

People associated with the VT KnowledgeWorks program receive vast amounts of business information, verbally, electronically, and on paper. It is clearly impossible for any individual to maintain a mental catalog by which to preserve clear distinctions among bits of information which might be clearly public, informally private, situationally private, proprietary but not necessarily confidential, and absolutely confidential. Furthermore, the very nature of the networking process by which VT KnowledgeWorks connects individuals and enterprises with each other for their mutual benefit requires relatively open communication among the potentially interested parties. Under these circumstances strict compliance with traditional non-disclosure agreements is simply impractical.

As a consequence, VT KnowledgeWorks has chosen to operate under the following policy guidelines regarding confidentiality and non-disclosure.

1. All VT KnowledgeWorks program participants are expected to exercise good faith and appropriate business restraint in communications involving information concerning any other entity, however that information might have been obtained.
2. Detailed technical information which is not protected by patent (granted or pending) or by similar means and which is vital to the economic welfare of an individual or enterprise will not be accepted by VT KnowledgeWorks for review or re-distribution to third parties.
3. Documents, either electronic or hard-copy, clearly marked "confidential" will not be distributed by VT KnowledgeWorks without the consent and direction of the owner/author of the document; however, it should be expected that incidental information about a company, process, technology, relationship, or strategy obtained by review of such documents might possibly be communicated in the general course of business discussions.
4. VT KnowledgeWorks does not execute common, traditional non-disclosure agreements. The various individuals and enterprises, however, which meet and interact via the VT KnowledgeWorks program, are encouraged to execute among themselves such agreements as they deem necessary under their particular circumstances.

This policy statement will be communicated to all formal program participants and prospective participants and will be posted on the VT KnowledgeWorks web site for public access.