



Communication Standards Policy

Communication Standards

Introduction

The aim of the communication standards is to project a more united, corporate and professional image of the company to those with whom we come into contact. The information is not exhaustive, but it is meant to be a guideline for good practice within the company.

Scope

The standards are applicable to all staff.

External Communications

- We will greet our clients in a courteous and professional manner.
- We will listen effectively to our clients' requests and promptly take the necessary actions to assist them, as appropriate. We will keep our clients informed of unexpected changes or delays in service or response.
- We will inform our clients of normal process time, when they can expect a response and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will touch base with our clients to update them as to where we are in the process, as appropriate.
- We will respond to website questions/requests within 24 hours during normal business hours.
- We will respond to applicants (employee/volunteer) within 24 hours of normal process time to let them know when they can expect completion and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will finish our encounters with our clients in a courteous and professional way.

Documents & Publications

- All staff within the company will support the corporate identity through the consistent use of our official logo, colours and font in all publications and documents.
- All letters should be written on the company's official headed paper.
- The logo should be printed in colour whenever possible.
- A consistent use of font (Calibri 12) should be used. All information should usually be written in black.

Internal Communications

- We will interact with each other in a courteous and professional manner.
- We will inform our colleagues of normal process time, when they can expect a response and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will work to resolve issues with co-workers and other departments by discussing problems directly and working toward agreed upon solutions.

- We will be considerate, cooperative and helpful to every staff member.
- We will hold ourselves, and each other, accountable for addressing inappropriate comments and behaviour.

Telephone Etiquette

- When at our desks, attempts should be made to answer the phone within five rings.
- In circumstances where the telephone is left unmanned, arrangements should be made to transfer calls to another member of staff or set up voicemail, as appropriate.
- When we are out of office, we will ensure that we leave an appropriate voicemail message.
- **We will identify ourselves when we answer.**
- We will listen to the caller's request and assist the caller accordingly.
- If we cannot assist the caller, we will direct the call to the appropriate person. Before transferring the call, we will obtain the caller's permission and provide the caller with the name and extension number (if applicable) of the person who will be helping the caller.
- We will obtain the caller's permission before placing the call "on hold" by asking and waiting for a response before initiating the hold function.
- If we need to take a message, we should include:
 - date of call
 - time of call
 - callers name
 - company/department
 - what the call is about
 - telephone number of caller
 - state action to be taken, eg you will ring back at...
- We will end the conversation in a courteous and professional way by thanking the caller. We will wait for the caller to hang up first.

Voice Mail

- We will respond to voice mails within 24 hours during normal business hours.
- We will update our voice mail greeting (where relevant), advising callers when we will be out of the office for an extended period of time (1/2 day or longer), informing callers of when we will return and who they may contact with questions (if applicable).

Email/Teams Posts

The use of email/Teams Posts for work purposes is a form of business communication in the same way as letters and memos. Staff should guard against sending correspondence of a 'dubious' nature, e.g. words, jokes or pictures that may cause offence – always consider the feelings of the recipient.

- We will respond to e-mails within 24 hours during normal business hours.
- Reply, delete or file for action.
- We will update our e-mail notification message when we will be out of the office for an extended period of time (full day or more). We will indicate our expected return date and indicate a contact person (if applicable).
- We won't share our password with anyone or leave a note of it on our desk.
- We will ensure that our email signature is in line with the Company's communication policy.

Freedom of Information gives everyone the right to ask for any information the company holds (with the exception of personal or service user information). This includes emails.

General

- We will make our goal to exceed the expectations of all of our client groups.
- We will work to anticipate the needs of those we serve by proactively working to meet their needs.
- We will hold ourselves, and each other, accountable for our service commitment.
- We will be conscious of our communication style (ie; audible voice, eye contact when speaking to someone, tone of voice) and communicate in a professional manner.
- We will make a conscious effort to compliment co-workers when their actions comply with these standards.

ASSOCIATED POLICY OR STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES:

Social Media Policy

Communication Policy

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Authorised and Reviewed by:

Nicola Hemsley

Operations Director