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**Employees handbook**

**Human Resource Department**

**Motto: Solving the food insecurity in Africa through food processing and job creation.**

# **PROJECT SUMMARY**

* **Focus Group of Companies is aimed at solving the food insecurity in Africa through food processing and job creation.**
* **The company’s core business operations will start with animal rearing to make Ghana meat sufficient. We intend to add other cash crops with time.**
* **The company will be managed by experts and indigenous people will be employed to fill key positions as when need arises.**
* **Other potential crops: Maize, cocoa, mushroom**

# **Employee Code of Conduct**

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# **Employee Code of Conduct**

As an employee, you are responsible to behave appropriately at work. We outline our expectations here. We can’t cover every single case of conduct, but we trust you to always use your best judgement. Reach out to your manager or HR if you face any issues or have any questions.

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## **Dress code**

Our company’s official dress code is [*Business/ Business Casual/ Smart Casual/ Casual.*] This includes [*slacks/ loafers/ blouses/ boots.*] However, an employee’s position may also inform how they should dress. If you frequently meet with clients or prospects, please conform to a more formal dress code. We expect you to be clean when coming to work and avoid wearing clothes that are unprofessional (e.g., workout clothes.)

As long as you conform with our guidelines above, we don’t have specific expectations about what types of clothes or accessories you should wear.

We also respect and permit grooming styles, clothing and accessories that are dictated by religious beliefs, ethnicity, or disability.

## **Cyber security and digital devices**

This section deals with all things digital at work. We want to set some guidelines for using computers, phones, our internet connection, and social media to ensure security and protect our assets.

### **Internet usage**

Our corporate internet connection is primarily for business. Internet usage will be closely monitored to ensure compliance. Also, we expect you to temporarily halt personal activities that slow down our internet connection (e.g., uploading photos) if you’re asked to.

You must not use our internet connection to:

* Download or upload obscene, offensive, or illegal material.
* Send confidential information to unauthorized recipients.
* Invade another person’s privacy and gain access to sensitive information.
* Download or upload movies, music, material or software.
* Visit potentially dangerous websites that can compromise our network and computers’ safety.
* Perform unauthorized or illegal actions, like hacking, fraud or buying/selling illegal goods.

### **Cell phone**

We allow use of cell phone at work. But we also want to ensure that your devices won’t distract you from your work or disrupt our workplace. We ask you to follow a few simple rules:

* Use your cell phone in a manner that benefits your work (business calls, productivity apps, calendars.)
* Keep personal calls brief and use an empty meeting room or common area so as not to disturb your colleagues.
* Avoid playing games on your phone or texting excessively.
* Don't use your phone for any reason while driving a company vehicle.
* Don’t use your phone to record confidential information.
* Don’t download or upload inappropriate, illegal or obscene material using our corporate internet connection.

Also, you must not use your phone in areas where cell phone use is explicitly prohibited (e.g., laboratories.)

### **Corporate email**

Email is essential to our work. You should use your [company email](https://resources.workable.com/email-usage-policy-template) primarily for work, but we allow some uses of your company email for personal reasons.

* **Work-related use**. You can use your corporate email for work-related purposes without limitations. For example, you can sign up for newsletters and online services that will help you in your job or professional growth.
* **Personal use**. You can use your email for personal reasons as long as you keep it safe and avoid spamming and disclosing confidential information. For example, you can send emails to friends and family and download eBooks, guides, and other safe content for your personal use.

### **Our general expectations**

No matter how you use your corporate email, we expect you to avoid:

* Signing up for illegal, unreliable, disreputable or suspect websites and services.
* Sending unauthorized marketing content or emails.
* Registering for a competitor’s services, unless authorized.
* Sending insulting or discriminatory messages and content.
* Spamming other people’s emails, including your coworkers.

In general, use strong passwords and be vigilant in catching emails that carry malware or phishing attempts. If you are not sure that an email you received is safe, ask our [*Security Specialists*.]

## **Social media**

We want to provide practical advice to prevent careless use of[social media in our workplace](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZPbJ1NDqX8). We address two types of social media uses: using personal social media at work and representing our company through social media.

### **Using personal social media at work**

You are permitted to access your personal accounts at work. But we expect you to act responsibly, according to our policies and ensure that you stay productive. Specifically, we ask you to:

* **Discipline yourself**. Avoid getting sidetracked by your social platforms.
* **Ensure others know that your personal account or statements don’t represent our company.** For example, use a disclaimer such as “opinions are my own.”
* **Avoid sharing intellectual property (e.g trademarks) or confidential information**. Ask your manager or PR first before you share company news that’s not officially announced.
* **Avoid any defamatory, offensive, or derogatory content.** You may violate our company’s anti-harassment policy if you direct such content towards colleagues, clients, or partners.

### **Representing our company through social media**

If you handle our social media accounts or speak on our company’s behalf, we expect you to protect our company’s image and reputation. Specifically, you should:

* Be respectful, polite, and patient.
* Avoid speaking on matters outside your field of expertise when possible.
* Follow our confidentiality and data protection policies and observe laws governing copyrights, trademarks, plagiarism, and fair use.
* Coordinate with our [*PR/Marketing department*] when you’re about to share any major-impact content.
* Avoid deleting or ignoring comments for no reason.
* Correct or remove any misleading or false content as quickly as possible.

## 

## **Conflict of interest**

When you are experiencing a[conflict of interest](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6x99iz_W8TU), your personal goals are no longer aligned with your responsibilities towards us. For example, owning stocks of one of our competitors is a conflict of interest.

In other cases, you may be faced with an ethical issue. For example, accepting a bribe may benefit you financially, but it is illegal and against our business code of ethics. If we become aware of such behavior, you will lose your job and may face legal trouble.

For this reason, conflicts of interest are a serious issue for all of us. We expect you to be vigilant to spot circumstances that create conflicts of interest, either to yourself or for your direct reports. Follow our policies and always act in our company’s best interests. Whenever possible, do not let personal or financial interests get in the way of your job. If you are experiencing an ethical dilemma, talk to your manager or HR and we will try to help you resolve it.

## **Employee relationships**

We want to ensure that relationships between employees are appropriate and harmonious. We outline our guidelines, and we ask you to always behave professionally.

### **Fraternization**

[Fraternization](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSGT5MQO0tA) refers to dating or being friends with your colleagues. In this policy, “dating” equals consensual romantic relationships and sexual relations. Non-consensual relationships constitute sexual violence, and we prohibit them explicitly.

### **Dating colleagues**

If you start dating a colleague, we expect you to maintain professionalism and keep personal discussions outside of our workplace.

You are also obliged to respect your colleagues who date each other. We won’t tolerate sexual jokes, malicious gossip, and improper comments. If you witness this kind of behavior, please report it to HR.

### **Dating managers**

To avoid accusations of favoritism, abuse of authority and sexual harassment, supervisors must not date their direct reports. This restriction extends to every manager above an employee.

Also, if you act as a hiring manager, you aren’t allowed to hire your partner to your team. You can refer them for employment to other teams or departments where you don’t have any managerial or hiring authority.

### **Friendships at work**

Employees who work together may naturally form friendships either in or outside of the workplace. We encourage this relationship between peers, as it can help you communicate and collaborate. But we expect you to focus on your work and keep personal disputes outside of our workplace.

### **Employment of relatives**

Everyone in our company should be hired, recognized, or promoted because of their skills, character, and work ethic. We would not like to see phenomena of nepotism, favoritism or conflicts of interest, so we will place some restrictions onhiring or employee’s relatives.

To our company, a “relative” is someone who is related by blood or marriage within the third degree to an employee. This includes: parents, grandparents, in-laws, spouses or domestic partners, children, grandchildren, siblings, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, step-parents, step-children and adopted children.

As an employee, you can refer your relatives to work with our company. Here are our only restrictions:

* [*You must not be involved in a supervisory/reporting relationship with a relative*.]
* [*You cannot be transferred, promoted, or hired inside a reporting relationship with a relative*.]
* [*You cannot be part of a hiring committee, when your relative is interviewed for that position*.]

If you become related to a manager or direct report after you both become employed by our company, we may have to [*transfer one of you*.]

## **Workplace visitors**

If you want to invite a visitor to our, please ask for permission from our [*HR Manager/ Security Officer/ Office Manager*] first. Also, inform our [*reception/ gate/ front-office*] of your visitor’s arrival. Visitors should sign in and show identification. They will receive passes and will be asked to return them to [*reception/ gate/ front-office*] once their visit is complete.

When you have office visitors, you also have responsibilities. You should:

* Always tend to your visitors (especially when they are underage.)
* Keep your visitors away from areas where there are dangerous machines, chemicals, confidential records or sensitive equipment.
* Prevent your visitors from proselytizing your colleagues, gathering donations or requesting participation in activities while on our premises.

Anyone who delivers orders, mail or packages for employees should remain at our building’s reception or gate. If you are expecting a delivery, [*front office employees/ security guards*] will notify you so you may collect it.

## **Solicitation and distribution**

Solicitation is any form of requesting money, support or participation for products, groups, organizations or causes which are unrelated to our company (e.g. religious proselytism, asking for petition signatures.) Distribution means disseminating literature or material for commercial or political purposes.

[We don’t allow solicitation](https://resources.workable.com/solicitation-company-policy) and distribution by non-employees in our workplace. As an employee, you may solicit from your colleagues only when you want to:

* Ask colleagues to help organize events for another employee (e.g., adoption/birth of a child, promotion, retiring.)
* Seek support for a cause, charity or fundraising event sponsored, funded, organized, or authorized by our company.
* Invite colleagues to employee activities for an authorized non-business purpose (e.g., recreation, volunteering.)
* Ask colleagues to participate in employment-related activities or groups protected by law (e.g., trade unions.)

In all cases, we ask that you do not disturb or distract colleagues from their work.

## **Compensation and development**

## **Benefits and Perks**

* **Employee health**. All workers will be enrolled onto the Ghana national Health insurance
* **Workers’ compensation**. Social security will be paid for workers ensue Ghana national requirement.
* **Employee expenses**. All work-related expenses will be reimbursed. Please take receipt for record keeping.
* **Company-issued equipment.** Employees must make sure company tools and equipment are kept well as if they were their personal items.

## **Working Hours, PTO, and Vacation**

Work schedule is from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Saturday excluding national Holidays. Employees should contact their HR to discuss Religious related Holidays.

* **Sick leave**. Employees should contact their HR as soon as possible when they fall sick.

## **Employee Resignation and Termination**

Contents:

* Progressive discipline
* Resignation
  + Tuition or relocation reimbursement
  + Forced resignation
* Termination
* References

# Leaving our company template

In this section, we describe our procedures regarding resignation and termination.We also refer to our progressive discipline process that may sometimes result in termination.

*“ our company may terminate our employment relationship at any time and for any non-discriminatory reason*”

## 

## **Progressive discipline**

Here we outline steps we will take to address employee misconduct. We want to give employees a chance to correct their behavior when possible and assist them in doing so. We also want to ensure that we thoroughly investigate and handle serious offenses.

Our progressive discipline has six steps of increasing severity. These steps are:

* Verbal warning
* Informal meeting with supervisor
* Formal reprimand
* Formal disciplinary meeting
* Penalties
* Termination

Different offenses correspond to different steps in our disciplinary process. For example, minor, one-time offenses (e.g. breach of our dress code policy) will trigger Step 1. More severe violations (e.g. sexual harassment) will trigger step 5.

If you manage employees, inform them when you launch a progressive discipline process. Pointing out a performance issue is not necessarily a verbal warning and may be part of your regular feedback. If you judge that progressive discipline is appropriate, let your team member know and ask HR to help you explain our full procedure.

Managers may skip or repeat steps at their discretion. Our company may treat circumstances differently from that described in this policy. But we are always obliged to act fairly and lawfully and document every stage of our progressive discipline process.

Keep in mind that our company isn’t obliged to follow the steps of our progressive discipline process. As you are employed “at-will” in the U.S, we may terminate you directly without launching a progressive discipline process. For serious offenses (e.g. sexual harassment), we may terminate you without warning.

## **Resignation**

You resign when you voluntarily inform HR or your manager that you will stop working for our company. We also consider you resigned if you don’t come to work for [*three*] consecutive days without notice.

You are not obliged to give us advance notice before resigning. But, for efficiency’s sake, and to make sure our workplace runs smoothly, we ask that you give at least [*two weeks*] notice, if possible. If you hold a highly specialized or executive position, we ask that you give us at least [*a month’s*] notice, when possible.

We accept verbal resignations, but we prefer that you submit a written and signed notice of resignation for our HR records. We will reply with an acceptance of resignation letter within [*two days*.] HR will inform your manager that you are resigning if you haven’t already done so.

### **Forced resignation**

You can resign anytime at your own free will and nobody should force you into resignation. Forcing someone into resigning (directly or indirectly) is constructive dismissal and we won’t tolerate it. Specifically, we prohibit employees from:

* Creating a hostile or unpleasant environment.
* Demanding or coaxing an employee to resign.
* Victimizing, harassing, or retaliating against an employee.
* Forcing an employee to resign by taking unofficial adverse actions (e.g. demotions, increased workload).

## **Termination**

[Terminating an employee](https://resources.workable.com/employee-termination-letter-template) is always unpleasant but sometimes necessary. If that happens, we want to ensure we act lawfully and respectfully.

We may terminate an employee either for cause or without cause.

* **For cause termination** is justified when an employee breaches their contract, engages in illegal activities (e.g. embezzlement), disrupts our workplace (e.g. harasses colleagues), performs below acceptable standards or causes damage or financial loss to our company.
* **Without cause termination** refers to redundancies or layoffs that may be necessary if we cease some of our operations or re-assign job duties within teams. We will follow applicable laws regarding notice and payouts.

We will offer severance pay to eligible employees. We may also help employees who were terminated without cause to find work elsewhere, if possible.

We may also compensate accrued vacation and sick leave upon termination, depending on local law. Whenever local law doesn’t have relevant stipulations, we will pay accrued leave only to those who weren’t terminated for cause. We will also consider union agreements and abide by agreed terms.

If you manage team members, avoid wrongful dismissal. When you terminate an employee for cause, we expect you to be certain you made the right choice and keep accurate performance and/or disciplinary records to support your decision.

## **Performance management**

Established [*quarterly*] performance reviews. During these reviews, your manager will fill out your performance evaluation report and arrange a meeting with you to discuss it. Through these discussions, managers aim to recognize employees who are good at their jobs, identify areas of improvement and talk about career moves. Pay increases or bonuses are not guaranteed. But we encourage managers to recommend rewards for their team members when they deserve them. There won’t be any forced ranking or other comparison between employees, as our goal is to help all employees improve and develop their careers.

Instructed all managers to meet with their team members once per [*week*] to provide feedback and talk about their work and motivations. This way, you can receive feedback in a timely manner and avoid surprises during your [*annual/ bi-annual/ quarterly*] performance review.

### **How we expect managers to lead employees**

If you manage a team, you are responsible for your team members’ performance. To conduct effective regular meetings and performance evaluations, we expect you to:

* **Set clear objectives**. Your team members should know what you expect of them. When you first hire someone to your team, ensure they understand their job duties. Set specific goals for each team member (and team-wide if applicable.) Revisit those goals during [*annual/ bi-annual/ quarterly*] performance reviews.
* **Provide useful feedback**. During scheduled meetings with your team members, give them both guidance and praise, as appropriate. Be fair and specific to help them understand and implement your feedback.
* **Keep your team members involved**. There should be two-way communication between you and your team. Make your expectations clear, but always take your team members’ motivations and aspirations into account. Discuss training and development opportunities that may interest your team members.
* **Keep logs with important incidents about each one of your team members**. These logs help you evaluate your team, but may also prove useful when rewarding, promoting or terminating your team members.

## **Employee training and development**

We owe our success to our employees. To show our gratitude, we will invest in our employee’s professional development. We want employees to feel confident about improving their efficiency and productivity. We also want to help our employees achieve personal growth and success.

Development is a collective process. Team members and managers should regularly discuss learning needs and opportunities. And it’s HR’s responsibility to facilitate any development activities and processes.

Reference:

1. “Company Cyber Security Policy Template.” 2017. Recruiting Resources: How to Recruit and Hire Better. May 11, 2017. <https://resources.workable.com/cyber-security-policy>.
2. “Employee Handbook.” 2017. Recruiting Resources: How to Recruit and Hire Better. September 15, 2017. https://resources.workable.com/employee-handbook-policies.