



# Code of Conduct

## **Standards of Behaviour**

The reputation and, therefore, the success of our Company rests on the way each individual carries out his/her work. We expect you to present yourself in a professional and business-like manner at all times. All reasonable instructions given to you by your line manager must be carried out.

## **Personal Telephone Calls**

Whilst we recognise that there is a need to make or receive some personal telephone calls during working hours, these should be kept to a minimum. Non-work mobile phones should be switched off during office hours.

## **Gifts**

Those who are responsible for expenditure with outside suppliers should not accept gifts or other rewards from them. Any such offer should be politely declined and anything received should be politely returned. The acceptance of items such as diaries and calendars, however, is permitted.

## **Drink and Drugs**

You are not permitted to drink alcohol or to be under the influence of alcohol during working hours. Similarly, you are not permitted to be in possession of or to be under the influence of drugs, other than those specifically prescribed to you by a registered medical practitioner, during working hours.

## **Personal Possessions**

It is your responsibility to take care of your own possessions whilst at work - e.g. money, coats, bags and other valuables. We cannot accept liability for the loss of, or damage to, your belongings whilst you are at work.

## **Personal Details**

Please tell us as soon as possible of any changes in your personal details (e.g. name, home address, telephone number, next of kin, etc.) so that we can keep our personnel records up to date.

## **Away from Work**

People will judge us by your behaviour. This is true even when you are not at work. Remember that wherever you are - e.g. travelling to and from work, meeting people socially, staying at a hotel, etc.- potential customers may be forming an impression about our Company from your behaviour. Any conversations you may have about work may also be overheard so please remember to remain professional at all times.



## **No Smoking Policy**

We value the health, safety and welfare of our employees. We recognise that smoking is damaging to health and harmful to the environment. This policy aims to protect all employees, customers and any visitors from exposure to second hand smoke and to comply with the Health Act 2006. Under the Health Act 2006 smoking in all enclosed premises and substantially enclosed premises is outlawed. This includes company vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, customers and any visitors.

## **IT Policy - General Guidelines**

Because of licensing regulations you should not install software on client machines, unless permitted to do so. In most cases licensing agreements will not allow for any software to be copied by you or taken home. Records and/or software instructions must not be altered, unless you are authorised to do so.

You must ensure good practice to prevent the introduction of a virus to any of the systems you are authorised to use.

You should protect your personal password if you have one, and you must not use anyone else's ID to access systems that are not normally available to you. Employees who are issued with items of I.T. equipment are required to return them in good condition and in good working order at the end of the project for which they were issued or upon leaving The Focused Group's employment.

## **Email**

From time to time you may be required to use a client's email system. As an important business tool use of email for non-business purposes should be kept to a minimum. You must not send emails containing material which is: pornographic or sexual; defamatory or offensive; in any way illegal; or which may in any way bring the Focused Consulting into disrepute. Sending material of this kind is likely to be treated as Gross Misconduct.

## **Internet**

You must not use the Internet to access content of a pornographic or sexual nature. You must not access social networking sites during work hours. Doing so will be regarded as Gross Misconduct. You must not download unauthorised software from the Internet whilst on a client site.

## **IT Security**

In order to protect client's IT Systems from the threat of computer viruses, we ask that you do not use instant messaging and peer to peer file sharing programs. This includes programmes such as MSN Messenger, AOL Instant Messenger, Yahoo Messenger or peer to peer file sharing programs such as Kazaa and Edonkey.



## **Data Protection Policy**

We respect the Personal Data of all individuals against the backdrop of its Data Protection Policy. Breaching this policy may result in disciplinary action. If you have any concerns regarding the way we are holding or processing your Personal Data you must immediately contact the Data Protection Officer.

## **Training and Development**

We are committed to providing the training and coaching that will enable employees to carry out their jobs to the highest standard and that will encourage them to develop their potential. A selection of training can be made available in most major cities.

## **Disciplinary Policy & Procedure**

Our disciplinary procedure is designed to ensure that you are treated fairly and to clarify the kinds of acts, omissions or behaviours which could result in you being disciplined, suspended or dismissed. If you are required to attend a disciplinary interview, then in all instances you have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or a Trade Union representative.

## **Disciplinary Offences**

In general, there are three areas that could result in disciplinary action being taken:

- Unsatisfactory performance - if your work falls below agreed standards or if you fail to achieve agreed objectives (even if you are doing your best).
- Misconduct - this is one (or more) action, omission or behaviour that is deemed to be unacceptable - e.g. inaccurate claim of expenses, irregular attendance, poor timekeeping, disruptive or rude behaviour, refusal to carry out reasonable requests, disobeying general rules, etc.
- Gross Misconduct - this is one (or more) action, omission or behaviour that is deemed to be so serious that it may result in summary dismissal (i.e. without notice).

The following examples may constitute Gross Misconduct:

- dishonesty;
- theft of property or funds from the Company, customers or Employees;
- being unable to carry out your job because you are under the influence of drink or illegal drugs;
- possessing illegal drugs;
- physical violence; malicious damage to property;
- disobeying, or failing to abide by, any or all of our policies or procedures;
- failure to abide by relevant codes of practice or legislation; fraud/falsifying documentation;
- bringing the Company name into disrepute;
- discriminating against anyone on grounds of age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, race, religious background, disability or dependants considerations;
- bullying, harassment or victimisation. entering into contracts on behalf of the Company without proper authority

The above list is not exhaustive, and is intended purely as a guide.



## Grievance Policy & Procedure

We try to ensure that everyone who works for us is treated impartially and fairly. However, sometimes things can happen which appear unfair to you. To allow for such possibilities, we have a formal Grievance Procedure which you should use if you feel it necessary. This policy does not prevent you from dealing with your grievance informally. Indeed, in many cases this may be the most constructive way of resolving an issue or problem. However, if you have tried to resolve your grievance informally and are not satisfied or if you do not wish to take the informal approach then you should follow this procedure.

### How the Grievance Procedure works

You can choose to present your case in writing or in person or on the telephone. If you present your case in person you have the right to be accompanied to the meeting by a work colleague or trade union representative. Whichever method you choose, you must make sure that your Director is aware that you wish to use the Grievance Procedure.

#### Stage 1

Inform your Director in writing that you wish to invoke the grievance procedure and provide written details of your grievance.

Within 5 working days of receiving your grievance your Director will write to you to inform you how the grievance will be managed and the person who will hear your grievance. This will either be:

- Your immediate manager;
- or If your grievance is directed at something your immediate manager did or did not do, your manager's immediate manager;
- or A suitable alternative employee (selected by your Director) if your Director deem neither of the above to be appropriate in the circumstances.

If you have raised a grievance against another employee he/she will be informed of this by your Director and provided with a copy of your written grievance complaint. You will be invited to attend a meeting to present your grievance in person. You must notify your Director at least 3 days in advance of the meeting of any witnesses you intend to call to give evidence at the hearing. Alternatively, if you so wish, you can present your grievance in writing or by telephone.

Every reasonable effort will be made to come to a conclusion regarding your grievance as quickly as possible, subject to the availability of the relevant individuals, the need to conduct a thorough investigation and the right of the person(s) against whom any allegations are directed to consider and respond to them.



## **Stage 2**

If you are unhappy with the Stage 1 grievance decision(s) (or part of it) you have the right to appeal. You must notify your Director in writing of the grievance decision(s) you wish to appeal within 5 working days of receiving the decision(s).

Within 5 working days of receiving your notice of appeal your Director will write to you to inform you how your grievance appeal will be managed and the person who will hear your appeal. Your appeal will be heard by a more senior Co-Member to the Stage 1 decision maker or a suitable alternative as notified to you by your Director.

If you have raised a grievance against another employee he/she will be informed of your appeal by your Director. You will be invited to a meeting to present your appeal. You must notify your Director at least 3 days in advance of the meeting of any witnesses you intend to call to give evidence at the meeting. Alternatively, if you so wish, you can choose to present your grievance appeal in writing or by telephone. Every reasonable effort will be made to come to a conclusion regarding your grievance appeal as quickly as possible, subject to the availability of the relevant individuals, the need to conduct a thorough investigation and the right of the person(s) against whom any allegations are directed to consider and respond to them.

The evidence given and the decision made at Stage 1 of the grievance procedure may be considered at the discretion of the person hearing the appeal. When your Director write to you under point 2 above, they will state whether or not this discretion is being exercised. All parties are free to introduce fresh evidence on appeal. Any new evidence introduced must be provided to your Director no later than 3 days before the meeting. The decision of the person hearing your grievance appeal is final.

## **Modified Procedure**

If you raise a grievance after you have left our employment you agree to have your grievance dealt with by a modified procedure. Under the modified procedure you are required to provide written details of your grievance to your Director. Your written complaint will then be passed to an appropriate person who will respond to your grievance in writing. This decision will be final.

## **Whistleblowing**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 offers protection against victimisation or dismissal for workers who "blow the whistle" on criminal behaviour or other wrongdoing. We encourage our employees to bring their concerns to the attention of management. We will not victimise or take disciplinary action against employees for whistle blowing, and any such treatment would be considered Gross Misconduct and may be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.



### **Actions covered by this policy**

This policy has been designed to cover situations where employees have a reasonable belief that one of the following has taken, is or is likely to be taking place:

- A criminal offence and/or dishonesty (for example: theft of Company property, theft or fraudulent claiming of public money, falsification of expense or bonus claims)
- A failure to comply with a legal obligation (this includes both statutory obligations and acts which are deliberately in breach of contractual obligations)
- Endangering an individual's health or safety
- A miscarriage of justice
- Material breach of procedures
- This list is intended as a guide, and is not exhaustive.

### **What should you do if you come across this kind of act?**

If you become aware of any such act you should immediately do one of the following:

- bring it to the attention of your manager;
- or (if you believe that your manager might be involved) bring it to the attention of your manager's manager; or bring it to the attention of your Director.

### **Confidentiality**

Your identity will be protected wherever possible. We will take responsibility for taking action forward, and will keep you informed, where appropriate.