

# TANZANET Code of Conduct

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## A. INTRODUCTION:

1. The Code is intended to make networking life easier by providing guidelines of what is, and is not, expected of members of Tanzanet.
2. The Code shall be made a by-law and provided for in the Constitution.
3. The Code shall be enforceable through penalties.
4. Each member maintains the right and duty to privately or publically point out any breaking of the Code to the offending party or the enforcement organs.
5. To ensure adherence to the Code, an Etiquette Officer(EO) shall monitor and enforce daily adherence. The EO shall be appointed by the Chair of the Admin sub-committee (AdmC) but shall not be a member of the Executive Committee (ExeC) or any of its sub-committees.

## B. TANZANET CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1. General

- 1.1. Your Postings Reflect Upon You: Most people on the net will know you only by what you say and how well you say it. Also, much of how people judge you on the net is based on your writing. Make sure each posting is something that will not irritate or offend others, or embarrass you later.
- 1.2. Never Forget that the Person on the Other Side is Human:  
Try not to say anything to others you would not say to them in person in a room full of people. Do not attack people if you cannot persuade them with your presentation of the facts. Screaming, cursing, and abusing others only serves to make people think less of you.
- 1.3. Be Careful What You Say About Others: Avoid making statements or pronouncements that you cannot prove. Information posted on the net can come back to haunt you or the person you are talking about. Avoid posting malicious statements than can cause ill-feeling or distrust between any two people or groups on the net.
- 1.4. Avoid Belligerent Posturing: While everyone is entitled to an opinion, avoid the feeling that you must always volunteer yours and have it accepted. Read other postings with an open mind so as to get the big picture. Avoid reading with a view to finding fault! That is too easy since there is always something someone can criticise in any posting! Avoid antagonism and unnecessary sarcasm. Where humour is intended, take steps to ensure people realize you are trying to be funny. Remember that a network is composed of members who are all on your side. The spirit should be, therefore, to discuss with them; not to debate or fight them.
- 1.5. Avoid Preaching or Practising Sectionalism: A network is a 'grouping' of individuals for a common cause. Avoid posting material or opinions that appear to promote sectional interests that may lead to acrimony and/or division in the net.

- 1.6. Use Descriptive Titles: The subject line of an article is there to enable a person with a limited amount of time to decide whether or not to read your article. So, always have a title for your article. Keep this title short but indicative of content. If reacting or contributing to an ongoing discussion keep the existing title. Do not use an existing title to post material whose content is no longer in the "big picture" of the original posting even if what you want to say was prompted by the posting.
- 1.7. Be Brief:
  - 1.7.1. Never say in many words what you can say in few. Remember, that the longer you make your article, the fewer the people who will bother to read it to the end.
  - 1.7.2. When following up an article, include only the appropriate quotes from the original article. Do not include the entire article even if you are responding to all of it.
  - 1.7.3. Don't overdo 'signatures'. Keep your signatures brief and concise. Two or three lines are usually plenty. The main purpose of a signature is to help people locate you, not to tell your life story.
- 1.8. Be Considerate of the Limitations of the Resources of Others:
  - 1.8.1. One of the biggest problems on networks is that when someone asks a question, many people send out identical answers. Mail your answer to the requester, who must have the courtesy to summarize all received answers to the network if necessary.
  - 1.8.2. Before submitting a follow-up to a message, read the rest of the messages to see whether someone has already said what you want to say. If someone has, don't repeat it.
  - 1.8.3. When following up an article, include only the appropriate quotes from the original article. Do not include the entire article even if you are responding to all of it.
  - 1.8.4. Do not send messages to private individuals through the net.
  - 1.8.5. Do not post unsolicited materials or junk mail on the net. Specialized group publications, sales or get-rich-quick promotions, chain letters, and hoaxes are considered such postings.
- 1.9. Write in Generic Format: For the sake of most computer terminals and workstations, try to write in the simplest text format. Keep your lines to less than 80 characters for optimal readability. Avoid the use of color, bold, italic or other fancy character effects that may not be available in the programs used by other net members.
- 1.10. Be Careful About Copyrights and Licenses:
  - 1.10.1. If you are using facts to support a cause, state where they came from. Don't take someone else's ideas and use them as your own. You don't want someone pretending that your ideas are theirs; show them the same respect.
  - 1.10.2. It is generally considered rude to post private e-mail correspondence without the permission of the author of that mail. Furthermore, under copyright statutes, the author of the e-mail possesses a copyright on mail that he or she wrote.

1.10.3. You should also be aware that posting movie reviews, song lyrics, or anything else published under a copyright could cause you, your company, or members of the net community to be held liable for damages, so exercise extreme caution in using such material.

## 2. Specific

### 2.1. DOs

- 2.1.1. Read the Tanzanet Constitution carefully to know your rights and obligations.
- 2.1.2. Read the Tanzanet Etiquette Code carefully to know the conduct expected of you and others. Ignorance of the law is no defence.
- 2.1.3. Be prepared to offer volunteer services, including leadership, to Tanzanet.
- 2.1.4. Assist Tanzanet leadership. Follow up all discussions intended to reach an administrative decision. Cast your vote when asked to do so.
- 2.1.5. Pay your dues on time.
- 2.1.6. Scramble to help whenever a member posts a request for assistance.
- 2.1.7. Lurk before leaping. Lurking is reading objectively, understanding the full message, listening to what others have to say, before writing and posting your own contribution.
- 2.1.8. Read and edit your article before posting to correct unnecessary mistakes and to ensure that the article contains and conveys the intended message to the best of your ability.
- 2.1.9. Check the "To" and "Cc" lines to confirm destinations before sending mail. An apology does not correct the consequences of information sent to the wrong place.
- 2.1.10. Include apt subject headings to your postings to facilitate reception and discussion.
- 2.1.11. Post messages which will advance the unity and objectives of Tanzanet.
- 2.1.12. Be cautious about what you post. Treat your every posting as if your entire image depends on it.
- 2.1.13. Be human. Write online as if you are talking face to face to a person in real life.
- 2.1.14. Be careful and explicit when using humour to avoid misinterpretation.
- 2.1.15. Be sensitive of other members' time and networking costs by posting measured messages. When replying to mail, avoid reproduction of unnecessary quotations.
- 2.1.16. Be understanding of other members' imperfections and strive to not easily take offense

### 2.2. DON'Ts

- 2.2.1. Do not assist anyone to obtain membership by false pretence.
- 2.2.2. Do not post materials under a false name or by impersonating another member.
- 2.2.3. Do not post materials that humiliate, embarrass, ridicule or are otherwise derogatory and/or offensive to other members. Once a genuine complaint against such materials is made, no apology or "that was not my intention" statement can truly reverse the damage done.
- 2.2.4. Do not post libelous or defamatory material against any member.

- 2.2.5. Do not shout. Avoid posting messages with abusive or excessively strong language against others, members and non-members alike. Clear, cool-headed and factual statements should be used instead of obscene, profane, vulgar, harassing, or threatening language however angry you may feel while writing.
- 2.2.6. Do not post materials that are divisive in nature. Avoid subjects or messages that may result in the fragmentation of Tanzanet or in the alienation of members from one another. Sectarian, sectionalistic, and agendaistic postings shall be avoided at all costs.
- 2.2.7. Do not conduct fights or turf wars on the net. Avoid responding, for or against, to a posting just because it was sent in by a particular member. Likewise, avoid refusing to respond for the same reason.
- 2.2.8. Do not stretch the meagre resources of Tanzanet. Familiarize yourself with, and use, automation whenever provided. Use the personal services of the network technicians only when your personal efforts have failed. Even then, contact the technicians privately for help.
- 2.2.9. Do not post messages to private individuals through the net.
- 2.2.10. Do not post private messages on the net without the provable permission of the originator. It is highly inappropriate to publicise materials sent in confidence.
- 2.2.11. Do not cross-post. It is illegal to lift material from other networks and sources without permission and without acknowledging the source.
- 2.2.12. Do not post get-rich-quick, good-omen hoaxes, chain letters, or other unsolicited junk mail.
- 2.2.13. Do not wilfully introduce viruses or other destructive computer programmes, or otherwise technically hamper the communication network of Tanzanet.

## **C. INTERPRETATION OF THE CODE**

Whereas all elements of the Code are assumed understandable and unambiguous, and wherefore all members are expected to have the same interpretation of any element, the interpretation of the ExeC shall be final in the event of a dispute.

## **D. PENALTIES FOR BREAKING THE CODE**

The following penalties will be exercised by the ExeC on a member found guilty of breaking the code:

1. Public Apology: the sufficiency of the apology shall be decided by the Executive Committee.
2. Reprimand: Reprimand shall be public
3. Fine: Maximum of 5 British pounds
4. Suspension: Maximum of 4 weeks (1st offence); 4 weeks (2nd offence)
5. Any combination of 1, 2, 3, and 4
6. Expulsion: Mandatory if offence follows 2 earlier suspensions.

## **E. OFFENCES CARRYING PENALTIES**

Any and all listed general and specific codes of conduct shall be enforced under the pain of the stipulated penalties. Refusal to carry out any penalty shall result in expulsion.

## **F. LODGING AND RESOLVING COMPLAINTS**

The Etiquette Officer (EO) will have the duty to enforce the day-to-day observation of the code, send warnings to the erring parties and, as far as practicable, settle complaints that are brought to his/her attention. However, any member retains the right to originate a complaint on own behalf, on behalf of another member or group of members following the mechanisms below. In the event a complaint is lodged against a member of the AdmC or ExeC the member will not participate in the deliberations of the case that these bodies will conduct.

The procedures for lodging and resolving complaints are:

1. The complainant sends a written detailed complaint to the EO with a copy to the alleged erring party (defendant).
2. If the EO cannot settle the complaint, the case is forwarded to the Adm sub-committee (AdmC). The details forwarded to the AdmC must be copied to the party(ies) involved.
3. The AdmC then deliberates and decides to either handle the case or to re-direct the case to the EO with instructions for private settlement.
4. If the AdmC decides to handle the case, then it may summon additional explanations and evidentiary materials from any of the parties or recommend a ruling based on the current evidence.
5. The AdmC then prepares the case summary and forwards this with the recommended ruling to the ExeC with copies to the involved parties.
6. Three working days are then allowed for any of the involved parties to appeal the recommended AdmC ruling to the ExeC.
7. The ExeC deliberates on the case and any appeals and reaches the final ruling not more than five working days from the day the case was received from the AdmC.

8. The ExeC then privately informs the involved parties of its ruling and sets aside two working days for any party to submit a non-binding letter of protest.
9. After the two days elapse, the ExeC publishes the case summary, ruling, and the protest status (which party protested against the ruling and why) on the general forum.
10. The ruling takes effect on publication. Suspensions and expulsions are effective immediately while reprimands, apologies and fines must be dispensed within seven working days. The forum must be notified by the ExeC when fines have been paid and when the suspension has been served.

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