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3 (not so easy) steps to developing your organization's social media policy

"... if you think [social media guidelines] don't apply to you, you are probably already on the endangered species list." —Forbes.com (6/30/09)

Step #1 Questions to consider before implementing a social media policy:

- Should employees be using social media at work?
- Do our firewalls and security systems even allow social media tools?
- What should and should not be communicated?
- Who is communicating?
- Who should approve communications?
- What happens when it goes wrong?

Step #2 Research other organizations that have a social media policy in place:

IBM: ibm.com/blogs/zz/en/guidelines.html

INTEL: intel.com/site/sitewide/en_US/social-media.htm

Step #3 Agree on answers to these 10 questions

1. What is the overall philosophy of your organization?
2. Will your employees be open, honest, and respectful in a business context?
3. Are employees clear on your organization's policies on disclosure of confidential or proprietary information?
4. How will your employees differentiate their personal from their business identity?
5. Are employees evaluated on job performance vs. company time?
6. Are employees trained on potential conflicts of interest, and what types of conflicts are prohibited?
7. Are employees clear that their views about work-related related matters do not represent the views of their employer?
8. To what extent does the organization have the right to monitor social media usage and identify associated disciplinary guidelines?
9. Will the social media policy have universal application to all employees?
10. What other policies need to be considered? (workplace environment, discrimination, harassment, ethics, code of conduct, etc.)