

# **ABRAHAM BALDWIN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE PARTNERS IN EXCELLENCE**

## **Commitment to Service Excellence**

Partners in Excellence include the college president, administration, faculty, and staff of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and are committed to being courteous, helpful, accessible, responsive and knowledgeable in all their communication both internally and externally to the college environment.

Partners in Excellence are committed to four primary professional service standards which are used to guide the behavior of all employees from top administration to front line service providers. Our communications focus on promoting these behavioral standards:

- GREET everyone promptly and courteously.
- LISTEN with respect.
- BE HELPFUL. Treat others the way you want to be treated.
- HONOR your commitments in a timely manner.

No matter what we do or who we serve, users of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College services can expect these behaviors from any ABAC employee.

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE EXPECTATIONS**

### **Professional Assistance**

- ❖ I will accept responsibility for assisting others.
- ❖ I will demonstrate empathy with others' feelings.
- ❖ I will solicit additional information. If the issue can be resolved immediately, I will take action. If not, I will provide next step information.
- ❖ I will extend the same level of superior service to internal and external contacts.
- ❖ I will listen with respect and will always be polite and focused on the other person's perspective.
- ❖ I will give the contact my full attention and will not be distracted by background noise.
- ❖ I will conduct all conversations in a pleasant tone even if I do not agree with the contact's statement. I will not use a condescending tone but acknowledge the other person's point of view, i.e. "*I understand how you must feel about this ...*"
- ❖ I will respond to requests within 24 hours by providing a resolution or status report and/or provide the contact with a clear understanding of the steps needed for a resolution and give an estimate of the time needed to fulfill the request.

### **Professional Greeting**

- ❖ I will greet all contacts either in person or on the phone in a warm and friendly manner.
- ❖ In person contact, I will always smile and make eye contact. If busy with others, I will advise the new arrival that I will be with him/her momentarily.
- ❖ I will provide quality assistance to those present in my office/division before answering telephone calls.

## Telephone Service

- ❖ I will always be prepared to answer a phone call and will keep a pen and writing pad near the phone for messages. All messages will include:
  - ✓ The caller's name and phone number
  - ✓ If offered, the caller's office/department/division
  - ✓ The date and time of the message
  - ✓ The nature of the message if the caller chooses to disclose that information
  - ✓ The employee's name or initials
- ❖ ABAC's goal is to have all calls answered by a live person. If I am going to be away from my desk for an extended period, I should forward call to another employee or to voicemail.
- ❖ I will speak in a clear, calm, upbeat, non-hurried, professional manner.
- ❖ I will extend the same level of superior service to both internal and external contacts.
- ❖ I will answer all telephone calls immediately or at least by the third ring with the following information:
  - ✓ Identify ABAC and the appropriate office/division.
  - ✓ Identify myself using both our first and last name.
  - ✓ Offer to help the caller.Sample script: *ABAC Public Service & Business Outreach Center, Heather Vaughn speaking, how may I help you?*
- ❖ If answering a call for another employee, I will place the caller on hold before locating the other employee. Before placing the caller on hold, I will ask if the caller is able to hold.
- ❖ If a caller is on hold, I will check back within the first 30 seconds and always say, "Thank you for holding." I will offer to take a message or forward the caller to voicemail if available.  
Sample script: *Will you hold, please?*  
*I am sorry Dr. Ross is out of her office.*  
*Would you like to leave a message or be transferred to her voicemail?*
- ❖ A caller should be transferred only when absolutely necessary. I will provide the name and telephone number of the office or the person to whom the call is being transferred in case the call is disconnected.
- ❖ I will tell the person to whom the call is being transferred the caller's name and the nature of the call.
- ❖ I will transfer calls with care, being sure to check the extension and will always transfer calls to a manned telephone.
- ❖ I will not allow a caller to be transferred more than two times. If necessary, I will take the caller's name and number and take responsibility for conveying the message to the appropriate person for follow-up.
- ❖ I will ask permission before transferring a call to voicemail.
- ❖ Voicemail should be used as a last resort during business hours.
- ❖ I will keep voicemail messages current and am responsible for avoiding having a full voicemail box.
- ❖ I will check voicemail at least twice each day. All voicemail messages should be returned within 24 hours.
- ❖ It is unacceptable if a caller receives a constant busy signal or constant ringing phone with no answer.

- ❖ I will take responsibility for helping callers. I will listen actively to questions, communicate in a friendly manner and follow up to make sure the caller has been properly served.

### **Email Service**

- ❖ I will check email at least twice each day. All messages should have a response within 24 hours.
- ❖ If I will be away for several days, my email message should state when I will be out of the office and a contact for immediate assistance. When I return, every effort should be made to review all emails and respond by the end of the first business day back in the office.
- ❖ Business-related responses should include name, title, office/division and contact information. Use the signature feature of *Outlook* to add this information.
- ❖ If the email response involves a referral to another office/division or person, full contact information should be provided in the response.
- ❖ I am responsible for managing my emails to avoid having a full in-box.

### **Be Helpful and Knowledgeable .**

- ❖ I will answer questions accurately and provide appropriate support such as forms, directions, etc. If I do not know the answer to a question, I will conduct research to determine an accurate response.
- ❖ I will reduce "bouncing" or the "run around" of contacts. I will provide the name, telephone number, and email address of the person who can provide further assistance if needed in the future.
- ❖ I will always maintain a pleasant and professional tone.

### **Customize Technology**

- ❖ I will become familiar with the student email address system and the BannerWeb access system in order to assist students requesting information.
- ❖ I will become familiar with information provided through campus information channels (FOCUS, campus websites, e-mail, etc.) in order to assist those seeking information pertaining to such things such as financial aid, degree programs, etc.