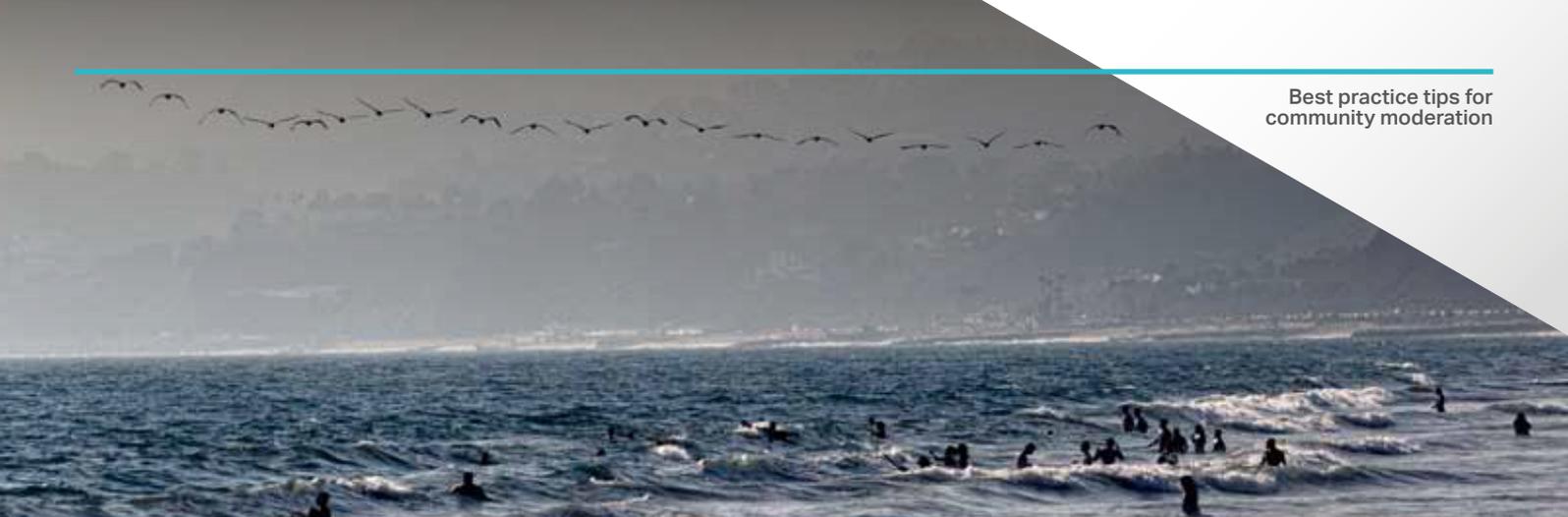




Best practice tips for community moderation

Moderation is the key that unlocks the insights that a community has to offer. It demands careful planning, strategy, and good people skills.

In this guide, we've detailed 10 best practice tips to follow for successful community moderation.



1 ADOPT THE APPROPRIATE 'RESEARCHER' MINDSET FROM THE BEGINNING

Be open-minded, curious, respectful, non-judgemental, empathic, democratic and, most importantly of all be authentic in all of your communications with community members.

2 CREATE A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PLANNED ACTIVITY

The best community activity plans consist of topic topic areas for discussion. They may not contain all the questions from the outset. This creates the ability to flex future topics in light of the feedback and insights gathered along the way.

3 CONSIDER THE COMMUNITY PROGRAMME 'JOURNEY' FOR YOUR COMMUNITIY MEMBERS

Think about the tools at your disposal and don't forget that you will have the opportunity to sequence tasks i.e. deploy a private survey prior to a social discussion. It is fairly typical to commence with easy questions and tasks – for instance, onboarding and introduction based exercises followed by a customer exploration phase. This in turn might occur prior to concept assessment and the consideration of more abstract topics e.g. brand personality. Sensitisation promotes deeper thinking and reflection. Use this to your advantage and don't forget to wrap up with closing thoughts or feedback at the end!



4 USE A RANGE OF TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EXPRESSION

Plan what should remain private vs. community-led. Decide where it is appropriate to develop activities that will achieve broad understanding vs. detail. Evaluate the opportunity to use projective techniques if you are looking to explore feelings and emotions.

5 PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND HONESTY OF OPINION

From the very beginning, make sure it is understood that it is fine to have different views and to disagree. Prompt and probe the 'crowd pleasers' to get at their true feelings, and be sure to keep everybody on their toes by maintaining a curious approach to questioning.

6 THINK ABOUT THE PERSONA THAT YOU PROJECT AS A MODERATOR

The best moderators allow their persona to evolve throughout the course of the community lifespan, switching roles as needed between leader, teacher, coach, parent, friend, expert, and last, but not least, dunce!

7 CONSIDER THE FEELINGS THAT MEMBERS MIGHT HAVE AND THE QUESTIONS THEY MAY ASK

Always think about what community members can realistically know or remember, and shape questions in easy-to-understand language that avoids corporate speak, jargon and cliché.





8 THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG – GIVE ‘PERMISSION’ FOR YOUR MEMBERS TO DISAGREE

Encourage outside-the-box thinking by pre-empting predictable feedback and avoiding treading over the same old ground. Consider stating facts or reflecting back on what you already know or have established in order to push boundaries and gather fresh insight.

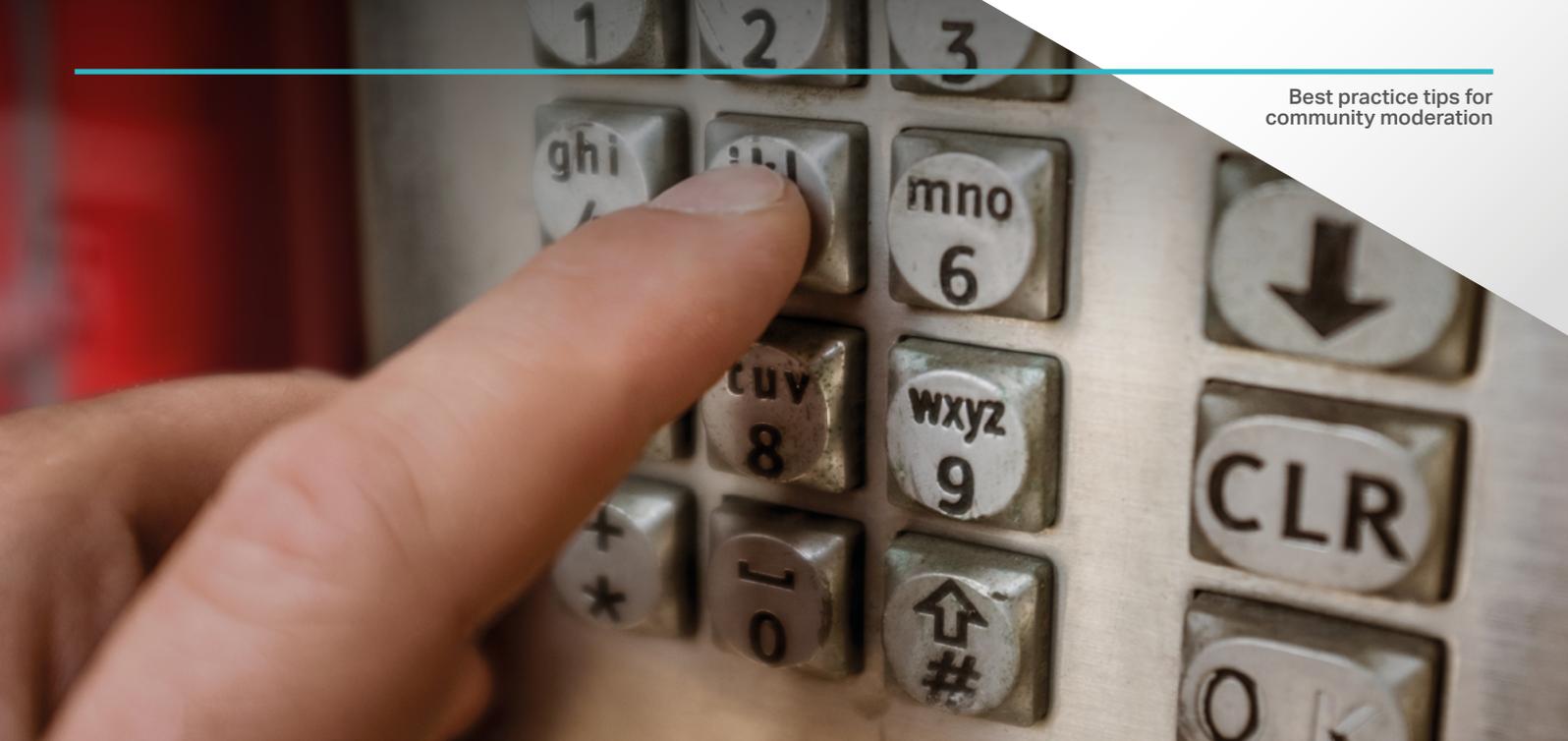
9 ESTABLISH COMMON BONDS FROM THE START

Onboarding and introductions are essential for allowing members to gain comfort and familiarity in the community, and to feel at ease about sharing their personal opinions in the company of others. Although the process can be time-consuming, it helps establish norms and expectations, while promoting an individual sense of identity which can help you reduce the prospect of ‘groupthink’.

10 BE MINDFUL OF THINGS TAKING PLACE OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY

Empathise with the people you are looking to target and consider the everyday roles, responsibilities and challenges that they face, as well as anything that might impact their mindshare, interest, and responses e.g., time of day, events, holidays, etc. You can use this knowledge to your advantage and to try and improve levels of engagement and commitment.





In conclusion

We hope you found our ten best practice tips for successful research community moderation useful. Now all you need to do is ensure you maximise engagement. Download more guides about online research [here](#).

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