

Tips for Professional Communication

When we communicate with others, we need to acknowledge that we are all professionals who are working towards a common goal. We all want to be treated with dignity, honesty, kindness, and respect.

General Communication:

- Be polite.
- Treat others with respect.
- Think before speaking, calling, or writing.
- Avoid gossip and rumors.
- Do not confront others out of anger; do not let emotion control the situation.
- Only interrupt instructional time when absolutely necessary.
- Be honest, but not at the expense of good manners.
- Agree to disagree with others.
- If conflicts arise, contact those involved in person without involving others.
- Communicate with others in person whenever possible.

Written and E-mail Communication:

- Include a relevant subject line on all e-mail communications.
- Use a normal, legible font.
- Whenever possible, avoid the use of color and unusual fonts.
- Avoid using all capital letters.
- Proofread written communications, but forgive those who do not.
- Use the “All Staff” mailing list only for things that truly concern the whole staff.
- Only use “CC” to send information to those who really need a “Carbon Copy”.
- Use humor sparingly; tone is not easily conveyed in an e-mail.
- Keep e-mails concise.
- Only sign written and e-mail correspondence with your own signature.
- Deal with conflicts and controversial issues in person whenever possible.
- Send replies only to the original sender, not to others.

Cautions:

- Use of e-mail to “tattle” on others is not acceptable.
- Use e-mail to insult or deride others is not acceptable.
- Do not use written communications to say what you are unwilling to say in person.

**Positive and honest communications build up relationships;
negative communications tear them down.**

WHS Learning Improvement Team--November 8, 2007