7 Facebook-Group Etiquette Tips for Business Owners

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Facebook groups can be a beautiful thing, but too many people take advantage of Facebook business groups for their own personal promo. The work someone else put into creating, building and moderating a Facebook group can all be threatened by people who won't follow the rules or even basic etiquette there.

Here are six ways to use business Facebook groups the right way.

Read the rules and follow them

This seems basic, but group rules are there for a reason. If you don't agree with the rules, don't join the group or choose to leave the group later if they feel oppressive. If someone calls your attention to the rules in a nice way, don't argue about the alleged infraction. Simply own up to it or ask for further clarification and move on. If a group owner or set of moderators has made a call that your post violates the rules, a back-and-forth argument isn't worth your time or theirs.

Most entrepreneur Facebook groups have rules about promoting yourself. This can include your podcast episodes, your books, coaching calls, "free" offers, your website and more. If you're not sure if something flies, ask the moderator. It shows respect and is a good chance to get approval for

something that might otherwise get deleted out of context. When I do this as a group member, I liked to add, “This post was approved by Admin X” so it’s clear I’m not breaking any rules.

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Search first, then post

If you’re new to a group, always use the search function before asking a question. Some groups get flooded with dozens of repeat questions, pushing engagement down. If it’s been a year since someone asked your question and the answers might be different, go ahead and ask again. But if you’re the 15th person this month to ask, “What’s the best book on retirement for business owners?” you’re not going to get great responses, either.

If you can’t find your topic in the search, it’s fair game!

No shady promos

There are always a few people trying to skirt the “no promotions” rules. They think that by offering a shielded promotion they’ll get away with it.

I kick a few people out of my group every single week for posting total spam offers or fraud, but the shady promos are often the most irritating (and, in my experience, more likely to get reported to me as a group admin when another member doesn’t want to call out the offending poster but recognizes it as spam or a promo).

Your, “I just added 6,000 people to my Facebook group overnight; comment below and I’ll DM you my secrets” post isn’t fooling anyone. Neither is posting a question that you’re clearly asking to answer yourself.

The golden rule applies: Don’t want Facebook groups ruined for you as a member? Do unto others.

And finally, if you’re joining a group with someone who offers a similar service or product to you, this is not your chance to mine and poach their followers. There’s a big difference between giving value to that audience in something like a podcast episode or webinar and trying to add every group member as a personal friend on Facebook so you can pitch them.

Don’t invite people to groups with rules

Just about every Facebook group I belong to has multiple posts from a moderator about this topic. When you “invite” someone to a group from within the group, the questions/rules do not pop up for them. That means they’ll sit in group request purgatory or get outright declined. Instead, send your friend a link to the group itself so they can click “join,” read the rules and sign up to acknowledge them.

Report posts that break rules

No sense in piling on to a post and giving it more attention than it deserves when it breaks the rules. Report it to the moderators, who will get a notification and review the request. Only the moderator sees who marked the post as a problem, so this is an anonymous way of reaching out if you don’t want to call attention to the person or if you’re not really sure they broke a rule in the first place.

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Be respectful with ‘coffee chats’

Coffee chats are a nice way to connect and meet with other people, but they can also be a huge waste of time if not used properly. I joined a group once built entirely on the concept of the 15-minute coffee chat. The purpose was to meet other service providers we could refer business to. Half the people didn’t show up for their appointed time and spent their 15 minutes trying to sell me on their service or online course. Needless to say, I never referred any business to anyone from that group.

If you’re going to do a coffee chat, truly connect with someone. This is not the place to word vomit all the paid offers you have and where they can buy them. If you sign up for a coffee chat with someone, show up on time and go in with the right intentions.

If you join a lot of groups, make a spreadsheet

Many groups do allow promotions on certain days. When these days pop up, there’s usually a post made by a moderator noting it where you can comment and share your offer like a blog post, podcast episode or lead magnet. It gets tough to keep track of, so use a spreadsheet to track which days of the week you can post things so it’s easy to follow those rules. You can even include a link to the group directly in the spreadsheet for quick access on promotional days.

Now, go forth, be considerate and network!

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