

Media & Communications Policy

Introduction

Spinnaker Trust recognises the fact that digital communication and social media are a major part of modern life. We recognise the potential organisational benefits of social media because this is the way we communicate, keep in touch and research. However, we are also clear that it is a way that can be used for dishonourable purposes and so we believe that there are few areas of our working and personal lives where the phrase 'wise as serpents, harmless as doves' is more relevant.

This policy will give guidance to team (both salaried and volunteers), office staff and trustees of Spinnaker and it is a non-negotiable requirement that everyone who works or volunteers for Spinnaker in any capacity agrees with this policy in its entirety.

The following guidelines represent Spinnaker's commitment to improving the efficiency of our communications whilst maintaining maximum integrity. We believe in honesty and transparency, and in being a Christian influence in our world, whether we are in someone's presence or in the virtual world/online.

The basis of this policy is simple:

- Be careful and sensitive
- Be mature and correct
- Be Godly and thoughtful
- Never act hastily!

Or, as someone who never anticipated social media, appropriately wrote:

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Phil 4: 8-9

General Principles

1. In all communications, whether on paper, by phone or social media, always be polite and inoffensive, responding appropriately and quickly to direct comments or inquiries.
2. Make sure you are authorised* to speak or write on behalf of Spinnaker Trust. This policy affirms that only designated people directly representing Spinnaker Trust are empowered to speak on our behalf to ensure our message is consistent and we are not duplicating effort or information.

Photographs and Video

See our separate Photography & Filming Policy

Social Media and On-line Publishing

1. If you are not authorised* to publish, write or speak on behalf of Spinnaker Trust, you must seek permission or have your material editorially checked prior to sending it. It is not good enough to 'copy in' a member of the core team when you send it. Always remember, once the 'send' button clicked, you can't get it back!

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2. If you are authorised* to go on-line or write for Spinnaker, at any and all times, please identify yourself: use your name and your affiliation with Spinnaker Trust and include contact information. If you are acting as a representative of “Spinnaker” (not as an individual) please include all appropriate contact information (office phone number, postal address and web address at minimum). Note that engaging with others positively, whether staff, team, teachers, or church supporters is encouraged as an official Spinnaker Trust outreach practice. Please be aware when writing, responding, commenting and or asking a question on Christian mission or education issues, you are generally known as acting on behalf of Spinnaker Trust.
3. Unless you are authorised to speak on behalf of Spinnaker, be careful how you participate in online conversations in areas relating to Spinnaker’s mission and services. Ask one of the core team before you post anything on-line that may be construed as the official view or statement of Spinnaker Trust.
4. Never post confidential information about anyone, regardless of whether they work for Spinnaker or not. Please seek advice from the Core Team if you are not sure what is appropriate. We want to be transparent and not betray our warm relationship with any school, church or individual. Someone once preached, “if you can’t think of anything good to say about a person... say nothing!”
5. Be helpful, be professional, and above all be Christian. Understand that what you do should not reflect poorly on Spinnaker Trust or anything we do.
6. Please do not mention schools or individual teachers in general communications. If you are unsure, then check with one of Spinnaker’s designated staff*.
7. Attribute what you post. Let others know where you get your information, being especially respectful of copyright, trademark and other intellectual property rights.
8. When you are online as part of your work with Spinnaker during work time and participate in social media as part of your job, what you do should be directly related to furthering your work, our mission and goals.
9. Allowable social media participation can include:
 - Monitoring networks to see what others are saying about Spinnaker Trust or issues important to what we do.
 - Following Twitter/Facebook or any other accounts belonging to link organisations or churches.
 - Sharing announcements or invitations about Spinnaker or relaying announcements from related organisations or individuals.
 - Passing on items, such as articles, to interested people.
 - Posting or copying positive news or events information with a direct relation to the community at large where your work for Spinnaker is based.
 - Asking questions of other institutions in any online forum.
 - Commenting in direct response to others’ blog/forum/Facebook/Twitter posts.

Any activity outside of this list is probably not work related!

10. We recommend against anyone routinely representing Spinnaker Trust in on-line activities outside of work hours. We recognise that “work hours” may occasionally include nights, weekends and holidays, in which case, keep track of time spent online on behalf of Spinnaker and try not to let it take over your leisure time.
11. Spinnaker Trust understands and respects that most of us participate in a variety of online activities as individuals. Mostly this is justifiable, however, sometimes individual actions online are purely for the

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sake of connecting with family and friends or for entertainment, when the line between these types of interaction can blur. Be careful!

12. While acting as a Spinnaker Trust employee or volunteer, or at any time when you can be identified as a part of Spinnaker Trust, you should disclose your connection to Spinnaker Trust. If in your Facebook profile your employer is listed as Spinnaker Trust, realise that what you post there may reflect on Spinnaker Trust as an organization. The same goes with your LinkedIn profile or anywhere that your Spinnaker Trust affiliation is indicated.
13. Remember we live and work in relatively small (online and offline) communities. Even if you are not directly identified as a member of Spinnaker Trust, people may know you work or volunteer for us and consequently anything you say or do online can reflect on Spinnaker Trust. Please be considerate of this fact and be responsible for all of your online activity.
14. If you decide to remain anonymous or write with a pseudonym, make sure that your online activity cannot be connected with your real identity or your affiliation to Spinnaker. Theoretically, in that scenario you can say and do what you will. But know that Spinnaker Trust would be grateful if your contribution only served to bless others!
15. Never belittle others or seek to raise Spinnaker above our peer organisations.

In your work for Spinnaker, we want to affirm that we trust you to be responsible with your time and your activities, whether at school or at home on your computer. Any disregard of this policy as outlined above should be considered liable to disciplinary action and may be grounds termination of employment or work as a volunteer with us.

It should go without saying, but any use of the internet in any way that brings your own Christian life, or that of your family, Church or the reputation of your work with Spinnaker into question may result in Spinnaker taking disciplinary action. Spinnaker reserves the right to pass any information gained on to relevant bodies or authorities. If you break the law, it will be reported, and it may result in you being dismissed as an employee and removed from our team.

Whilst Spinnaker Trust is not interested in monitoring or censoring what you do in your own time, be aware that the trustees and/or exec of Spinnaker Trust are prepared to ask you about your internet usage. Please understand and respect the fact that if we ask to you to change, limit or refrain from doing any on-line activities, it would be because we are pastorally concerned with anything that may compromise your own Christian life or the reputation of Spinnaker Trust. This is especially vital where such activity could adversely impact our security, confidentiality, credibility, or integrity in relationship to any school, church or person. Therefore, it is important to remember that some online actions can affect your employment or service with Spinnaker Trust even if they are done on your own time and equipment. This is especially the case if you can be identified as a Spinnaker Trust team member.

The Bible makes it very clear that we will all stand before God and answer for our actions. And that includes leaders! We affirm that there is forgiveness and grace if anyone does breach the rules in this policy or break the law, but there are consequences and while we will not judge you, we may not be able to keep you in your job or role.

Conclusions

It goes without saying that an individual acting irresponsibly online could affect the whole of the ministry of Spinnaker and beyond, so the final word should go to Paul, in his letter to the Philippians 2:14-16 he wrote:

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Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' then you will shine among them like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.

*authorised persons are the CEO, members of the Executive Team and Trustees.

Date last updated:

April 2022

April 2021

September 2019