

Code of Good Manners at DNB: how to behave and how not to behave?

DNB attaches high importance to proper conduct. This is why it has drawn up the following Code of Good Manners.

DNB's Code of Good Manners

DNB's Code of Good Manners partly follows from the text under the heading "integrity" in DNB's Code of Conduct: *"Our conduct is marked by integrity, carefulness and discretion. We avoid disreputable behaviour, treat others with respect and encourage our colleagues to do likewise"*. DNB's Code of Good Manners addresses sexual harassment, aggression and violence, bullying and discrimination, and seeks to ensure a good and inspiring working climate within DNB. In such a climate, unseemly behaviour is avoided, and it is common courtesy to treat others with respect and care. We encourage this attitude amongst ourselves by being alert to inappropriate behaviour. A good working climate requires an active contribution by everyone who works for DNB: not only as regards your own behaviour, but also by exercising vigilance regarding any inappropriate behaviour you observe in your own work situation. Senior Officers, in particular, should be aware of their responsibility in this respect.

Objective

The objective of DNB's Code of Good Manners (hereinafter "the Code") is to bring these guiding principles explicitly to the attention of everyone who works in any capacity for DNB. Furthermore, the Code is meant as some form of preventive policy which will, inter alia, be concretised in a systematic identification of the risks associated with inappropriate behaviour and in monitoring compliance with the Code by DNB's line management. Compliance with the principles of the Code forms part of staff performance and assessment policies.

Guiding principles

What exactly is inappropriate behaviour? What do we understand by sexual harassment? And what by aggression and violence? And what is actually meant by bullying or discrimination? The guiding principle is that it is you who should indicate when, in your view, certain behaviour is to be deemed inappropriate. It is immaterial whether such behaviour is wilful or not. The person who is guilty of such behaviour may not always be aware of it, or may not realise that a colleague is bothered by it. Besides, what is a mere prank for one person, can be a bridge too far for another. Every employee who feels offended, bullied, threatened or discriminated against, may contact a Confidential Adviser or submit a complaint to the independent Complaints Committee.

Totally unacceptable

DNB will not accept inappropriate behaviour! Everyone has the right to a pleasant work environment. And that includes a working atmosphere in which colleagues treat each other with respect. We therefore take policy regarding inappropriate behaviour seriously.

Do something about it

Inappropriate behaviour can pretty much spoil the enjoyment you have in your work. Sometimes you can make it clear that you do not accept certain behaviour and stop it with just one remark. But it is not always easy to speak up. When you challenge a colleague about inappropriate behaviour, he/she may find that you exaggerate, saying that the remark was meant "only as a joke" and that you must have misunderstood it. Maybe you

are afraid of not being taken seriously, or of being blamed yourself ('you provoked it') or of ending up in an isolated position. You should, however, realise that you are not the one responsible for the inappropriate behaviour or for its consequences. It is important that you call attention to your problem, however sensitive the subject may be. If you bottle things up, you will suffer and so will your job performance.

Who can you turn to?

Whether you are in permanent employment, or a temporary worker, an insourced employee, a trainee or a holiday worker, your best course of action would, of course, be to go to your immediate superior. Your superior is responsible for what happens at your department. You can also turn to one of the internal or external Confidential Advisers. They have an independent position and, as such, enjoy DNB's protection. Confidential Advisers have been trained to provide assistance in cases of inappropriate behaviour. Whatever course of action you choose, it will sometimes help just to unburden yourself. Or, you decide together what action to take. For instance, you could first try to seek a solution in an informal talk with a Confidential Adviser. You could also decide to submit a complaint to the independent Complaints Committee.

Final remarks

If you have been confronted with inappropriate behaviour, you need not necessarily call in a third party. The most important thing is that the inappropriate behaviour stops. You can make it clear that you do not accept certain behaviour. You can also talk about it with a colleague or with your Senior Officer. On the other hand, if you notice that a colleague is being harassed, you could challenge the perpetrator. And let the victimised colleague know that you support him/her. There is no place for sexual harassment, aggression and violence, bullying and discrimination at DNB!

More information

If you wish to know more about the issues mentioned above, please contact one of the Confidential Advisers.