

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that communications across the organization are well co-coordinated, effectively managed and responsive to the diverse information needs of everyone including our customers.

2.0 Policy Statement

It is the policy of FPCNL:

1. To promote effective, professional and consistent standards of communication across the organization. All staff are expected to practice and maintain high standards of communication in all aspects of the business of the company and adhere to the defined acceptable standards of communication.
2. To provide accurate, timely, relevant and understandable information to its customers. Our customers can both be external and internal and the same courtesy, along with a high standard of service is to be maintained for both.
3. To use a variety of methods to communicate and provide information to both its employees and clients.

3.0 Scope

For the purposes of this policy, communications includes

- Internal communication
- External Communication

Internal Communication

Direct and open communication is fundamental to FPCNL's culture. Good communication means a healthy environment of mutual trust and respect exists in which employees and managers can comfortably discuss work issues or employment concerns. Because communication is so integral to our business, hence the establishment of a formal Communication Policy

FPCNL's Communication Policy features several tools; the most important is the **Open Door Policy**. This is a commitment from managers and supervisors to listen and respond to employee concerns. Here are the basic steps employees should follow under the Open Door Policy:

1. Discuss the concern with your immediate supervisor.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved with the supervisor, the employee should refer such to the departmental head.
3. If the problem remains unresolved, the complaint should be referred to the most senior management staff next to the Managing Director. It should be discussed at a meeting to be attended by the Head of Department, the supervising officer and the complainant. This meeting should be convened within three working days from the day of reference to the Head of Human Resources.

4. If the matter remains unsolved, the complaint is sent to the Managing Director who takes a decision that shall be binding on both parties.

FPCNL believes that ongoing communication usually prevents problems from arising in the first place. Consequently, aside from dissemination of information via Lotus Notes, general meetings are held on monthly basis.

Two-way communication is expected throughout FPCNL, and employees are encouraged to take advantage of the Policy.

External Communication

In dealing with customers, FPCNL staff will always

- Be polite and helpful
- Be succinct
- Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself
- Deal with enquiries efficiently and promptly
- Avoid promises that cannot be delivered
- Have a right to end contact if the customer is abusive

When our customers contact us

1. In writing FPCNL staff will
 - Take responsibility for the message/request
 - Date stamp letters
 - Ensure ownership is accepted by the appropriate person who will reply or attend to the mail within a reasonable timeframe
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2. By email FPCNL staff will
 - Respond to the email with 24hours or forward the mail to the appropriate person ensuring that they have taken ownership of the message
 - Ensure that the customer is aware if they are away from the office for more than one day.
3. By telephone FPCNL staff will
 - Take responsibility for the call and any required action
 - Should answer the call within three rings and apologize if there is a delay
 - When transferring calls, first announce the caller
 - Respond to external calls with Good morning/afternoon, FPCNL, "first name" speaking, how may I help you? And with their name to internal calls
 - Ensure messages are passed onto the appropriate person or department in a timely manner
 - Take ownership of the call until it is passed on to the appropriate person
 - Ensure calls are returned within 24hours
 - Where voicemail is available, either office or mobile phone, ensure it is set up correctly and checked regularly

When we contact our customers

4. In writing FPCNL staff will

- Produce external letters on headed paper and date all correspondences with reference numbers where necessary.
- Spell check all documents before sending
- Produce all documents in Arial, minimum of 9.

5. By email FPCNL staff will

- Ensure the message is clear, concise and relevant
- Ensure all email messages have a subject heading and end with their job title and telephone contact details
- Use a blank template, black on white background format.

Where away from the office for more than one working day, FPCNL staff will

- Where appropriate ensure telephones are diverted, covered by another staff member or a voice mail (if available) is activated with a message advising the caller when to expect a response.
- Activate their email “out of office assistant” giving details of their expected period of absence and alternative contact details for another member of staff.

All issues/complaints/enquiries must be closed via the same medium in which such was initiated OR a superior medium.