



STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ETHICS

Preamble

The Association of Collegiate Conference and Events Directors-International is an Association of Collegiate Conference and events professionals employed with colleges and universities. The Association is committed to unite in one organization those persons whose major responsibility is to provide conference and events services to their educational organizations; to promote high standards of business methods and ethical conduct among its members; to encourage fraternal spirit and cooperation in the business affairs of its members; to encourage communication and the sharing of ideas and information among professional colleagues; to encourage member institutions to view their conference and events personnel as professional level employees; to promote the profession; and to encourage and support the professional development of the membership.

The conference and events profession has developed from a rudimentary one to a highly challenging, well-defined specialty in little more than a quarter of a century. The profession is significant because of the amount of money generated throughout the economies in which it operates, the sociopolitical decisions and positions that result from its activities and the impact upon the lives of those who participate in its programs, either as groups or individuals. To enjoy the respect and confidence of the larger community as well as other members of the profession, conference and events professionals must strive to maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct, confidence and respect of clients through high standards of integrity, skill and competence.

As communities, universities and colleges are concerned with choices and values, behavior and activities, judgments and decisions as to what is equitable, worthy and just. The essence of professional responsibility is that the conference and events professional must act at all times with utmost good faith to the institution, client and members of the public, as the strength of the profession depends upon high standards of professional conduct that permits no compromise.

This statement will provide a framework of standards and ethics within which the conference and events professional may provide the high quality services that a complex and ever-changing society demands.

Use of Statement

This statement of ethics and standards is made to define conduct within the context of the profession and to foster an honest and ethical atmosphere and conduct among conference and events professionals. This statement serves as a guide and does not attempt to define misconduct or conduct unbecoming nor does it try to evaluate the relative value of the various components or the gravity of a breach of any of them.

Responsibility to the Profession Generally

The conference and events professional should assist in maintaining the integrity of the profession and should participate in its activities. The conference and events professional's conduct toward colleagues and clients should be characterized by courtesy and good faith.

Authority

In general principle, the conference and events professional who acts without proper authority from his or her client or institution does so at his or her own peril and, regardless of good faith, is responsible for any harm caused to clients or institution. The professional must have proper instructions from a person or persons properly authorized by the institution and by existing client groups/sponsors.

Integrity

A conference and events professional must perform with integrity all responsibilities owed to clients, the institution, other members of the profession and the public. The principle of integrity is the key element in this statement.

Integrity is the fundamental quality of any person who seeks to practice as a member of the profession. If a client doubts the professional's trustworthiness, the essential element in the client/professional relationship will be missing. If personal integrity is lacking, the professional's usefulness to the client and institution, and reputation within the profession will be destroyed regardless of how competent the individual may be.

Competence and Quality of Service

Competence on the part of the conference and events professional means the provision of an adequate standard of service, skill and knowledge in planning and management activities on behalf of a client.

Knowledge and Skill

- Competence involves an adequate knowledge of practice and procedures. The client and institution are entitled to assume that the professional has the ability and capacity to adequately service the program.
- Competence goes beyond formal qualification to the sufficiency of the professional's knowledge (theory and process) and skill capability and to effectively represent the interests of the client and institution. The professional should not undertake a program without honestly feeling either competent to handle it, or able to become competent without delay, risk or expense to the client and institution.

Quality of Service

Numerous examples could be given of practices that meet the required quality of service. The list that follows is illustrative, but by no means exhaustive -

- keeping the clients, service providers, and staff reasonably informed;
- answering reasonable requests from clients;
- adhering to planning schedules and deadlines;
- striving to maintain adequate office staff and facilities;
- practicing effective office management skills;
- providing information to the client and institution and disclosing neglect or mistakes;
- providing prompt and complete reports when the program is finished; and
- maintaining judgment in personal and professional conduct, in adherence with institutional policies.

Confidential Information

The conference and events professional has a duty to hold in confidence all information concerning the business and affairs of the client acquired in the course of the professional relationship, and should not divulge such information unless authorized by the client.

The guiding principles include the following.

- The professional cannot provide effective planning and management services to the client unless there is full and unreserved communication with them.
- The professional should avoid disclosure to one client of confidential information concerning or received from another client and should decline employment that might require such disclosure.

Conflict of Interest

A conflicting interest is likely to have an adverse effect upon the professional's judgment, advice and loyalty to a client or institution. The conference and events professional shall not act or continue to act in a situation when there is or is likely to be a conflicting interest. The professional's judgment and action shall be free from comprising influences .

The conference and events professional should not enter into a business transaction with a client unless:

- the transaction is a fair and reasonable one and its terms are fully disclosed to the client in writing in a manner that is reasonably understood by the client;
- the client consents in writing to the transaction;
- the professional assumes the responsibility to protect the client's interests; and
- the professional's business and personal interests are not in conflict.

Discrimination

The conference and events professional should act in accordance with the laws of their country and with their institutional policies in relation to discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital or family status, disability or age.

Outside Interests

The conference and events professional who concurrently engages in another profession, business or occupation must not allow such outside interest to jeopardize his or her integrity, independence or competence.

The term "outside interest" covers the widest possible range and includes activities that may overlap or be connected to the practice of the profession. Whatever overriding social, political, economic or other considerations arising from the outside interest might influence the professional's judgment, he or she should be governed by the considerations relating to conflict of interest.

In order to be compatible with the profession, the outside interest must be an honorable one that does not detract from the status of the professional, the profession or the institution generally and must not result in a conflict of interest

Fees

The conference and events professional will charge and accept fees that are fully disclosed, fair and reasonable and avoid conflict with clients over charges. The conference and events professional should give the client an early and fair estimate of the fees and payments, pointing out any uncertainties involved, so that the client may be able to make an informed decision.

A fair and reasonable fee will depend on and reflect such factors as:

- the time and effort required and spent;
- institutional considerations;
- the difficulty and importance of the work;
- supplies and services;
- customary charges of other institutions of equal standing in similar situations; and
- relevant agreements between clients and suppliers.

Withdrawal

The conference and events professional owes a duty to the client not to withdraw services except for good cause and upon notice appropriate to the circumstances. The professional who withdraws should act so as to minimize expense

and avoid jeopardy to the program.

In certain circumstances, the professional may be required to withdraw. For instance,

- the institution's interests are not being served;
- the professional is instructed by the client to act in a manner consistent with professional standards and ethics;
- the involvement of the professional relates to conflict of interest; or
- the professional is not competent to handle the work.

Withdrawal Obligations

- Deliver in an orderly and expeditious manner all papers and property (work in progress) to which the client is entitled.
- Give the client all information that may be required regarding the program.
- Account for all expenditures and refund any fees not earned during employment.
- Promptly render an account for outstanding fees and payments.
- Cooperate with the successor professional to minimize expenses and delays.

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