SAMPLE CORPORATE BLOGGING & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. When blogging, make it clear that the views expressed in the blog or other social media outlet are yours alone, not your employer's. This is often done through inclusion of a disclaimer like, "Opinions expressed here are the sole responsibility of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the view of XYZ Corp."
2. Do not post false or misleading information related to the company. If you post about the company, be truthful and accurate.
3. Do not blog about your co-workers or their personal characteristics in an identifiable way without their explicit permission. Do not write or talk about them in a disparaging or disrespectful way.
4. Do not blog about proprietary or confidential information belonging to your company.
5. Whenever you refer to the company, products, or competitors, use a respectful and appropriate tone.
6. You are responsible for following all other corporate communications policies and any applicable laws, ie Securities regulations related to "insider" information.
7. Make sure that your blogging and other online communications do not interfere with your work responsibilities.
8. These rules apply whether you are blogging using your name, a pseudonym, or anonymously.
9. Do not plagiarize material produced by others. For example, if you are reading this sentence on a corporate web site, it means someone cut and pasted this policy without even bothering to try to make it look like original work.
10. Ask your manager or the company's designated agent (usually someone in the PR or Legal Department) if you have any questions about what is appropriate to include in your blog. If you are asked not to blog about a particular topic, please respect that request.

Key Definitions:
Blog: The term "blog" includes any written or visual communication published online, specifically including posts or comments on web sites, Facebook, MySpace, or Twitter, and pictures or videos posted to social media sharing sites such as Flickr or YouTube.
Disclaimer: If you post a lengthy post or comment related to the company or a product of the company, include your disclaimer within the post or the comment. On FaceBook, Twitter, MySpace, Flickr, or similar locations where the communication itself is more restricted, you may include the disclaimer on your profile. You must place the disclaimer in a location where it is easy for a reasonable person to find.
Social Media: Any form of communication that is available for groups of people to read or view, and to which they can then make comments, edit, or share the original with others. This may include web pages, online profiles, instant message communications, online forums, public bookmarking sites, text or web enabled phone applications, or any other shared or shareable means of communication.

Attribution: This policy was written by Liza Barry-Kessler, Managing Partner of Privacy Counsel LLC. She can be reached at lbk@privacycounsel.net or at 414-712-1048. This example policy is not intended as legal advice and Ms. Barry-Kessler makes no warranty that following this policy will protect your company from legal action. This is a draft policy made freely available to encourage corporate and organizational discussion of the need for a blogging and social media use policy that reflects your organizational needs and culture. Ms. Barry-Kessler is available to work with companies and organizations to develop appropriate custom policies.

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