

Credo for Ethical Communication

Approved by the NCA Legislative Council, 1999; Reaffirmed by the Legislative Assembly upon passing of the report and recommendations of the Taskforce on the Public Policy Platform, 2011; Legislative Assembly reaffirmed with edits, 2017. Legislative Assembly reaffirmed with edits, 2024.

Questions of right and wrong arise whenever people communicate. Ethical communication is fundamental to responsible thinking, decision-making, and relationship building, and community development within, and across, contexts, cultures, channels, and media. Moreover, ethical communication enhances human worth, human life, and dignity by fostering truthfulness, fairness, responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for self and others. We believe that unethical communication threatens the quality of all communication and, consequently, the well-being of individuals and the society in which we live. Therefore we, the members of the National Communication Association (NCA), endorse and are committed to practicing the following principles of ethical communication:

We advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason as essential to the integrity of communication.

We endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and acknowledgement of dissent to achieve the informed and responsible decision-making fundamental to civil society.

We strive to understand and respect other communicators' intent before evaluating and responding to their messages.

We promote access to communication resources and opportunities necessary to fulfill human potential and contribute to the well-being of individuals, families, communities, and societies.

We promote a supportive climate of communication that entails caring, mutual understanding and respect for individual communicators' needs and characteristics.

We condemn communication that degrades individuals and humanity through distortion, intimidation, coercion, and violence, and through the expression of intolerance and hatred.

We commit to supporting the courageous expression of personal convictions in pursuit of fairness and justice.

We advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings when facing significant decisions, while also respecting privacy and confidentiality.

We accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences of our own communication and expect the same from others.