Conversation Options in SharePoint 2013

Capability	Instant Message (not technically SharePoint)	Email	Team Discussion (with Community "features")	Site Newsfeed	Public Discussion (Community Site)	Public Newsfeed
Best For	Urgent chat with one person or small group	Private conversation	Topic-focused Q&A and conversation with a team on a private team site where content preservation is important	Short, time-sensitive conversations within a team	Topic-focused Q&A where content preservation is important	Short, time-sensitive conversations – hallway chatter
Maximum Length	Short	None, but long messages may be more easily consumed as documents	To facilitate reading, these messages should be relatively short – with links to documents if more content is needed	512 characters per post. Maximum of 100 replies/post.	To facilitate reading, these messages should be relatively short – with links to documents if more content is needed	512 characters per post. Maximum of 100 replies/post.
Acknowledge Agreement with "Likes"	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Privately Target a Specific Person	Yes, can send privately	Yes, can send privately	No, you can @mention a person but everyone can see the post	No, you can @mention a person but everyone on the team can see the post	No, you can @mention a person but everyone can see the post	No, you can @mention a person but everyone can see the post
Ability to Encourage/ Reward Participation	No	No	Yes, with Community features	No	Yes, with Community features	No
Ease of Content "Findability"	Difficult	Difficult, unless you have saved the email messages personally	Easy, because content is categorized	Possible, but only via search because the conversation space is not optimized for re-use	Easy, because content is categorized	Possible, but only via search because the conversation space is not optimized for re-use
Visibility of Historical Content	Depends on organizational policy	Only for people in the distribution list	Anyone added to the site as a Visitor. Content is permanent, list contains a history of any posts and replies before a user has even joined.	Only for team members and only as long as newsfeed content is preserved based on organizational policy	Anyone added to the site as a Visitor. Content is permanent, list contains a history of any posts and replies before a user has even joined.	All users, but only as long as newsfeed content is preserved based on organizational policy
Moderation	No	No	Yes, built in capabilities-but someone has to be assigned the Moderator role	No	Yes, built in capabilities-but someone has to be assigned the Moderator role	No

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