



VC GUIDELINES ON WEB BLOGS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

It is critical that we tell our story responsibly

Blogs are great ways of sharing reflections on your experiences overseas with a wider audience. Viatores Christi supports this method of communication. However, we do have a few guidelines for our members to ensure that both the organisation and the individual (VC Volunteer) can take full advantage of blogging in a responsible way.

Uphold the Fundamental Principles

Remember the commitment you have made to the ethos of Viatores Christi. If you choose to share your religious or political stances online, be certain you are representing yourself and not the organisation as a whole.

Use Disclaimers

Make it clear that the views you are expressing are yours alone and not necessarily those of Viatores Christi or the project you are working for.

Be Transparent

If you discuss Viatores Christi, then you have a duty to disclose your role within the organisation, i.e. a member serving overseas in a volunteer capacity.

Be Accurate

Even though your blog posts may be primarily made up of personal opinion, do your research well and check that your facts are accurate. Make sure you have permission to post any copyrighted information to your blog. Show respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others. Be careful about posting or linking to items that contain viruses.

Be Considerate

Remember that anyone, including your colleagues, family and friends may read what you publish online. We recommend that you avoid references to politically sensitive issues or other issues that could put yourself or others at risk. If you witness illegal, unsafe or unethical conduct, do not discuss it in your blog. Hopefully, such issues can be discussed directly with the project holder/mission partner or VC. (Reporting issues like those in a blog may do more harm than good).

Don't Reveal Confidential Information

By all means, include comments about the good work you are doing as a Viatores Christi member for the organisation you are working with. However, it is important to respect the confidentiality and to protect the dignity and privacy of those in the communities where you work.

It is also good to keep an awareness of your own privacy, in the interests of personal safety. For example, travel plans indicate that your house is vacant, people know your whereabouts. This might not always be in your best interest. Maintain a healthy awareness. Some information does not need to be in the public domain.

Following is a list of 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' that might be helpful.

Do

Be considerate
 Be transparent, use disclaimers
 Be accurate
 Respect copyright laws
 Tell us about your blog
 Be generous, e.g. *Put a link to the VC website on your blog*
 Respect work commitments
 Uphold the Fundamental Principles
 Adhere to the Dóchas Code of Conduct on the use of images when posting photos
 For Facebook, do choose the security settings you are comfortable with.

Don't

Reveal confidential information

Viatores Christi expresses thanks to the Carmichael Centre, Ethiopia, for sharing their blog guidelines.

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