

draft-gondwana-effective-terminology

GENDISPATCH 2020-09-01
Bron Gondwana

<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/draft-gondwana-effective-terminology/>

Goals

- Find/document the areas in which consensus exists in the IETF regarding terminology.
- Avoid trying to solve all the world's problems or take sides in current political debates.
- Centre the IETF's mission, and use that as the basis to inform our choices.

IETF Mission RFC3935

- *“make the Internet work better by producing high quality, relevant technical documents”*
- The IETF exists to improve the Internet
- The Internet exists to serve all humans
- It follows that our goal is to produce high quality documents that serve all humans

Not all problems

- There are many things wrong in the world
- Other organisations have other missions
- Ours is: *“influence the way people design, use, and manage the Internet”*:
 - Success of the internet has pros and cons for humans
 - We want to reduce the downsides where possible
 - But we are relentlessly pro-internet and proud of our work

Not all humans

- The IETF serves all humans, but doesn't want everybody to be involved:
 - Only adult humans
 - Only people who bring technical competence
 - not e.g. those who believe that writing “data transfer faster than the speed of light” and stamping “RFC” on it makes it so.
 - Only people who sign on to our mission
 - not e.g. “all protocols must be designed with a primary purpose of ensuring extraterrestrials can be detected”.

Don't bring your whole self

- Nudists: wear clothes when attending an IETF meeting, even if remote! Pants not optional.
- Assholes: behave professionally and debate issues, not people. Good behaviour not optional.
- The goals of our norms reflect our mission:
 - take away distractions that remove our focus from the work
 - welcome those with contributions to make

Persuasion

- Consensus: persuasion, fatigue, or fiat.
- “You’re all racists” would be unpersuasive, even if true.
- Build on enlightened self-interest and increasing the value of our work.

Next steps

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- I don't expect this is close to final form yet!
 - Do we believe there is a consensus here that's worth documenting?
 - Is there interest in adopting this draft as a basis for work?
 - Is there anybody who wants to co-author (or even take it from me entirely)?