Taking Social Media Precautions

Many politicians and public servants have seen their careers altered significantly after private information was posted on a social media site. As a leader, your reputation is important to protect. Therefore, deciding what to publicize via a social media network should be done with care. Ask yourself these questions to guide your decision-making.

• What do I want others to know about me? If the information shared via social media does not present you in the best light, you may not want to share the information. A good guide may be to ask yourself what your family or a potential employer might think about the post. If the reaction might be negative, reconsider whether you want to share it publicly.

• How much information do I want others to know about me? With social media, it has become easier to find information about others without ever making personal contact. Do you want everyone to know where you live or where you are every moment of the day? If not, then think about how much you post and consider using privacy settings that protect how much information is shared with others.

• How am I guarding my reputation? Think about whether you’re giving others social media ammunition to say negative things about you – and how those negatives could impact your organization, too. Whether it’s incriminating photos, an off-hand Tweet or a derogatory statement made by a Facebook friend that shows up on others’ news feeds, it all comes back to you. How are you going to guard your reputation and, consequently, that of your leadership organization?

“…to utilize social media tools effectively and properly, you must absolutely generate spontaneous communications in direct response to what others are saying or to what is happening in that moment. Be yourself. Be conversational. Be engaged.”

~ Aliza Sherman