

Tool kit for Health/Communication Managers and Staff involved in daily communication activities

Resource: Guidelines for using social media

Objective: The aim of these guidelines is to have a concrete reference of the main aspects that should be taken into account when using Social Media in an organization; improving efficiency with the recommendations and avoiding attitudes that will cause problems.

Guidelines for using Social Media

When using the social media, Don't:

- Use Social Media only because others use it or because it is “cool” or “trendy”. You need to have a well-defined strategy with clear objectives for your organization.
- Use technical language, give personal opinions or publish about not related themes.
- Publish something without having a reference or a reliable source. Make sure the information shared when using Social Media is reliable.
- Answer to each and all comments, rumours, complains, etc. You must concentrate on frequents asked questions and refute only relevant information.
- “Overreact”, about any criticism or different opinion. An excessive reaction can have the unpleasant effect of amplifying the criticism or making it “viral” on the Web.
- Use bad words or impolite answers.

When using the Social Media, DO:

- Include Social Media in the risk communication plan of your organization.
- Adapt the technical messages to be used in the different Social Media channels.
- Communicate in a correct manner: content, tone, frequency, appropriate language use, images, etc.
- Monitor the communication flows regularly.
- Share information with other relevant “opinion leaders” that have sum up to the mitigation efforts
- Maintain an integral voice, the message and tone should be consistent.
- Check the sources and reliability of the information.
- Define a policy for the possible elimination of comments that may be offensive or damage the institutional image and make it available to all users.

