

Give Employee Guidelines on Social Networking

Social networking and social media are all the rage. Whether it's Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, or YouTube – chances are your employees are using at least one form of social networking. It's probably on their time and it may not be against your company policies – so what's the worry?

Your clients are also using social networking and associate your employees as the face of your company, especially those that deal with clients on a regular basis or note their place of employment in their social networking status. When employees post personal information – pictures from a crazy Vegas weekend or ideas about a controversial cause or movement in which they believe – they affect the way a client views them and your company.

As an employer, what can you do? It's true you may be unable to stop employees from posting what they chose in their accounts on their own time. You may, however, address the issue with employees through a written policy that outlines your expectations for social networking.

Some tips and things to consider:

- Create a company account on any of the social networking sites in the event a client would like to “link” to your company. You are eliminating the need for the client to connect to your employees individually.
- Give employees the right to “deny” a link or friend request from a client. (Suggest they tactfully point the client to the company account.)
- Provide standard language for employees to use when social networking for the company on sites like LinkedIn – highly used for business networking purposes. This will ensure a consistent branding message.
- Institute a dress code policy that dictates company-logoed apparel is worn on company time only. (This will avoid your company logo in ‘risky’ personal pictures.)

Have additional tips for business owners on the topic of social networking? Submit them to newsletter@tandemhr.com.

For more information contact Tandem HR at 630.928.0510 or visit www.tandemhr.com. The staff at Tandem HR contributed to this article. It is intended as information only and is not a substitute for legal advice. Tandem HR is a professional employer organization specializing in strategic HR partnership with small and mid-sized businesses.

Copyright © 2010 Tandem HR. All rights reserved