Facilities Management Department
Policy Statement #10

Professional Communication

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is to encourage professional communication and create an organizational culture of trust and respect. The policy includes standards for communication and focuses on respect in all areas and levels of employment. Etiquette, follow-up, enforcement, and accountability are integral parts of the policy.

2. Principles

Effective communication is dependent on honesty, respect, integrity, and loyalty. These are essential to the success of our Facilities Management (FM) organization. By maintaining high standards for communication, the FM staff will gain respect throughout the campus community and will foster an atmosphere of fair treatment internally. Quality communication reduces conflict. This will lead to increased employee morale.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of employees at all levels to conduct themselves professionally while communicating. It is the responsibility of the management of FM to ensure our verbal and written values are enforced.

4. Guidelines

A. General: All communication shall adhere to FM Organizational Values of Respect, Honesty, Accountability, and Excellence.

B. Verbal Communication: All FM employees shall use appropriate volume, tone, and emotional control during verbal communication. Professional language shall be used at all times. FM employees shall refrain from using profane language, offensive gestures, racial slurs, sexist comments, harassing comments or threatening actions. These are inappropriate in the workplace, detrimental to good order and will not be tolerated.

C. Written Communication in General

 i. Written documentation shall be provided when changes to processes or procedures have been made to ensure understanding by all parties.

 ii. Written communication should always be reviewed for proper spelling, grammar, and syntax. This is a basic requirement for all written communication including email. Failure to produce quality written correspondence reflects poorly on both the author and the organization. Always use a "second set of eyes" to review written correspondence particularly for presentations and documents of importance.

D. Electronic Mail Communication

   i. Email is an important form of communication. It is valuable for quick dissemination of information to a large audience, documentation of actions and policies, and one-on-one correspondence. Care must be taken in the tone of the email. Employees should not write something in an email that you would not say in person. Pause and reread the email before sending to ensure it is not offensive or confrontational.

   ii. Email is not a good medium for conflict resolution and should not be used as such. If agreement cannot be reached after the second round of email exchange, then the issue must be resolved by other means, such as a phone call or meeting.

   iii. Care shall be taken in deciding whom to send a courtesy copy (cc) of an email.

      1. Think through who needs to have the information and make sure they are copied on the email.
      2. Always cc your supervisor when emailing personnel who may be higher than you in the chain of command.
      3. However, avoid overuse of the "cc" line.
      4. There are almost no circumstances where "bcc" should be used when sending an email.

   iv. All email shall be sent using the standard white background; wallpaper backgrounds can be distracting and serve no business use.

   v. Large and elaborate signatures, lengthy quotes, and lengthy confidentiality statements shall not be used in emails. In accordance with University Policy: 304 Electronic Communication Systems, the email signature should follow the electronic mail signature standards established by University Communications.

   vi. The "Facilities-All-Group" departmental distribution list is for business purposes only. Director approval is required prior to sending an email via this list.

   vii. Include a succinct subject line that conveys the purpose of the email.