



NEBRASKA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

Safe and Professional Protocols For Community Engagement

Be professional – No matter how small the organization is, 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 organization; 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 organization dress business-like, stay away from flip-flops and the comfy clothes you wear on weekends. 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, and don't transport clients or the organization's employees. A casual meeting in a coffee house is great if you don't wish or can't meet at the organization's office; meeting at a residence or in your dorm is neither wise nor professional and opens you to liability. 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 Admissions to tag along.

Keep confidentiality – Organizations may have confidentiality legal requirements; don't share information about the organizations or their clients in a way that violates this agreement or embarrasses those involved. If you are unsure of the organization's policies and procedures – ask! Never assume when it comes to confidentiality. This is real work experience and your actions 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. You are totally within your rights to decline requests for personal information such as your phone number. Organizations or individuals you are working with never need to know where you live or other details about your private life, unless it is on an application and that should be protected and available only to those with volunteer personnel responsibility.

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, they are real-life experiences where you have the opportunity and responsibility to conduct yourself in a safe and professional manner. Make the experience count in a positive way.

Questions?

Please contact Dr. Sara Jane Miles, Service Learning Coordinator, if you would like to discuss any situations of concern. Email smiles@nebrwesleyan.edu or call 402-465-7550 to set up an appointment.