



Secondary: I didn't mean it

You can't always judge, or control what effect your actions online will have on other people.

What's the issue?

An online poll might sound like a bit of fun, but when you are playing around online you can forget that you are actually still dealing with real people who have real feelings. What you say and do will affect them, often in ways that you didn't intend, with consequences that go well beyond your control.

Why does it matter?

- The online world is a part of the real world and what you do in one affects the other.
- Making other people the target of your pranks is often not funny for them. If it is deliberate and ongoing, or other people join in, it is bullying.
- Your family are the people who have known you the longest and to whom you are most closely connected. When you involve them in something they find hurtful, you are affecting some of your closest relationships.



Advice

Respect and value your friends

- Think about how you would feel if you were being given a rating about some aspect of yourself in comparison with others. Try to value each person you know for their unique characteristics.
- Think about how you would feel if, despite being a complex person, you were being treated as one-dimensional. Don't reduce an individual to just one aspect of who they are.

Use your imagination to think about cause and effect

- Stop and think about what possible outcomes your actions might have. You might change your mind once you think through the possible consequences.

People react in different ways

- What you think is amusing and good 'fun', doesn't always look like that from a different position. Try to walk in the other person's shoes to gain an insight into how they might experience your 'fun'.