

Fellowship Church Blogging Policy

Personal Website and Weblog Policies

Some Fellowship Church employees who maintain personal websites and/or weblogs, or who are considering beginning one, have asked about the church's perspective regarding these sites. In general, we view personal websites and weblogs positively, and respect the right of our employees to use them as an avenue of self-expression and outreach.

As an employee of Fellowship Church, you are seen by our members and outside parties as a representative of the church. Therefore, as in all areas of daily life, a church staff member's personal website or weblog is a reflection on the church, whether or not the church is specifically discussed or referenced. If you choose to identify yourself as a Fellowship Church employee or to discuss matters related to the church on your website or weblog, please bear in mind that, although you may view your site as a personal project, many readers will assume you are speaking on behalf of the church.

In light of this possibility, Fellowship expects our staff to observe the following important guidelines:

Notify Your Supervisor. If you currently have a personal website or weblog, or are considering starting one, be sure to discuss this with your supervisor. Also, if you have any questions, feel free to share them with HR or the Web Department.

Include a Disclaimer. On your site, please make it clear to your readers that the views you express are yours alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of Fellowship Church. To help reduce the potential for confusion, we recommend you prominently display the following notice, or something similar, on the homepage of your site:

I work at Fellowship Church. Everything here, however, is my personal opinion and is not read or approved before it is posted. Opinions, conclusions and other information expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of Fellowship Church.

We recommend a disclaimer if your site is published under your name, even if it is entirely personal and does not mention Fellowship Church or your employment, as readers will inevitably connect your personal life to your professional life.

Respect Confidentiality. You must take proper care not to purposefully or inadvertently disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to Fellowship Church. Consult Human Resources and the church's confidentiality policies for guidance about what constitutes "confidential" or "proprietary" information. Be sure that what you are announcing has been in the weekend bulletin, on the website, or announced from the stage before posting it. Otherwise, check with your supervisor. Any employee who violates our policies regarding confidentiality will be subject to serious discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Respect the Church and its Staff. Since your site is a public space, we expect you to be respectful to the church and our leaders, employees, volunteers and members. Any employee who uses a personal website to disparage the name or reputation of the church, its practices, or its pastors, officers, employees, volunteers or members will be subject to serious discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Respect Copyright. Do not use Fellowship Church's logos on your site or reproduce church material without first obtaining written permission from the COO/CTO.

Respect Your Time. All time and effort spent on your personal site should be done on your personal time and should not interfere with your job duties or work commitments.

Respect Our Beliefs. When working for a church, it is important to remember that employment decisions will be made based upon our Christian beliefs. If your personal website displays inappropriate images or reflects personal opinions or life-style choices that are contrary to Fellowship Church's religious beliefs, you may be subject to discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment. For this reason, we encourage you to first seek guidance from your supervisor or Human Resources if you have any questions.

Follow the Employee Handbook. Be sure to conform to the rules of the Employee Handbook, especially as it relates to harassment and illegal activities (including, in this case, spam and piracy). As with other forms of communication, do not engage in personal, racial or sexual harassment, unfounded accusations, or remarks that would contribute to a hostile workplace. For more information about Fellowship Church's Policy Against Harassment, see Human Resources.

Use Common Sense. Use common sense in all communications, particularly on a website accessible to anyone. What you say on your site could potentially be grounds for dismissal. If you would not be comfortable with your manager, co-workers, or the executive team reading your words, do not write them.