

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Purpose

This policy applies to web applications that facilitate information sharing and collaboration including web-based communities, social-networking sites, video-sharing sites, blogs and other internet/web based forums. Together, these technologies are known as “social media.” As the integration and use of social media continues to increase in popularity, a number of new issues and questions are raised about proper use. These Guidelines and Standards were created to assist [Company] personnel with effectively and responsibly navigating issues unique to social media and employment.

2. Scope

These Guidelines and Standards apply to all [Company] personnel who participate in social media or other Internet activity. The Guidelines and Standards apply without regard to whether the conduct occurs during working or non-working time. Similarly, the Guidelines apply regardless of whether [Company] equipment is used. These Guidelines are not intended to regulate [Company]-sponsored participation in social media. For example, [Company]-sponsored blogs or Intra-Nets are subject to separate standards of conduct.

3. Questions and Concerns

If, at any time, you are uncertain about how to apply these Guidelines and Standards or have any question about your participation in social media, you should seek the guidance of [Human Resources, Executive Management, or other individuals with authority over Social Media Policy]. Social media is in a state of constant change and [Company] recognizes that there will likely be events or issues that are not addressed in these Guidelines and Standards. Therefore, the responsibility falls to each individual to use good judgment and, when in doubt, to ask for clarification or authorization before engaging in any questionable conduct within a social media forum.

4. Duty to Report

Just as you have a duty to report harassment or other inappropriate workplace conduct, you also have a duty to report any conduct that violates the rules set forth in these Guidelines and Standards. In the event that you observe such conduct by any [Company] personnel, you are

obligated to comply with the reporting requirements set forth in [Company]’s [anti-harassment policy].

5. The Public Nature of Social Media

Information becomes public the moment it is published on the Internet. [Company] personnel should be aware of the public nature of the Internet when engaging in conduct within the Social Media forum. Further, personnel should expect that other members of [Company], including members of senior management, will see anything that is posted within that forum.

6. Other [Company] Policies

These Guidelines are intended to supplement—and do not replace—[Company]’s other personnel policies. Policies on confidentiality, controversial issues, personal use of [Company] equipment, professionalism, references for former employees, publication of articles, unlawful harassment, and other rules of conduct are not affected by these Guidelines. If not specifically addressed in these Guidelines and Standards, an issue often can be clarified by reference to other [Company] policies. Similarly, conduct that violates these Guidelines will be subject to the same action as set forth in [Company]’s [discipline policy], up to and including termination.

7. Standards

A. Transparency

If, at any time, you communicate about [Company], you must disclose your affiliation with [Company]. And, if you associate yourself with [Company] in any way, you must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of [Company]. In those circumstances, [Company] personnel may want to include this disclaimer: “The views and opinions expressed on this [blog; website; social media page] are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer.”

B. Confidentiality

[Company] personnel are not to discuss or otherwise reveal confidential matters. Do not upload, post, or share:

- 1) Photographs of [Company] personnel taken at any [Company]-sponsored event;
- 2) Photographs taken inside a [Company] office; or
- 3) Work-related documents or e-mail exchanges.

[Company] personnel are to preserve the confidentiality of customer and client information, including the identity of current, former, and prospective clients and such information is not to be disclosed in any manner in a social media forum.

C. Quality Matters

[Company] personnel are to use good judgment and strive for accuracy in communications within social media forums. Errors and omissions reflect poorly on [Company] and may result in liability for you or [Company]. Refrain from any online activity that is inconsistent with, or that reasonably could be expected to negatively impact, [Company]'s reputation or standing in the community, within the [industry-type] industry, or with customers and clients or potential customers and clients.

Be respectful and professional to everyone, including fellow personnel, competitors, customers and clients. Do not use profanity. Do not use language that violates [Company]'s harassment policy.

D. Expertise and Advice

[Company] personnel are not to purport to give advice on matters within the [industry type] industry. Speak only about issues about which you have knowledge. Do not purport to be an expert—even if you believe yourself to be.

E. Copyright

Do not use or incorporate [company / organization / firm] name, logo, imagery or derivatives thereof in your on-line address, screen name, user name, home page, screen imagery, or otherwise without prior written approval of the [appropriate Company representative or authority].

F. “Friending”

[Company] personnel are to exercise discretion in inviting current and potential colleagues, customers and clients, and in responding to invitations from current and potential colleagues, customers and clients to join social networks or become “friends,” and in making recommendations or referrals.

As between supervisors and subordinates, taking or reversing such steps may be awkward and could even feel coercive. As among peers, while feelings of inclusion can have positive effects on working relationships, the corollary feelings of exclusion can be painful and counterproductive.

SAMPLE