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# The Debian Community Guidelines

Or, how to be able to plan total world domination with a public discussion in debian-devel.



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16 slides

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# What are the DCG

## **The Debian Community Guidelines are:**

- A collection of what people normally do that works well.
- A list of suggestions for working online more efficiently.

## **The Debian Community Guidelines are *not*:**

- A policy.
- A way to point fingers at people.
- Perfect.



# Goals and contents of the talk

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## **I want you to:**

- know what's in the guidelines.
- tell people about the guidelines.
- watch out for potential additions to the guidelines.

## **So I will:**

- run through what is in the guidelines
- tell my plans for the guidelines
- ask you for ideas on what more can be done with them

# Editorial dogmas

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- Collect suggestions, not blames
- Suggestions must be useful for all the parties involved in the communication
- No more than 6/7 points per section



# Contents of the DCG

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1. Main guidelines
2. Communication-specific guidelines
3. Debian-specific guidelines

# Main guidelines

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- Strive for quality.
- Work with others.
- Principles do not change, the rest changes with work.
- Support the reasonable, rather than attacking the arrogant.

# Communication guidelines

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## **Improving the *content*:**

- Ensure you are adding useful information.
- Share the help you receive.
- Do some research before posting.
- Know what you want and make sure people know what they want

# Communication guidelines

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## Improving the *presentation*:

- Put the main point at the beginning, and the long details later.
- Talk with code or patches.
- Point to existing resources.
- Use a plain and simple style.

# **Communication guidelines**

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## **Ensuring sustainability**

- Read messages smartly.
- Be positive before being negative.
- Give credit where credit is due.
- Be respectful and polite.
- Help the public knowledge evolve.

# Communication mini-HOWTOs

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## **Bringing long threads to a conclusion.**

- Discuss controversial points off-list with the people you disagree with
- Take a leadership role
- Make summaries
- Start a new thread when the discussion drifts away

# Communication mini-HOWTOs

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## **Coping with flamewars**

- Send a private mail to your friends if they're being unconstructive or flameish

(this section could use more suggestions)

# Debian-specific guidelines

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## Package management

- Suggestions on how to work with comaintainers (pkg-\* group on Alioth, collab-maint...).
- Suggestions on how to publish bzr or darcs trees.
- Link to the low-threshold NMU list

# **Debian-specific guidelines**

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## **Handling bug reports**

- Take bugs positively.
- Interface with upstream.
- Be open minded.

# What now?

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- Add to NM documentation.
- Package in Debian and respond to bug reports.
- Publish on the Debian website.
- Link from wherever it could be useful.
- Work out the relationship with the Developer's Reference.
- Keep a watchful eye for useful things to add.

# Goals of the talk

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## **Beginning from now, I want you to:**

- know what's in the guidelines.
- tell people about the guidelines.
- watch out for potential additions to the guidelines.



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`http://people.debian.org/~enrico/dcg`  
`bzr pull http://people.debian.org/~enrico/dcg`