

The use of social media like Facebook and Twitter is steadily increasing, both at work and in private life, but the dividing line between these two areas of social media use is sometimes very narrow and difficult to distinguish. To help Fresenius employees use good judgement when using these powerful new communications tools, we have drawn up the following guidelines.

Please note that these guidelines on social media use do not replace the existing rules on Internet and social media use at your work location.



ACT RESPONSIBLY

Individual responsibility is a core value at Fresenius, and this certainly applies to using the Internet. As an employee, you are fundamentally responsible for anything you say in social media, whether at work (unless acting at the instruction of a superior) or in your free time. So be sure to carefully consider your comments before sending them – because the Internet never forgets!



ALWAYS BE HONEST AND OPEN

Your job is part of your life. When you speak out on an issue connected to your work or Fresenius, you should identify yourself as a Fresenius employee and use your correct name. If you have published an error, admit it openly and correct it as quickly as possible.



PROTECT CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Social media may encourage informality and open communication, but when it comes to confidential business information and personal data, remember: confidentiality must always be fully protected, and this also applies for social media.

KEEP FACTS AND OPINIONS SEPARATE

All of us have opinions, but when expressing your own views in social media, make it absolutely clear that they are your personal opinions. You can declare this in an appropriate place – for example, in the imprint or masthead of a blog – or by writing in the first-person form of speech (the “I” form, as in “I think” or “I believe”). Always remember that only Corporate Communications employees or other authorized persons are allowed to make official statements in the company’s name.



RESPECT ALL LAWS

All relevant laws - especially those concerning intellectual property, trademarks and copyrights - also apply on the Internet. It is illegal to use the Internet to threaten or defame anyone, to say anything that damages the reputation of an individual or business, or to make false assertions or accusations that may jeopardize a positive working relationship with colleagues. You should also observe the rules set by the individual social media platform.



BE FAIR TO OTHERS

When using social media, do not abuse the anonymity that is possible on the Internet to treat other people unfairly. Respect other people’s opinions, and do not make negative or damaging comments about competitors or business partners.



If you have any questions about social media usage as an employee, please feel free to ask your superior or contact your communications department.

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