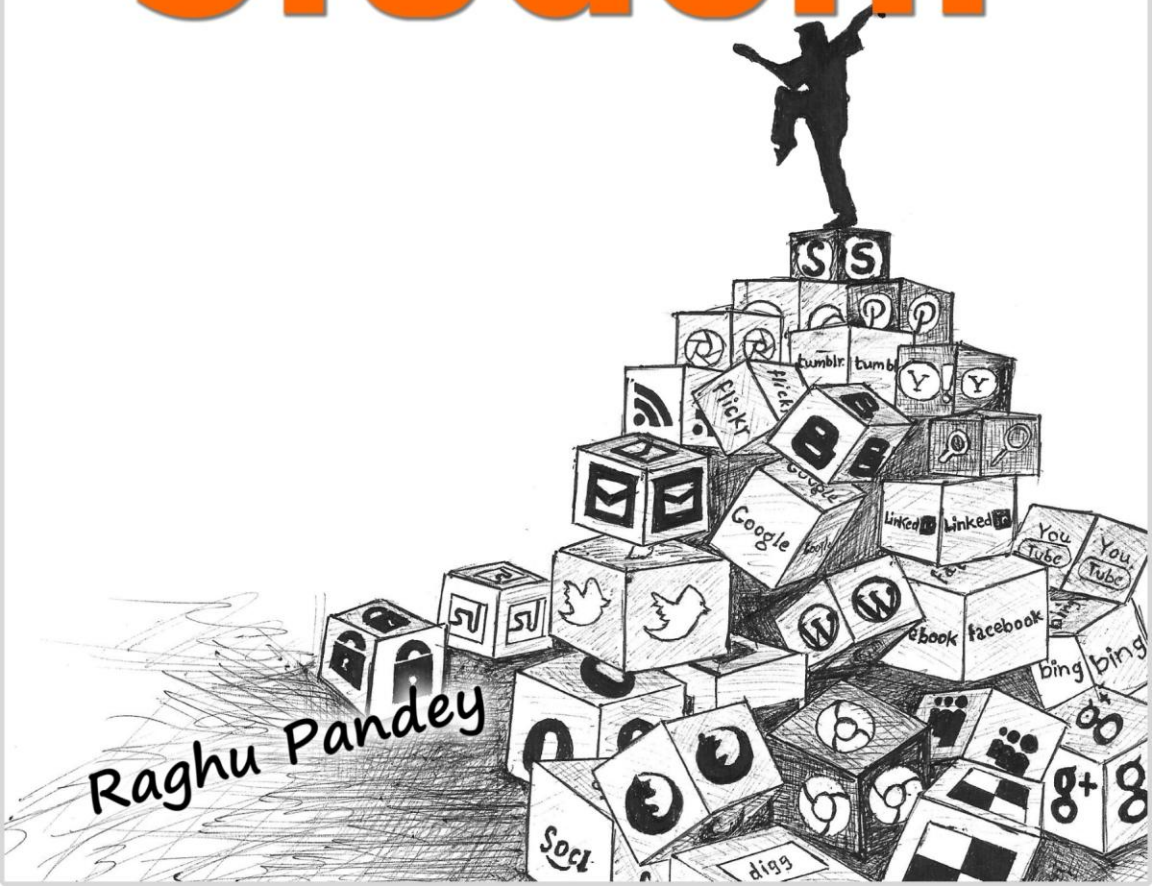
Digital Citizenship & Internet Maturity Guide

Become an iMature Student



Raghu Pandey

Become an iMature Student

- Raghu Pandey

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Disclaimer –
The information presented in this book is relevant and effective only to the best of author's knowledge. Author does not claim that any chapter contains comprehensive, exhaustive or technically correct information about the subject or topic it covers. Reader's discretion (and a lot of common sense) is advised while applying the tips & suggestions included in this book, especially in the matters of Online Safety and Online Reputation. Author also does not claim any responsibility of outcomes of applying those tips & suggestions.

To Sai Baba
My Guru, the ultimate teacher, and possibly the real author of this book

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Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement (noun)

1. Acceptance of the truth or existence of something.
2. Recognition of the importance or quality of something.

I will have to use both the above meanings to make this section complete. I have to accept the truth that I won't be able to put this 2nd edition into my father's hands, yet I see his existence in every pixel of this book. Wish I could send a copy to heaven dad :) (Jeff Bezos just got his new idea!)

Now its time to recognize the importance of people who made this book happen. And as per old tradition, we do it by giving *Likes*!

Firstly, a huge Like for my family. My strong & creative mother, my health-conscious & ever-supportive wife, my cheerful & backpacking sister, and my powerhouse son! They're my charging points.

One Like each for Dr. Amlan Saha, Mr. Ashish Agarwal and Mr. P. S. Kalra, all pioneering Principals who brought Digital Citizenship education formally into their schools along with my book. One Like each for ed-tech entrepreneurs Mr. Aurbind Sharma and Mr. Utkarsh Lokesh for propelling DCIM and this book to new heights. One special Like for Mr. Casper Pieters, a foremost Digital Citizenship expert from Australia for his constant encouragement.

A respectful Like for Mr. B. Maria Kumar, Special Director General, State Cyber Police of MP, for placing trust in my DCIM expertise. A grateful Like for Mr. Yogesh Pandit for his techno-legal review of chapters on online safety and cyber ethics.

A big personal Like for the amazing sketches by Mr. Ritvik Rahul (chapter-end artworks) and Ms. Shuchi Agrawal (chapter graphics).

Finally four thousand Likes for the readers of the 1st edition, many of whom shared their flattering & ego-flattening feedback to make this 2nd edition even more enjoyable (I hope)!

Who Should Read? Why? And Why Not?

Who should read this book?

- ✓ School Students.
- ✓ College students.
- ✓ Teachers & Parents.

Why should you read this book?

It gives you the 'License' to use Internet.
If a teenager knows how to drive a bike or car, it does not mean he or she is mature enough to drive on the main roads. Similarly, if a person knows how to operate a computer or smartphone, doesn't mean he or she is mature enough to use Internet actively. Becoming iMature makes you **street-smart** and **world-wise** by **21st century** standards.

It is your guide to take the maximum benefit of Internet in education.
Internet is the biggest source of knowledge and learning-tools. But majority of people are unaware about their existence. This book will not only make you aware about those resources, it will also tell you the best way to utilize them.

It helps to make your education "complete" by 21st century standards.
'Digital Citizenship' has emerged as a critical part of education in 21st century. It includes skills for participating in the virtual world by creating and sharing digital content for various purposes. It also includes skills for finding out relevant & trustworthy knowledge resources from the ocean of information called the Internet.

This book ensures that you develop the required Digital Citizenship skills in an enjoyable manner.

It is an eye-opener on online safety-risks, legal problems, reputation issues, and addiction problems.
This is another aspect of Internet, about which people are ignorant. This book will tell you about such risks and how you can avoid them.

It helps to create a strong foundation for your 21st century career.
Internet is a critical part of professional life in the 21st century. All the points mentioned above are important for becoming a mature professional. You know... **'Survival of the FITTEST'.**

Finally, you must read it because... **it is fun to read!**

Do NOT read this book if you want lessons on...

- How to operate a desktop, laptop, smart-phone, or a tablet.
- How to operate web-browsers or technical features of various websites.
- How networking technology or Internet works.
- How to create websites or web applications using HTML, Javascript, .NET, PHP etc.
- How to create mobile applications (Android, iOS etc).

The purpose of this book is to make you a mature user of Internet (a mature digital citizen), not an Internet technology expert.

What's so cool about this book?

A story and a sandwich!

When it comes to learning concepts, our brain loves stories and hates 'plain lessons'. The text books I read as a student were like vitamin-pills... containing plain boring lessons. It's not a secret that students find it difficult to absorb and retain those lessons.

So the first cool thing about this book is that it teaches digital citizenship & Internet maturity through a story and dialogue. Actually, it's quite an old idea to teach concepts through stories. Jaataka Tales & Panchatantra are well known examples in India. The most prominent example is Bhagwad Geeta. The wisdom of Geeta is also available in many other scriptures. But the Geeta is still its most popular source... Why? (Hint: story & dialogue!)

Not coincidently, the main characters of this book are Krish and Arjun. However, unlike the Geeta, their discussions are often light-hearted :)

The second cool thing about this book is that it uses a positive approach to teach DCIM. It 'sandwiches' the negative messages of Digital Citizenship & Internet Maturity between the positive ones. Almost all other books or courses on in the world use a threatening approach to teach DCIM – *"Don't do this on Internet, else you'll become a victim of that"*. But this book tells you what great things you should do on Internet to create an amazing life for yourself.

So, enjoy becoming Internet mature!

About Raghu

Raghu Pandey is an entrepreneur in the education technology (EdTech) domain. He founded iBranch.in in 2007 to provide *Knowledge Sharing Portals* to schools and colleges in an affordable and hassle-free manner.

After completing his B.E. in Computer Science in 2002, Raghu spent a year at the University of Massachusetts (Dartmouth, USA) to pursue M.S. in Computer Science. Then the entrepreneurship bug forced him to dropout and return to India in 2003. His next two years were spent at IIIT (Pune, India) for pursuing M.S. Program in Networking & Telecom.

It's been a decade since Raghu is training students and teachers to make the best use of Internet in education. In these years he observed that students learn the **A-B-C** of Internet very fast, but do not go beyond it's **E-F-G** (Entertainment, Fun, & Gossip). They remain ignorant of the real benefits of Internet, its threats & dangers and concepts like online reputation. All that motivated Raghu to write the 1st edition of this book in 2013.

Since then he has been speaking at various conferences and seminars on Digital Citizenship. At the time of writing this 2nd edition, Raghu was training for a half-marathon, working on his piano skills, creating videos for his Youtube channel 'School2', and managing his overgrown beard. So if you find any mistakes while reading, you know the reason!

He'd be happy to answer your questions sent to *raghu@imature.in*, or on forums of *www.imature.in*.

PART I

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP & INTERNET MATURITY

1

Introduction

Arjun Wants to Become an iMature Student

Arjun was a student of class 12th in Drona Academy, a great school situated near Delhi, run by a famous scholar *Sir Drona Aachaarya*. *Arjun* sincerely studied all the subjects. He was very confident that no other student was as brilliant as him. After the final exams, he went to meet *Sir Drona* to thank him. He had scored 100% in all the subjects!

.....

Arjun: Hello Sir! With your blessings I have scored 100% in all subjects. With some good luck I shall get admission into a good college. I really owe it to you sir.

Drona: Dear *Arjun*, it is all because of your hard work and focus. We will award you the title of '*Second Best Student*' of Drona Academy! Congratulations son!

Arjun: Excuse me sir… '*Second Best Student*'?! No other student has scored higher than me in any subject! Then why will I not get the '*Best Student*' award?

Drona: The '*Best Student*' award shall be given to Ekalavya.

Arjun: Ekalavya? Who is he? There is no student by this name in any section of class 12th!

Drona: Actually he was enrolled in our distance learning program. He too scored 100% in all subjects. But there is one extra thing that Ekalavya did, due to which we are giving him this award. He became an **'iMature student'**! I must say that boy is really good at self-learning.

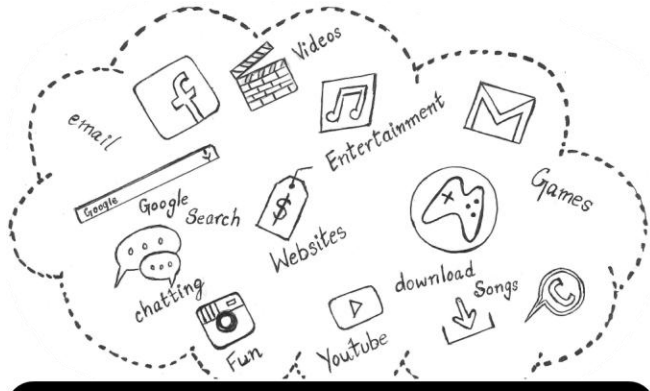
Arjun: **'iMature student'**... What's that sir?

Drona: Read this document...

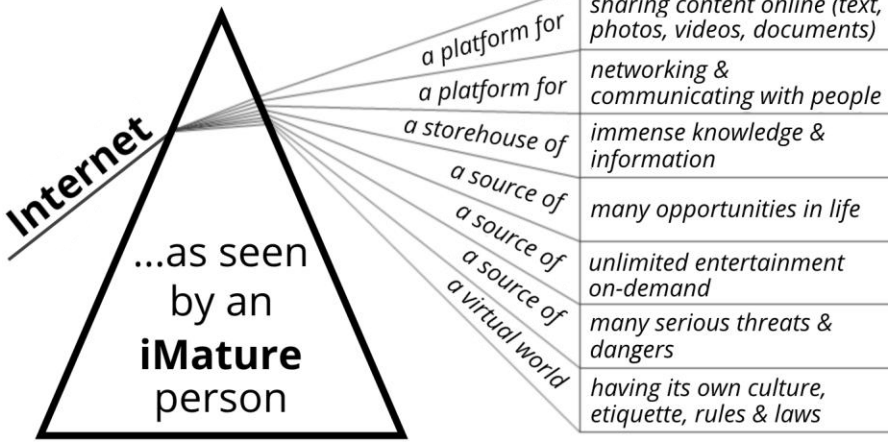
Handout no. 1.1

What is iMature?

iMature means **'Internet Mature'** – a person who is a mature user of Internet or a **mature 'digital citizen'**. An iMature person knows how to make the best use of Internet in personal & professional life. He or she also knows how to avoid all the threats & dangers of Internet. In the 21st century, Internet has become a very important part of EVERYTHING that we do in life. Therefore in today's world we can say that **iMature is the opposite of immature**.



Internet... as seen by an **immature** person



A person who is immature in using Internet, wastes a lot of time, loses good opportunities, and misses the real benefits of Internet... just like an ignorant tourist who goes to Agra but does not see Taj Mahal!

Why do students need to become iMature?

If you do not become iMature, your education would be 'incomplete' by 21st century standards. You will also suffer from many online problems.

If you become iMature you can take the maximum advantage of Internet in your education in school and college.

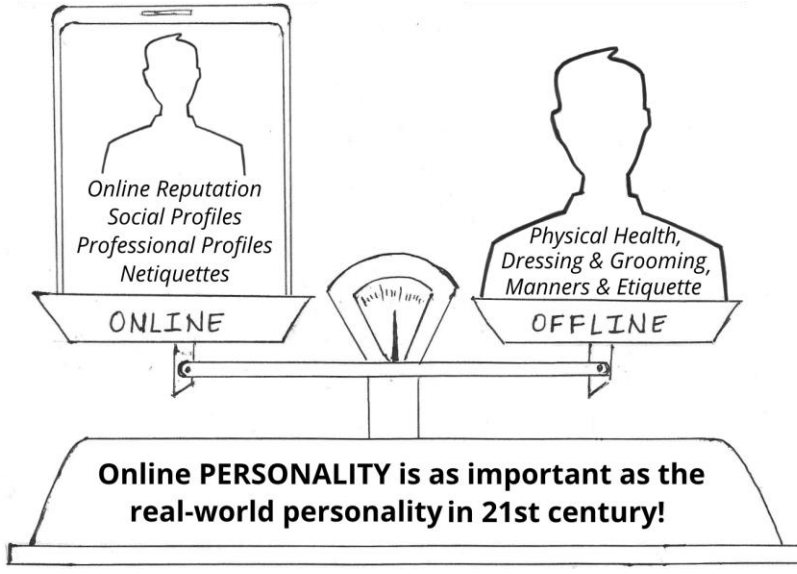
If you become iMature, you can attract great career opportunities through Internet.

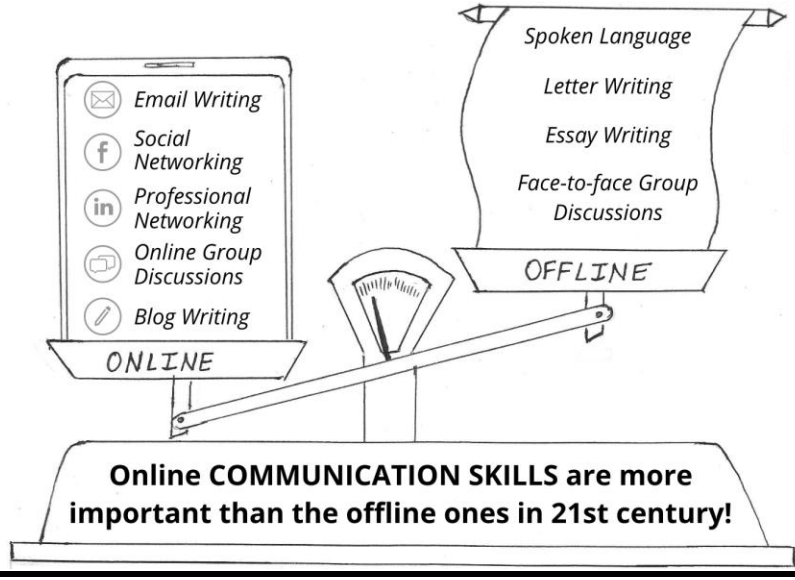
If you become iMature, you can protect yourself from the threats & dangers of the Internet.

Why will your education be incomplete, if you don't become iMature?

It is well known that along with academic knowledge of science,

arts, commerce etc, students must develop Good Communication Skills, Self-Expression Skills and a Good Personality. These things are VERY important for becoming successful in professional and personal life (unless your goal is to live in a Himalayan cave).





How can Internet help in your education?
Think of Internet as a Super Teacher!

It never sleeps and never goes on vacations – Always ready to answer your queries 24x7.

It is an ocean of information – Articles, videos, documents, etc. on almost every subject and topic in the world.

It gives individual attention to each student and yet it can teach millions of students at the same time.

It is very helpful to the students who are shy and hesitate to ask questions in the classroom.

So, even at 12 o' clock in the night if you want to learn how '*photosynthesis*' works, Internet can teach you. If you cannot find information on *'International Space Station'* in text books, you can find it on Internet. And whether you take 5 minutes to understand a topic or 5 hours, Internet will never ask you to hurry up. You may ask as many questions on a topic as you like, and Internet can patiently answer them all.

Why you must become iMature to take the maximum advantage of Internet in your education?
Although Internet can teach everything to everyone, it has some weaknesses...

- ✗ It cannot advise what information is relevant or irrelevant for you.

- ✗ It does not know whether the knowledge contained in an article or video is correct or not.
- ✗ It cannot stop you when you get distracted towards harmful information or activities.

Let's say you want to know *"how Newton discovered gravity"*. When you search for this information on Internet, you may also find detailed information on *"apples"*. You may also find an article which says *"Newton was hiding in an apple tree. When he fell on the ground, he discovered gravity"*. You may also find a video which shows *"how to make a bomb which looks like an apple"*. In this example it is easy to know which information is unnecessary, false, or harmful. But in many other cases it is difficult for an average person to decide how TRUSTWORTHY an article, video, or website is.

An iMature student knows how to filter out the bad information and take the useful one. In other words he or she knows how to get the best out of the super-teacher called Internet.

Why you must become iMature to protect yourself from the threats & dangers of Internet?

There are many students who are completely ignorant about the harmful effects of Internet on their lives. Some, who are aware about the online dangers, think that all the problems can be avoided by using an antivirus and firewall. But in addition to external threats like viruses and hackers, lot of other problems are caused by CARELESS USE of Internet. For example *Identity theft*, *Bad Online Reputation*, *Plagiarism*, *Internet Addiction problems*, *Information Overload* etc. Plus, there are bad people like *Cyber Bullies* and *Online Predators* trying to harm you online. Therefore students must become iMature to understand and avoid all these problems of 21st century life.

How can a student become iMature?

To become iMature, a student **MUST…**

- ✓ Be able to browse Internet on all types of devices.
- ✓ Understand what is 'Web 2.0'.
- ✓ Be able to create digital content and share it online.
- ✓ Be mature in Social Networking.
- ✓ Know basics of Professional Networking.
- ✓ Know how to discuss on Online Forums.
- ✓ Know smart Blogging techniques for self-expression.
- ✓ Know how to find useful knowledge on Internet.
- ✓ Know about 'Online Courses' for self learning.
- ✓ Follow online safety rules.
- ✓ Be a law abiding Digital Citizen.
- ✓ Know how to manage his or her Online Reputation.
- ✓ Become a MASTER of Internet tools… not a SLAVE!

Handout no. 1.1

Arjun (after reading the document): Sir, why didn't you give this to me before? I could have practiced these skills too!

Drona: It was there on our school website, *Arjun*! If Ekalavya could find it why couldn't you?

Arjun: Sir, I am really desperate to get the *'Best Student'* award. It has been my dream since the day I was born! Please do something.

Drona: Alright, Alright. See, the award will be given after one month. So, if you can master the skills required to become an iMature student before that, I shall recommend your name for the award. There is a friend of mine who can guide you really well. His name is Mr. Krishna Kumar.

(Arjun goes to meet Mr. Krishna Kumar)

Arjun: Good morning Mr. Kumar.

Mr. Kumar: Hi *Arjun*. You can call me Krish. Tell me how can I help you?

Arjun: I wish to become an iMature student to get the *'Best Student'* award. But the problem is that I must learn all those skills in one month. For that I need your help.

Krish: Okay! So award is the motivation for learning! No problem, I'll guide you to learn all the skills required to become an iMature student. But remember, if you try to learn these skills only to get the *'Best Student'* award, you won't be able to master them. You must understand that in 21st century, these skills are required for a good quality education... and also for a successful career. After going through this exercise you will realize that Internet is much more than a fun-place to share jokes & photos with friends. It is already an important part of our lives and its importance is growing day-by-day. So dear *Arjun*, you must become a mature digital citizen **to lead a successful life in the 21st century!**

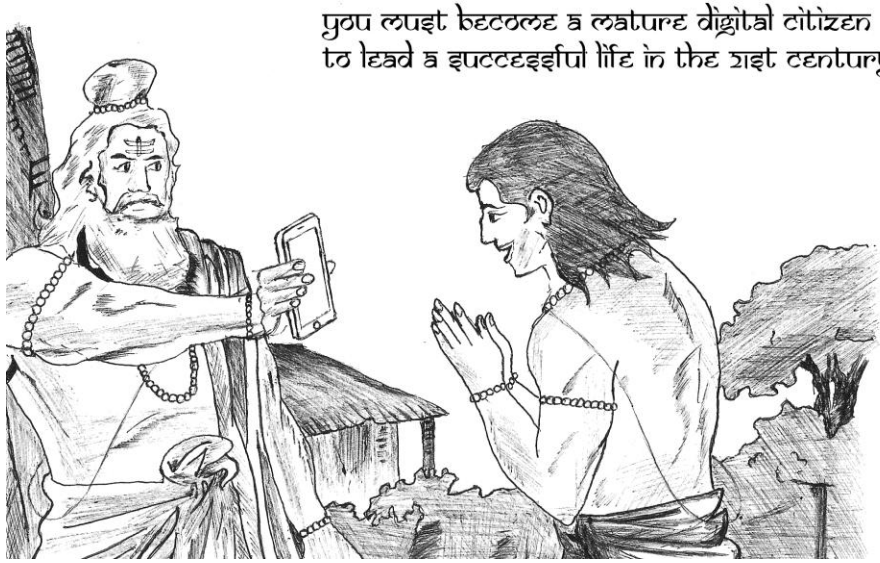
We shall start your training from tomorrow. Good Luck!

Do this ↘

- Ask the following question to your parents, teachers and friends.
  "What do you understand by 'Internet Maturity'? Do you think it is important?"

Think about it ↘

- Are you comfortable with browsing Internet on different devices, such as desktop, laptop, mobile phone, or tablet PC?
- What's good and bad about accessing Internet on these different devices?



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