



Community Guidelines

The community for communicators.

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Overview

Welcome to Comms-unity

Hello there! We're very happy you've joined us 🎉👏

Comms-unity is committed to bringing together and elevating professionals working in internal communications through a vibrant and supportive community.

This space exists as a forum to share ideas, ask questions, seek feedback, discuss best practices, and get advice.

As of August 2020, *Comms-unity* is made up of 530 communication professionals, consultants, HR and People & Culture experts, and many more passionate people who share our commitment to elevating the internal communications profession.

All are welcome to contribute, no matter what their level of experience.

What you'll find in *Comms-unity*

In the Comms-unity Slack space, you will find:

- Questions and feedback
- Career advice
- Events
- Job opportunities
- Tips and tricks from the experts

3 Important Notes:

1. While Comms-unity has been created by the good people at Bananatag, **this is not a support channel for Bananatag customers**. Our tech support team does not have access to the space. If you need to reach the Bananatag team with questions about using our tools, please visit our [support page here](#).
2. This space is not a place to sell stuff. That includes Bananatag stuff. Though we will give you updates about the product, content, and other cool resources, our goal is to provide value wherever we can, not initiate sales conversations or pitch you anything.
3. If you're interested in sharing resources you've developed, blog posts you've penned, or other services you offer, you're welcome to share it in the #shameless-self-promotion channel. Otherwise, we'll keep the channels clear from self-promotion and keep our channels focused on connecting with each other.

First Things First

When you join the community

One reason we're choosing to host this community on Slack is because it is already widely used for internal communications, and so many of you will already know how to use it.

If you're not familiar with Slack, we suggest taking a look at Slack's very own [Getting Started Guide](#) to get up to speed.

Generally speaking, Slack is easy-to-use and intuitive.

But Slack has *a lot* more features than we can cover here. So in this document, we'll just go over the basics.



Your First Visit to Comms-unity

After you sign into Comms-unity through Slack, you'll be added to the **#general** channel and a few others. Simply click on **Channels** to find an up-to-date listing of all the available channels and join whichever ones interest you.

Step 1: Set up a profile

Comms-unity is about connecting with real people.

As such, we'd appreciate it if you would take a minute to **flesh out your profile** straight away and **upload a photo of yourself** so the rest of the members can see who they're connecting with.

Step 2: Introduce yourself

Once you're set up, jump right in and tell us who you are in the **#introductions** channel!

Tell us where you're from, what you do, what you're working on, and what you're hoping to get out of the community. This is a great place to start conversations with people doing work in organizations you're interested in, working on projects you'd like to hear more about, or in the city that you live!

Step 3: Set preferences and manage notifications

As mentioned, we won't cover all of Slack's features here, but to start, you can dig into the **Slack Preferences** to customize notifications, messages, settings and more.

You can find these in the **Comms-unity** drop-down menu in the upper left-hand corner.

If you've used Slack before, you know that if you don't have your preferences set up from the beginning the notifications can get a bit annoying. We want you to love this group and definitely do not want it to annoy you, so please take just a minute to adjust your settings and preferences.

Here are Slack's instructions for customizing your notification settings:

- [Email](#)
- [Mobile](#)
- [Desktop](#)

For the complete guide to managing your profile and preferences, visit [Slack's help centre here](#).



Step 4: Take a look around

Joining a Slack space is a lot like walking into a room full of people. There may already be conversations you're interested in having happening all around you. Instead of trying to start a new conversation about topics already being discussed, it's best to read the room and see where you can join in.

So before you start typing, take a look around. See what has already been discussed and where you can contribute to the conversation.

If you want to find out if someone has already posted about a topic you're interested in discussing, use Slack's search function on the top bar to enter keywords and find relevant threads you can join.

Our Moderator team

Our Slack space is actively moderated by our friendly team of moderators.

Our current moderators are:

- **Kyla Sims – @Kyla**
- **Emily Lang – @Emily**
- **Joe Shaw – @Joe**
- **Siobhan Nordstrom – @Siobhan**
- **Travis Bonnough – @Travis**
- **Mary Bruder – @Mary**
- **Jill Turton – @Jill**

Our moderators are here to answer your questions, ensure our community is safe and thriving, and to help keep the conversations flowing.

Our moderators are active Monday - Friday from 7am - 5pm PST.

We love to get DMs from our members, but we may not always be able to get back to you right away. Please be patient and know that we will get back to you as soon as we can. This might mean a couple of days if you've sent a direct message to a moderator who is on vacation or if you've sent your message over the weekend.

As such, for any questions that can be answered by anyone in the community, we ask that you please post in the **#ask-a-question** channel to get a faster response.

Would you like to help moderate Comms-unity? This community is not just for Bananatag. As such, we welcome any interest from the wider community to help out with moderation. New moderators can be nominated by the community and of course, any nomination will need to be approved by the current moderator team.

Community etiquette

We want this community to thrive. That means we all need to be clear on what is and is not acceptable in this community, best practices for posting and engaging, and how to use this group to connect.

Use the right channel

Comms-unity is a multi-channel Slack group.

Slack chat spaces are divided into rooms called “channels”. Channels help us keep conversations flowing on topic, and keep our community from becoming hard to read or engage with.

That’s why we will be actively encouraging members to keep relevant conversations going in the relevant channels.

Our main channels are:

- **#ask-a-question** – For any questions on anything and everything internal comms
- **#ask-for-feedback** – Get a second set of eyes on a project or bounce ideas off people
- **#career advice** – Ask and give career advice to fellow communicators!
- **#events** – Post info on any upcoming comms-related events
- **#announcements** – Occasional announcements from the moderators
- **#intros** – The meet and greet channel. Introduce yourself and connect!
- **#jobs** —On the hunt for a job or a fantastic new hire? Know someone who is? This is the place to post roles.
- **#random** – A place where anything goes. Except the things that don’t.
- **#shameless self promotion** – Go on then. The *only* place where you can show off all that hard work of yours.



Please do not repeat your post in multiple channels. People hate that. Rest assured that the nature of the platform will allow all members who want to engage with your content, questions, or conversations, to do so.

If your favourite topic isn't being discussed, bring it up!

Don't be afraid to ask!

We're here to help support you! So don't be afraid to ask questions or send us feedback.

If you are uncertain if you should post something, or would like to post anonymously (if your employer is in the group, for example) please ask one of our moderators for assistance. We can post on your behalf (anonymously) and help you get the answers you need.

Code of Conduct

By joining Comms-unity on Slack, you are agreeing to this Code of Conduct.

The short version

1. Be kind, friendly, and respectful to everyone.
2. Before you post anything, ask yourself:
 - a. **Is it true?**
 - b. **Is it helpful?**
 - c. **Is it kind?**
3. If you notice a member behaving inappropriately to you or another member, please reach out to the moderator team immediately.
4. If you're making people uncomfortable or violating any of our community guidelines, it will be made known to you, and in some cases, you will be asked to leave the community.
5. No jerks allowed.



The long version

What we strive for

Conversations in *Comms-unity* are the ones you can't find elsewhere. But what's *most* important is the sense of belonging. Diversity and inclusion make our community strong.

We are committed to creating a safe, inclusive and welcoming culture; one that promotes healthy discussions, nurtures positive relationships, and connects members through shared interests and experiences.

We encourage participation from everyone, regardless of *race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, personal appearance, body size, ethnicity, culture, age, religion, level of experience, political affiliation, nationality or any other characteristics that make you unique.*

We believe everyone gains perspective from diverse viewpoints. That being said, we will not tolerate any abusive language, or any conversations that violate our community guidelines.

Below, you'll find the guidelines that govern our Slack Community's discussions, and help us maintain the spirit of *Comms-unity*.

What we appreciate (highly encouraged!)

How to be a good community member:

- Be kind and courteous
- Be authentic – use your real name and don't misrepresent yourself
- Be respectful of differing viewpoints and experiences
- Be humble – as with any large group, disagreements will happen. We understand that you'll have some strong opinions, but be courteous during debate and gracefully accept constructive criticism
- Be welcoming and inclusive – say hi to new members!
- Be friendly and encouraging – look out for each other
- Be grateful – thank folks who take the time to reply to your posts
- Be empathetic and seek to understand each other's context. Listen carefully and actively.



- Ask thoughtful questions – Respect each others' time by doing research before asking questions that have been addressed before or in other channels.
- Only give constructive feedback – that means addressing the ideas you disagree with, not the person, adding value, avoiding blame, being curious, assuming good intent, owning your biases, having empathy.
- Own your mistakes. If you screw up, name it and move on.

What we don't appreciate (highly discouraged!)

A few things that will raise red flags for our members and moderators:

- Failing to include your full (first and last) name within your profile.
- Dropping in only to self-promote or make a sales pitch, while otherwise being inactive.
- Spamming or trolling other members.
- Being rude or a jerk
- Not updating your profile picture to a real photo of you
- Bad faith arguments or responses
- Dog-piling on members when they've misspoken or made a mistake

Unacceptable behavior

The following behaviors are considered harassment and run counter to the culture we aim to cultivate in our community:

Harassment includes:

- Conduct or insulting/derogatory comments which could be considered sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or otherwise discriminatory or offensive in nature.
- Offensive comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, mental illness, neuro(a)typicality, physical appearance, body size, age, race, or religion.
- Violent language or threats directed against others, or incitement of violence.
- Inappropriate/unwelcome attention or contact. If it makes someone uncomfortable, stop.
- Deliberate intimidation or harassment.
- Bullying or encouraging dogpiling/bullying
- Unwelcome comments regarding a person's lifestyle choices and practices, including those related to food, health, parenting, drugs, and employment.
- Deliberate misgendering or use of 'dead' or rejected names.
- Gratuitous or off-topic sexual images or behaviour, and unwelcome sexual attention.
- Sustained disruption of discussion.



- Continued one-on-one communication after requests to cease.
- Publishing other people's private information without explicit permission.
- Contacting members via DM without expressed consent in a public channel.
- Pitching your services or having sales conversations in any channel.
- Deliberate “outing” of any aspect of a person’s identity without their consent except as necessary to protect vulnerable people from intentional abuse.
- Publication of non-harassing private communication.

Please note: This list does not cover every case of unacceptable behavior.

What we will not moderate

Comms-unity will advocate for marginalized people’s safety over privileged people’s comfort.

The Mod team **will not act** on complaints regarding:

- ‘Reverse’ -isms, including ‘reverse racism,’ ‘reverse sexism,’ and ‘cisphobia.’
- Reasonable communication of boundaries, such as “leave me alone,” “go away,” or “I’m not discussing this with you.”
- Communicating in a ‘tone’ you don’t find congenial.
- Criticizing racist, sexist, cissexist, or otherwise oppressive behavior or assumptions.

Everyone will have different boundaries, triggers, and limits on what they consider acceptable behavior. Please treat each other with kindness and empathy, and we will all get along just fine.

We will do our best to make sure the Comms-unity is a safe space for everyone.

Consequences

Unacceptable behavior from any community member, including moderators and those with decision-making authority, will not be tolerated.

Anyone asked to stop unacceptable behavior is expected to comply immediately.

If a participant engages in harassing behaviour, the moderator team may take any action they deem appropriate. We reserve the right, always, to deactivate accounts – temporarily or permanently – at our discretion should anyone choose not to abide by the spirit of our community guidelines.

As moderators, we can’t anticipate every situation, but we will seek to resolve conflicts peacefully and in a manner that is positive for the community.



Reporting

If you are being harassed, or you notice someone else is being harassed, please notify us as soon as possible by emailing kyla.sims@bananatag.com, or contacting a member of the *Comms-unity* moderator team on Slack.

We will respond as promptly as we can.

In order to protect volunteer moderators from abuse and burnout, we reserve the right to reject any report we believe to have been made in bad faith. Reports intended to silence legitimate criticism may be deleted without response.

Message Retention

Because this is a free slack account, we have restricted scrollback, but Slack--the company--retains complete logs of all channels and direct messages back to the creation of *Comms-unity*.

Slack is a U.S. company and therefore subject to subpoenas from U.S. courts. Our logs may be subject to subpoena and could become public as part of legal proceedings.

Privacy

Please be mindful that things you say here may at some point become public.

While we expect members to honor the confidentiality of this space, we cannot guarantee that they will do so—nor can we guarantee that every member's login credentials and logged-in devices are secure.



Nobody has signed an NDA to participate in this Slack community, so please exercise caution and refrain from sharing sensitive information that could harm you or others if it became public.

Credits & licence

[This work was adapted under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#).]

A special thanks to the multiple sources that we drew from to build these Guidelines and Code of Conduct, including:

- [Dbt Slack Rules of the Road](#)
- [Creative Commons Slack/Code of Conduct](#)
- [Women in Technology](#)
- [DesignX](#)
- [PyLadies Code of Conduct](#)

This code of conduct is based on Annalee Flower Horne's [Sample Slack Code of Conduct](#), which is in turn based on Geek Feminism's [Community Anti-Harassment Policy](#). We have adapted the Sample Slack Code of Conduct for our own use under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#).

