Paranoia and criticism, how it was meant and how it is taken

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It's interesting to see how many people automatically associate criticism with "Anti-X distro".

I have seen 'rational' Linux users who can say they like a distro, find pro's and con's about it, even if it's one of their favorites and move on along to the next topic.

Then I see the users who feel they must emotionally attach themselves to one distro and do everything they can to promote, 'sell' and otherwise defend in the face of "criticism" every chance they have.

Let's talk criticism and what's "fair" and "unfair".

To say " X distro SUCKS!" is what most people would call "unfair" criticism. it doesn't provide reason or rationale and is designed primarily to evoke strong emotional responses. Typically used by 'trolls'.

"X distro is OK, but it could be better." This falls into the "fair" criticism", while only a short, one liner without supporting detail, it isn't being necessarily contrary or argumentative, simply establishing a mainly 'neutral' position.

"X distro is the best of all, way better than the other ones out there." While complimentary, this is an "unfair" comment because in so proclaiming it to be better than everything else, it insinuates, without rationale, that nothing else is 'good enough'. It also uses a word like "best" which is a relative term and cannot apply to every user or every situation that Linux will find itself being used in.

It has been found that by using clear and logical communication, by using personal referencing in relation to emotional and relative terms, most arguing and 'in-fighting' can be prevented or avoided altogether.

Using terms like "I think, X distro is best" " In my opinion, X distro performs well (or doesn't perform well) because of.."

By avoiding emotional terminology and specifying personally held points of opinion, most discussion can remain calm, constructive and logical.

Realizing that not everyone is going to be using a given distro on the same equipment and the same settings and environments we are using them, we should always keep in mind that what we think is "best" really only applies to a personal and vague line of usage.

You also will not likely be as defensive about others not sharing the same opinion by acknowledging the myriad environments and situations in which this software can be used.

Above all, keep in mind that while there are many distros, they are all under the one umbrella, part of the same core that is Linux. That puts us all on the same team.

[Linux](http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/123)

Links:
[1] http://www.tuxmachines.org/taxonomy/term/123