



Applying the Communication Mindfulness Approach

Course | Introductory | Module | 5

A 10-STEP CHECKLIST FOR ONLINE SAFETY:

- ☐ **1: Check Hyperlinks:**
 - ☐ **Secure Hyperlinks** (i.e. those starting with HTTPS)
 - ☐ **Spoofed Hyperlinks** (e.g. missing letters, additional punctuation, etc.)
 - ☐ **Inconsistencies** (i.e. when the actual hyperlink does not match the hyperlink text)
- ☐ **2: Protect Personal Information:**
 - ☐ **Keep personal information private.**
 - ☐ **Ask the following questions before sharing any sensitive information:**
 - ☐ Is it really necessary for the recipient to know about this information?
 - ☐ Could the information be used to gain access to accounts, or to target colleagues, friends or family?
- ☐ **3: Check Network Connections:**
 - ☐ **Make sure to use private hotspots, instead of public Wi-Fi.**
 - ☐ **If using public Wi-Fi is necessary, use a trusted VPN provider.**
- ☐ **4: Install Software Protection Services:**
 - ☐ **Consider using a software protection service to help protect personal and device data.**

FOR POTENTIAL ONLINE SCAMS:

- ☐ **5: Analyse Graphology:**
 - ☐ **Branding** (e.g. logos, colour schemes, font styles, etc.)
 - ☐ **Colours**
 - ☐ **Font & Text Styles** (e.g. underline, bold, italics, capitalisation, etc.)
 - ☐ **Other Visual Elements** (e.g. banners, buttons, images, hyperlinks, etc.)
- ☐ **6: Analyse Lexis:**
 - ☐ **Misspellings**
 - ☐ **Unusual Spellings**
 - ☐ **Word Choices**
- ☐ **7: Analyse Syntax:**
 - ☐ **Punctuation** (e.g. !, ?, ., etc.)
 - ☐ **Sentence Types** (e.g. commands, exclamations, questions, statements, etc.)
- ☐ **8: Analyse Semantics**
 - ☐ **Word Choice**
 - ☐ **Tone** (e.g. informal, formal, humorous, etc.)
- ☐ **9: Look out for Appeals To:**
 - ☐ **Trust** (e.g. spoofed brands)
 - ☐ **Authority** (e.g. unusual correspondence from banks, government offices, etc.)
 - ☐ **Risk vs Reward** (e.g. financial opportunities, unrealistic rewards, etc.)
 - ☐ **Social Norms** (e.g. staying up-to-date with trends, well-known brands, etc.)
 - ☐ **Emotions** (e.g. distressing images, sympathetic backstories, etc.)
- ☐ **10: Reflect & Identify**
 - ☐ **What actions am I being pressured or persuaded to take** (e.g. clicking on a hyperlink, downloading an attachment, installing software, etc.)?
 - ☐ **Is it necessary for me to carry out these actions, or should I take a few moments to reflect and ask someone I trust for advice on what to do next?**