

Code of Conduct

For Office Professionals attending events - member of PAFSA

Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets standards and guidelines for attendance of events such as seminars, conferences, launches and all corporate events.

In essence, it aims to ensure that personnel conduct themselves with decorum and integrity, and dignify their role as ambassadors of their company. It also incorporates guidelines on courtesy and protocol before leaving for an event, and upon return.

1. Towards the employer

Before you leave for the event:

- Motivate your request to attend any function by stipulating the needs, and benefits of attending, both for yourself as a professional and for the organisation as a whole.
- Ensure that you leave relevant people informed on how to contact you during your absence, and left clear briefs on procedures and systems.

At the event:

- Respect the need to safeguard confidentiality of sensitive information regarding products, services and activities, when networking with personnel from other companies.
- Be ethical and respect confidentiality regarding information on superiors and colleagues
- Adhere to the programme and fulfil obligations as per your stated motivation to attend.
- Be appropriately groomed, whether in corporate uniform or own attire, for the activities that the programme has set.
- Exercise the right skills and attributes if, and when, you're on duty.
- Treat resources/equipment of employer with due care, if these are taken to the event.
- Conduct yourself in an orderly and lawful manner as you are an ambassador of your company, and not at the function in your private capacity.
- Do not indulge in, or incite, unruly behaviour that could reflect poorly on the reputation of your employer.

On your return:

- Provide feedback in verbal or written format. Ditto towards your colleagues who did not attend and will benefit for getting notes from you.
- As a token of loyalty to your employer, you may consider reporting any untoward behaviour of colleagues who attended the event, if you believe it was seriously detrimental to the reputation of your company.
- Thank all concerned for the opportunity you were afforded, and thank the team who held the fort during your absence.

2. Towards superiors and colleagues attending the same event

- Do carry out the team's obligations in a professional and obliging manner, as you are in public view.
- Handle any disagreements or conflict that may arise, privately and out of public view.
- Treat superiors and colleagues with respect and loyalty.
- Address diplomatically and sensitively poor behaviour from any team member who appears to disrespect this Code of Conduct. It is important to point out the impact of behaviour on the reputation of your company, or on the morale of colleagues who were left behind in favour of this staff member attending.
- Consciously contribute to good camaraderie by exercising sound interpersonal skills

3. Towards VIPs, clients, stakeholders and suppliers at the event

- Treat all with respect and integrity, and maintain the spirit of goodwill.
- Be ethical, and cordial, in your communication and dealings with them. In case of VIPs ensure you respect, and follow protocol procedures.
- Do not remove any assets or decorative items from the venue, unless otherwise announced by an MC. Although you may mean no harm, the client or supplier will be affected by the loss.

4. Towards peers attending the same event. As a custodian of this profession

- Set an example to others regarding a professional's comportment.
- Be willing to step in when asked for assistance or advice; and when necessary offer assistance (without being obtrusive) to a peer who looks lost but seems shy to ask for help.
- Respect the different levels of proficiency among your peers, and seek to mentor for self-improvement. Avoid being judgemental.
- Respect the social and cultural diversity among all attendants. Practise tolerance of the differences and cultivate a spirit of harmony by encouraging mutual cultural knowledge.
- Exchange views and techniques with others, so that your experience of the event is further enriched by peer-to-peer learning.
- Remember that your peers often ask where you work, before they ask your name. This reveals the importance with which your place of work is viewed; use this opportunity to do goodwill marketing of your employer.
- Realise that any form of overindulgence (drink etc.) will reflect poorly on your professionalism and on your employer.

5. Towards the MC, speakers and presenters

- When asking a question ensure that it is brief and to the point, and that you speak audibly.
- Try not to ask too many questions, thus eroding on the time available to others
- Refrain from talking to people beside you during presentations and speeches.
- Refrain from leaving the room during proceedings, as it is disruptive for the presenter.
- Ensure that your cell telephone is switched off during proceedings.
- Exchange views with speakers/presenters but do not expect them to dedicate their free time to resolve a problem particular to your circumstances. Contact or contract them after the event.

6. Towards the organisers and hosts of the event

- Before you leave for the event, read all correspondence you've been sent, and familiarise yourself with as many aspects as possible. Ensure you communicate, ahead of time, special dietary requirements, and if sharing accommodation, indicate smoking or non-smoking preference.
- If delegate briefs are not provided at registration, or these do not provide the necessary information, it is your prerogative to request that appropriate and timely systems of information be provided.
- If daily updates are handed out, it is your responsibility to make time to read regularly interrupt the working team to get information on matters they have taken the trouble to print out for you.
- Report to the sessions/events with all the necessary name tags/, entry tickets/materials. These are usually handed out to you beforehand.
- Be punctual and co-operative with respect to timetables.
- When making a complaint, report the problem to the organisers, and present all the facts. Remember that organisers are also subject to being let down by suppliers, and will be grateful to any recommendations you may make. Confrontation, rumour-mongering, and making own arrangements will only worsen the original problem for everybody.
- Consider that the organiser's sound planning, coupled to good contingency plans, is still no guarantee to make every participant happy all of the time.
- When important to you, request that feedback on a complaint be communicated to you, as not all problems can be resolved instantly or on site.
- Report cases of conflict or unruly behaviour and contribute to the resolution process if you can; remember that tension is easy to prevail as both the attendees and the organisers are away from their offices and comfort zone.
- Report emergencies/accidents to the nearest identified working team member. Ensure someone stays with the injured person, whilst you seek official help.
- Show appreciation when due, and let them know of interesting experiences and memorable moments. When appropriate, send a thank-you note to the organiser after the event.
- Ultimately, remember that you are a key ingredient in the success or failure of the event. What you put in is directly equal to what you get out.