

UUCWI Communications Best Practices

v2.2 DPC 10/13/10

Approved by the Board of Trustees

In order to create a culture of respect for one another, I will:

- **treat others as I would be treated: with respect, caring, sensitivity, kindness, and compassion**
- **greet and include strangers and visitors as well as friends and members**
- **speak for myself only**
- **honor the confidentiality of shared personal information**
- **feel empowered to state my feelings when I am dealt with unkindly**
- **address issues with others directly and not through third parties, avoiding hurtful gossip**
- **remember that how I communicate shapes my relationships**
- *listen* **to and encourage all contributions , employing empathy**
- **avoid “talking over” others or dominating conversations**
- **express gratitude, appreciation and affirmation generously**
- **give credit for ideas that I borrow or build upon**
- **help, as I am able, and inform others who can assist, when a member needs support**
- **show respect for diverse perspectives and opinions that may not match my own**
- **give timely, honest, specific, constructive feedback when appropriate**
- **welcome and expect skepticism when my ideas are presented**
- **seek consensus when possible, and use democratic processes when it is not**
- **ask myself if I have contributed to a conflict**
- **request “time out” to reflect on these practices when needed**
- **follow the Board Policy on Disruptive Behavior to resolve serious problems**
- **volunteer when work needs to be done**
- **contribute resources to support the congregation**
- **apologize and seek pardon when I violate these practices, and forgive, in return, with love**

In order to use electronic communications effectively, I will:

- give timely responses to requests
- restrict copies to those with a need to know
- avoid use of email for matters that require face-to-face interactions
- avoid sending communications when angry

In order to make our meetings productive, I will:

- inform conveners in a timely manner when my expected attendance is not possible
- arrive at meetings on time and prepared
- recognize the value of personal greetings, but limit them appropriately
- cooperate with the convener's needs for order, process, clarity, and closure
- encourage contributions from all, and not dominate the discussion
- think before speaking, and endeavor to be concise
- value group decisions and not only my personal preferences
- strive to suppress my own need to be right, or be stroked, or be important
- keep discussion on topic
- complete "action items" on time and communicate them appropriately

When exercising a leadership role, I will:

- avoid taking on more than can be done well
- devote the time necessary for communicating, planning, and research
- maintain orderly processes, communicate clearly, and codify results
- announce and circulate an agenda for each meeting
- designate recorders and process observers as appropriate
- ensure that each person understands objectives, process, issues, proposals and conclusions
- lead with modesty
- subordinate personal objectives to the needs of the group
- delegate and share responsibilities
- expect compliance with, and enforce, these practices