

# PROFESSIONALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

Presented By: Ann Liberman, Director Alumni, Career & Professional Development  
University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work

## Defining Professionalism:

“The standards, views, and behaviors of one who engages in an activity to make his/her livelihood.”  
*Webster’s Dictionary*

“Professionalism is a focused, accountable, confident, competent, motivation toward a particular goal, with respect for hierarchy and humanity, less emotion.”  
*Edward Toupin*

## Professionalism is Judged By:

- Attitude
- Appearance
- Appropriateness
- Communication (verbal, non-verbal and written)
- Competence
- Integrity

## Social Work Core Values:

For the Social Work Profession the guiding principles are rooted in its set of core values. These core values are the foundation of social work’s unique purpose and perspective and are found in  
*The NASW Code of Ethics:*

- Service
- Social Justice
- Dignity and worth of the person
- Importance of human relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

National Association of Social Workers, *Code of Ethics for Social Workers*, Washington, DC: NASW, approved 1996, revised 1999.

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) uses the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) to accredit baccalaureate and master's-level social work programs. EPAS supports academic excellence by establishing thresholds for professional competence.

### **9 Social Work Competencies:**

- Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior
- Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice
- Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice
- Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice
- Engage in Policy Practice
- Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities
- Evaluate Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

Council on Social Work Education, Inc., *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards*, Alexandria, VA: CSWE, 2008, Revised 2010, Updated 2012, Revised 2015.

### **Quotes on Professionalism:**

“Personal character is the foundation to professional success. Be gracious, be humble, be forgiving, but be strong.”

Dana Perino

*Former White House Press Secretary, Media Strategist, Political Commentator*

Dana Perino, “Tales from the Trenches”, Talk given at the Center for Professional Excellence, York College of Pennsylvania, April, 2012.

“Professional is not a label you give yourself – it’s a description you hope others will apply to you.”

David Maister

David Maister, *True Professionalism*, Touchstone, New York: 1997.