



NEBRASKA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

Safe and Professional Protocol For Community Engagement

Be professional – No matter how small the non-profit is that you are working with, they are still a business, treat them as such. Conduct your business within standard working hours. You are offering your time and skills to the agency; always present your contribution in a professional manner and recognize the time and talents of those you are working with.

Dress appropriately -Not all situations require business or casual dress however be cognizant of the image you are projecting and the environment you are in. If those in the agency you are working with dress business-like, stay away from flip flops and the comfy clothes you wear on Saturday morning. Know what your clothing says – inappropriate sayings/symbols/slogans on t-shirts are just that – inappropriate to wear while conducting business.

Follow safety guidelines – Meet in public places, don't transport clients or agency employees. A casual meeting in a coffee house is great if you don't wish or can't meet at the agency; meeting at a residence or in your dorm is neither wise nor professional and opens you to liabilities. If those you are working with are interested in a campus tour, connect them with Admissions. Once Admissions has arranged for the campus tour you can always ask to tag along.

Keep confidentiality – Agencies may have confidentiality legal requirements; don't share information about the agency or their clients in a way which violates this agreement or embarrasses those involved. If you are unsure of the agency's confidentiality policies and procedures – ask! Never assume when it comes to confidentiality. This is a real work experience and your actions will have consequences, make them positive.

Your personal information is private – Your Wesleyan email is a safe way to communicate and share information. Some students may prefer to text and therefore give out their phone number – realize you are giving personal information that cannot be taken back and therefore opens you to some liability – and that you are totally within your right to decline requests for personal information such as your phone number. Agencies or individuals you are working with never need to know where you live or other details about your private life.

Feeling uncomfortable? Listen to your instincts, be aware of your surroundings, and check-in with a colleague or instructor if you are wondering if or feeling boundaries have been violated. If the situation requires an immediate call on whether it is appropriate – choose safety first. When you are safe you can take the time to assess what steps to take from there.

Community Engagement opportunities are experiential in nature – real life experiences where you have the opportunity and responsibility to conduct yourself in safe and professional manner. Make the experience count in a positive way.

Questions?

Feel free to contact Shari Sorenson, Coordinator of Community Engagement and Resources if you would like to discuss any situations of concern. Email is ssorenso@nebrwesleyan.edu to set up an appointment or call 402-465-2439.