credible resource. Someone who creates a legitimate website designed to provide people with factual information takes care with both spelling and grammar in order to appear more professional.
- **Check Your Local Library** - The internet is a great source of information, but when accuracy counts, the library is still one of the best places to do research. Most libraries now allow patrons to utilize their research tools online, so you can still do your research from the comfort of your computer chair. Libraries have access to research databases, many of which require a subscription and aren't available through traditional search engines. These databases allow you to search for articles in print and online journals and books. Since many of these resources are peer-reviewed, the information you find in them is not only written by professionals but has been reviewed and approved by other professionals within their field.
- **Don't Trust Your First Source** - Finally, no matter where you find information, it's a good idea to double-check it against other sources. You can do this by performing additional online research or checking some print publications at the library. If you find the same information on several other legitimate websites as well as in a print publication, it increases the odds that the information is accurate.

1.5 Referencing and plagiarism



Referencing is the process of acknowledging the sources you have used in writing your essay, assignment or piece of work.

It allows the reader to access your source documents as quickly and easily as possible in order to verify, if necessary, the validity of your arguments and the evidence on which they are based. To reference successfully, it is essential that, as a matter of course, you systematically note down full details of author, date, title and publication details of any material you use at the time you use it. For web pages, e-journals and e-books, write down the web address and the date that you accessed the source. Besides being good academic practice, this ensures that you do not have the problem of trying to find sources you may have used weeks or months previously.

By referring to the works of established authorities and experts in your subject area, you can add weight to your comments and arguments. This helps to demonstrate that you have read widely and considered and analysed the writings of others. Remember, good referencing can

help you attain a better grade or mark (often between five and ten percent of the total). Most importantly, good referencing is essential to avoid any possible accusation of plagiarism.

▮ Citations means that you identify sources by citing them in the text of your assignment and referencing them at the end of your assignment.

Plagiarism means using someone's work unacknowledged. It includes material or ideas from any source (published, unpublished, print, web-based or audio-visual, even if freely available).

▮ Using the words or ideas of others without referencing your source would be construed as plagiarism and is a serious academic offence. It is regarded as stealing intellectual property.

Reference list for plagiarism:

- Copying text as it is without quotation marks and with no citation or source
- Reordering the elements of the source text without citation
- Copying pieces (sentences, key phrases) of the source text without citation
- Paraphrasing without citation
- Reproducing information that is not common knowledge without citation
- Incorporating an idea heard in conversation without citation
- Using your own past material or someone else's material as a new idea without citation
- Paying for another to contribute to your work without citation

Academically, there are many cases of students who find themselves accused of plagiarising, but often they have done so unintentionally. Poor organisation and time management, as well as a failure to understand good academic practice, are often to blame.

How can you avoid plagiarism?

- Manage your time and plan your work – ensure that you have enough time to prepare, read and write
- When paraphrasing an author's text, ensure that you use your own words and a sentence structure sufficiently different from the original text
- In your notes, highlight in colour/bold any direct quotations you want to use in your assignment - this will help to ensure you use quotation marks with an appropriate reference when you are writing up your work
- Allow enough time to check your final draft for possible referencing errors or omissions: for example, check that all your in-text citations have a corresponding entry in your reference list, and vice versa

2. Communication

Communication is simply the act of transferring information from one place, person or group to another. Clearer definition would be – exchanging information by speaking, writing or using some other medium.

Every communication involves a sender, a message and a recipient.

This may sound simple, but communication is actually a very complex subject. The transmission of the message from the sender to recipient can be affected by a huge range of things – our emotions, the cultural situation, the medium used to communicate and even our location.

There are different ways in which we communicate and more than one may be occurring at any given time. The different categories of communication include:

- Spoken or verbal communication (face to face, telephone, radio or television and other media)
- Non-verbal communication (body language, gestures, how we dress or act, scent, tone of our voice etc)
- Written communication (letters, e-mails, social media, books, magazine, the Internet and other media)
- Visualisations (graphs and charts, maps, logos, pictures etc)



https://en.unesco.org/youth/toptips/user/pages/images/phases/phase_communication-jumbo.png

2.1 Online communication

! The online communication refers to how people as well as computers communicate with each other through a computer network and the internet.

People are resorting more to online communication than the traditional forms due to its many advantages, like the flexibility it provides for the person to communicate across the world with someone else. Parents and children and friends and siblings living in different corners of the world have been brought together by the click of a button. This form of communication also gives leverage to people who are more comfortable expressing their thoughts by putting them down on paper (meaning typing on the chat window or the email) than just speaking their thoughts out. It also gives an opportunity for a person to edit and correct what they want to communicate.

Since online communication is documented, it can be stored for later reference and has been known to be of importance especially related to legal aspects. Online communication saves a lot of time as well since the people involved can perfectly carry it on while doing other things as compared to a verbal communication where both parties have to be present.

Types of Online Communication

Online communication can be a wide variety of things like communicating through chat rooms, through instant messaging applications, through electronic mails, through online forums, filling out requisite forms online, posting comments online through different social media sites or blogs, through social networking, or through online conferencing both video and audio. All of these types of online communication are being effectively used today increasingly.

- **Emails** - Emails or electronic mails were the earliest forms of online communication. This is considered to be the sole reason for the decline of the postal service across the world. A method that saves time and money, it is still widely used by a multitude of people across the world for personal and professional communication. Emails work through an online interface and are hosted on the servers of different Internet Service Providers. You must have an email account in order to send or receive these web-based text messages. Besides text messages, you can also attach other files such as images and documents. The messages reach the intended recipient almost instantly. If you are the sender, you must have the correct email from the recipient.
- **Chats and chat rooms** - This is a very popular method of online communication as it allows a user to carry on a discussion with one or multiple people at the same time. Chat rooms are an area on the Internet, typically communicated to a particular topic, where members can communicate and share their interests with others. One member types a message that is accessed by all members who are online in the chat room. The member can also see a list of all members who are online. He or she can also click on another member, whether online or not, to send a private message or view his profile.
- **Forums** - A forum is a type of website that allow members to post questions, start a discussion or contribute to various discussions. Each individual question or discussion is referred to as a thread. A forum is usually updated and monitored by the admin or

moderator. These are online sessions that have multiple users interact with each other by posting messages on the same chat trail. This is popular for having discussion and debates on any particular topic.

- **Instant Messaging** - This mode of communication is an enhanced method of the chat. Messages can be conveyed through a special software to any user who is part of the same instant messaging network. Both users have to be connected to the relevant network to be able to communicate online. However, if one user is not available, they will be notified of getting a message from a user.
- **VoIP** - VoIP or Voice over Internet Protocol is used to denote any audio or video transmission that happens between two or multiple users. This is a very popular method of communication nowadays as it allows users to interact real time and also captures the subtle nuances of the age-old verbal communication. This is used today mostly for hosting meetings and conference calls.
- **Video conferences** – Another way to communicate online vividly and intuitively is via video conferencing. To make it, you just need a professional and noteworthy video conferencing solution. It is often used to hold video conferences and improve online communication with clients, colleagues, students and partners in various geographical locations across the world. Video conferencing solution is tailored for new businesses, small business and large companies that want to simplify remote collaborations.
- **Audio conferences** – Another way of communicating online is audio conferencing to communicate online with your family members, friends, business partners and students. Basically, it is a connection between two computers equipped with speakers and microphones. Participants use either an audio conferencing application such as Skype or an instant messaging software to communicate with each other. The microphone picks the audio message from one user and pass it through a computer to the other user almost instantly. The message is heard by the recipient through the speaker.
- **Blogs** - A blog is an online diary or journal located on a website. The content of a blog typically includes text, pictures, videos, animated GIFs etc. Since a blog can exist merely for personal use, sharing information with an exclusive group or to engage the public, a blog owner can set their blog for private or public access. When a blog is made publicly accessible, anyone can typically find the blog through links available on the blog owner's individual or business website, their social media profiles, emails and e-newsletters and online keyword search engines. Many blog owners also set up blogs

on websites devoted to the creation, storage and sharing of blogs, such as Blogger, LiveJournal, Tumblr and WordPress.

2.2 Social networking sites

A social networking service/site is an online platform which people use to build social networks or social relationship with other people who share similar personal or career interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. Social networking sites allow users to share ideas, digital photos and videos, posts, and to inform others about online or real-world activities and events with people in their network.



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While in-person social networking, like a gathering in a village market to talk about events, has existed since the earliest development of town. The Web enables people to connect with others who live in different locations, ranging from across a city to across the world. Depending on the social media platform, members may be able to contact any other member. In other cases, members can contact anyone they have a connection to, and subsequently anyone that contact has a connection to, and so on.

The success of social networking services can be seen in their dominance in society today, with Facebook having a massive 2.23 billion active monthly users in 2019. LinkedIn, a career-oriented social-networking service, generally requires that a member personally know another member in real life before they contact them online. Some services require members to have a pre-existing connection to contact other members.

The main types of social networking services contain category places (such as age or occupation or religion), means to connect with friends (usually with self-description pages),

and a recommendation system linked to trust. One can categorize social-network services into four types:

- socializing social network services used primarily for socializing with existing friends (e.g., Facebook)
- online social networks are decentralized and distributed computer networks where users communicate with each other through internet services.
- networking social network services used primarily for non-social interpersonal communication (e.g., LinkedIn, a career- and employment-oriented site)
- social navigation social network services used primarily for helping users to find specific information or resources (e.g., Goodreads for books)

The world's most popular social networking sites certainly have changed over the years, and they'll undoubtedly continue to change as time moves forward. Old social networks will die, popular ones will stick around as they're forced to evolve, and brand-new ones will appear. We've moved on from the days of MySpace to a social media era now dominated by Facebook and all sorts of other social mobile apps.

According to [Lifewire article](#) (May, 2019), these are the most popular social network sites:



Facebook

Like	Dislike
Massive community. Easy to find long-lost friends. Integrated messenger. Join interesting groups and pages.	Highly addictive. Difficult to keep up with updates. Complicated to adjust privacy settings.

Most of us already know that Facebook is the top social network on the web. It's a thriving beast of a social networking site on the web with about 2 billion monthly active users and more than one billion that log on daily. Statista shows that Facebook Messenger, with tons of cool features, is the second most popular messaging app behind WhatsApp. People use Facebook individually and by joining or setting up groups. After failing to acquire Snapchat in 2013, Facebook acquired WhatsApp in 2014 so that it could be the one that was on top of instant messaging.



Twitter

Like	Dislike
Very large community. Easy to use. Get updates from major brands. Integrates with third party services.	Can feel disorganized. Not easy to find specific people. Difficult to develop followers.

Twitter is known as the real-time, public microblogging network where news breaks first. Most users love it for its short message limit (now 280 characters) and unfiltered feed that showed them absolutely everything in the form of tweets.

Twitter has changed dramatically over the years, and today it's criticized a lot for going the way of looking and functioning almost exactly like Facebook. Besides Twitter Card integration, which now makes it easy to share all sorts of multimedia content in tweets, you can expect to see algorithmic timelines coming to Twitter as well.



Like	Dislike
Easy to make new connections. Simple to find people you know. Well-organized website.	Too much information at times. Frequent messages from marketers.

LinkedIn is a social network for professionals. Anyone who needs to make connections to advance their careers should be on LinkedIn. Profiles are designed to look sort of like extremely detailed resumes, with sections for work experience, education, volunteer work, certifications, awards and all sorts of other relevant work-related information.

Users can promote themselves and their businesses by making connections with other professionals, interacting in group discussions, posting job ads, applying to jobs, publishing articles to LinkedIn pulse and so much more.



Like	Dislike
Many hours of entertainment. Interact with communities of followers. Active comment areas. Find others with common interests.	Less personal than other social sites. Overwhelming volume of information.

Where does everyone go to watch or share video content online? It's obviously YouTube. After Google, YouTube is the second largest search engine. Despite being owned by Google, YouTube can still be recognized as a separate social network all on its own as the premiere place online to go to watch videos on every topic under the sun and upload your own as well.

From music videos and movies, to personal vlogs and independent films, YouTube has it all. YouTube also launched a premium subscription option, called YouTube Red, which removes all advertisements from videos. It also now offers YouTubeTV, a separate live streaming subscription service. For kids usage, parents should use parental controls.



Instagram

Like	Dislike
More interesting than most social networks. Useful filtering feature. See into the lives of others.	Strictly enforces policies. Ads can be a nuisance. Many photos are overly edited.

Instagram has grown to be one of the most popular social networks for photo sharing that the mobile web has ever seen. It's the ultimate social network for sharing real-time photos and short videos while on the go.

Now it's even a leading advertising platform for brands as well as Instagram Influencers, who legitimately generate income through the network. Instagram was bought for a hefty \$1 billion by Facebook in 2012.



Pinterest

Like	Dislike
Very entertaining to use. Discover new ideas. Loaded with inspiring messages. Intuitive interface.	Loaded with affiliate posts. Limited range of topics. Can get cluttered.

Pinterest has become a major player both in social networking and in the search world, proving just how important visual content has become on the web. As the fastest standalone site ever to reach 10 million monthly unique visits, Pinterest's beautiful and intuitive pinboard-style platform is one of the most enticing and useful resources for collecting the best images that can be categorized into separate boards. Pinterest is also growing to become a huge influencer in social shopping, now featuring "Buy" buttons right on pins of products sold by some retailers.



Tumblr

Like	Dislike
Large variety of content. Focused on writing and reading microblogs. Easy to set up and customize. Large user base.	Generates heated debates. Loaded with misinformation.

Tumblr is an extremely popular social blogging platform that's heavily used by teens and young adults. Like Pinterest, it's best known for sharing visual content. Users can customize

their blog theme, create blog posts in all sorts of different types of content formats, follow other users to see content in their dashboard feed and be followed back. Reblogging and liking posts is a popular way to interact. If you post great content, you could end up with thousands of reblogs and likes depending on how far it gets pushed out into the Tumblr community.



Snapchat

Like	Dislike
Very easy to use. Millions of users. Editing and filtering features. More personal and intimate than other platforms.	Small demographic of users. Content disappears every day. Lots of useless content. Difficult to find people you know.

Snapchat is a social networking app that thrives on instant messaging and is totally mobile-based. It's one of the fastest growing apps out there, building its popularity on the idea of self-destructing "snaps." You can send a photo or short video as a message (a snap) to a friend, which automatically disappears a few seconds after they've viewed it. Kids love this app because it takes the pressure off of having to share something with everyone like they would on traditional social networks. Snapchat is easy to learn. Snapchat also has a unique feature called Stories, which allows users to share snaps publicly when they want. Facebook and Instagram have recently added Stories as well.



Kik

Like	Dislike
Works on multiple platforms. Millions of users. Free to download and use.	Most users are young. Uncensored community. Can be dangerous for children.

Kik is a free instant messaging app that's very popular with teens and young adults. Users can chat with each other one-on-one or in groups by using Kik usernames (instead of phone numbers). In addition to text-based messages, users can also send photos, animated GIFs and videos to their friends. Although it's most useful for chatting with people you already know, Kik also gives users the opportunity to meet and chat with new people based on similar interests. Similar to Snapchat snapcodes, Kik users can easily scan other users' Kik codes to add them easily.



According to the FBI, this app in particular makes it extremely easy for people of all ages to contact one another. With children and teens, use extra caution and teach them of the dangers of online child predators.



Periscope

Like	Dislike
Integrates with Twitter. Live interaction with viewers. Large user base. Easy and quick way to broadcast.	Can be difficult to learn. Safety and privacy concerns. Broadcasts require good internet connection.

Periscope is all about live web video broadcasting from your mobile device. It's a Twitter-owned app that's had its fair share of rivalry against another competing broadcasting app called Meerkat. Anyone who starts a new broadcast can send instant notifications to people so they can tune in to start interacting by leaving comments and hearts. Broadcasters have the option to allow replays for users who missed out, and they can also host private broadcasts for specific users. Anyone who just wants to watch something can open up the app and browse through all sorts of broadcasts that are currently being hosted live.



Medium

Like	Dislike
Large visibility for your writing. Potential payments for popular content. Can draw in new fans to your work.	Payments are usually very low. You give up all rights to your writing. Limited reader analytics.

Medium is perhaps the best social network for readers and writers. It's sort of like a blogging platform similar to Tumblr but features a very minimal look to keep the emphasis on content that's shared there. Users can publish their own stories and format them just the way they want with photos, videos, and GIFs to support their storytelling. All content is driven by the community of users who recommend stories they like, which show up in the feeds of users who follow them. Users can also follow individual tags as a way to subscribe to content focused on topics of interest.



Soundcloud

Like	Dislike
Innovative community based on sound. Dedicated mobile app for listeners. Free to use. High-quality player.	Free tier limits monthly podcasting hours. Low popularity. Financially unstable company.

SoundCloud is the world's most popular social network for sharing sounds. Most users share music they've made or podcasts they've recorded. In fact, if you're looking for a new free music app, SoundCloud should be one to try out. While you won't exactly get to listen to all

the popular songs you hear on the radio or can listen to on Spotify, you'll get to discover lots of covers and remixes that are often better than their original versions. Even so, many well-known popular artists use the platform, so you can follow your favourites to listen to what they've decided to promote on SoundCloud. You can also discover what's trending, browse by genre, and create your own playlists with tracks that you love.



Tinder

Like	Dislike
Very large dating pool. Provides fun ways to interact with new people. Swiping breaks the ice quickly.	Plenty of trolls and eccentrics. Can make the dating process impersonal.

Tinder is a popular location-based dating app that matches you up with people in your area. Users can set up a brief profile that mainly highlights their photo, and then anyone who's matched up to them can anonymously swipe right to like their profile or left to pass on it as a match. If some who liked a profile likes theirs back, then it's a match, and the two users can start chatting privately with each other through the app. Tinder is completely free, but there are premium features that allow users to connect with people in other locations, undo certain swipes and get more "Super Likes" to let another user know they're extra special.



WhatsApp

Like	Dislike
Supports audio and video calls. Send your location. Messages are encrypted. Ad free.	Complicated to find past messages. Voice calls aren't available in all countries. File transfers are limited to 100 MB. Need a person's phone number to contact them.

Currently the most popular instant messaging provider worldwide, WhatsApp is a cross-platform app that uses your internet connection or data plan to send and receive messages. Users can send messages to individuals or groups using text, photos, videos and even voice messages. Unlike Kik and other popular messaging apps, WhatsApp uses your phone number rather than usernames or pins (despite being an alternative to SMS). Users can allow WhatsApp to connect to their phone's address book so that their contacts can be seamlessly transferred to the app. The app also offers a few customizable features like profiles, wallpapers and notification sounds.

2.3 Interacting with technology

Every facet of life that once was extremely hands-on has been reduced to a series of keystrokes:

- We send text messages populated with emojis to represent genuine emotions once expressed in words.
- We go on first dates via Skype with a smartphone screen replacing a restaurant table.
- We use email, Slack or Facebook to notify a boss when we're feeling too sick to come into work.

Since the first desktop computers began reporting widespread sales in the early 1990s, personal communication has changed. We no longer interact with each other, or the outside world, in the same way. Technology is a game-changer, no doubt. It has spurred groundbreaking developments in areas like research, healthcare and education.

How Technology has Changed Social Relationships?

Sociologists analyse how different technologies have seismically impacted the way we relate to our jobs, our friends, even our families, how technology continues to affect various cultures, and social organizations, including the ways that people have learned to modify advancements to suit their own purposes.

Not long ago, it was breaking news to learn that more and more people, both married and single, were filling their free time by staring at a handheld device instead of talking or participating in shared activities. Technology has changed the way single people meet, with the advent of dating apps that allow for intense scrutiny and quick decisions based solely on the information and photos another party provides about themselves. Even rejection no longer has the same emotional impact, when an online algorithm can show you 50 or more possible compatible matches living less than 10 miles away. In many cases, people now choose to communicate almost exclusively through technology to avoid dealing with the reality of meeting in person.



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Even friendships can end abruptly in the digital age as people have learned they can un-friend one another in a matter of seconds, or essentially vanish from view by hiding behind social media settings designed to help an individual become a ghost. Constant viewing of social media applications like Instagram, where people often share the best version of themselves possible, can transform how we view others, even if it's not necessarily based on reality.

Even parenting styles have been altered due to technology. Few people likely remember the dog-eared copy of "Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care" that their parents may have consulted for answers. Today, there's Google. Punishing a child or a teenager is no longer as simple as banishing them to their room because that's no longer the youthful equivalent of a gulag if they are plugged in. Likewise, more and more parents appear ill-equipped to detach their children from technology long enough to push them outside to play or complete a chore.

Technology also has given rise to new issues – cyberbullying, child endangerment, even a misrepresentation, often wilfully, of both our children and ourselves as picture-perfect – something previous generations may not have faced.

But it has not been all bad. Parents can enable GPS tracking on a smartphone to find their children, they can impose restrictions on content their children can access online and can instantly access their child's report card when the original copy somehow "vanishes" between school and home.

2.4 Types of information should or should not be shared online

To keep your career, educational prospects and personal life from becoming another social media site casualty, you should be very aware what you share online. The classic piece of advice on online posting is not to share anything you wouldn't want your grandmother to see. More than that, though, you should consider what you want a potential employer or college admissions officer to glean about you from your online presence. Make your online presence work for you, not against you. Employers and admissions officers report that the internet can be a good place for applicants to present their talents, professionalism, and sociability.



- Assume that nothing you share online is private. After all, it's only private until the person you've shared it with (or a hacker) makes it public.
- Don't post on forums using your real name or real email address.

- Actively keep tabs on your privacy settings.
- Don't post when you're upset. Keep in mind that everything you put out there on the internet, even into seemingly private realms like emails and Facebook messages, is impossible to take back. Limit your venting in emotional moments to fewer permanent means of communication.
- Check yourself. Everyone else is googling you, so you should get in on the action. Don't forget to monitor photos and information about you that friends post. Then, clean up accordingly.
- You should not share your credit card, debit card, banking or any other social information. Do not share pictures of your credit cards.
- Never share your personal opinion about someone who you dislike because it is only your personal opinion and the person you are talking about might read your comment and get hurt mentally. If your post negative comments about your jobs or boss or co-workers, you may end up being in an unwanted situation.
- Never share much information about your relatives, kids and friends on your posts. Sensitive information about your friends may get leaked because of your unconsidered comments or posts. You can advise your friends and relatives too not to share your sensitive information via social media.
- Never post about your holidays.
- Do not share any documents that bear your signature.
- Do not give your password to your kids, spouse or anyone. Even if you are absolutely sure that they will not share your password with anyone else, your password still gets leaked if there is a compromise on the person's computer.
- Do not share videos of your friends that you took without permission. Our cell phones are always in our hands, and it's tempting to film or take snapshots of everything we see. That's fine, but if you go around posting stuff without the permission of the people depicted, you can get yourself in trouble.
- Don't share inappropriate personal images. Social media is no place for your secret selfies. Again, if you don't want your grandmother seeing them, they shouldn't go on social media.
- Don't complain about your boss. It can be really tempting to vent about your horrible boss on social media. There's just one problem with that. Things take on lives of their own when they end up on the internet.
- Don't share fights with your significant other. Public forums are definitely not the place to score points on your partner when you're in a fight. Think about it. Eventually the fight will end, and you'll want to get back to normal with your S.O.
- Don't share unsubstantiated accusations. Social media is a powerful tool for outing wrongdoers within their own communities. That doesn't mean you should reprint and share every sordid rumour you hear about someone you barely know.

Finally, before sharing anything online ask yourself if the contents or comments contain any sensitive information and if it is absolutely necessary to share this information. Remember what you publicly share can be used to be exploited against you and take advantage of you.

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