

# A Guide on Job Behavior

## What Employers Expect From You

Career Foundations: Item 7

The following guide is a list of employer expectations when you start your first job. You are being paid to do a job and the better you do it, the better your career will become. It's up to you to fit into the company work environment. Your employer is paying you to do a job for them, not the other way around; they owe you nothing else.

### An Employer's Basic Expectations

- ◆ **Reliable transportation**
- ◆ **Get to work on time**
- ◆ **You are then expected to work for a full day!  
Always work your full eight hours**
- ◆ **Many companies require you to report to your supervisor as soon as you arrive for work**
- ◆ **If you are going to be late, or are sick, or cannot come to work for any reason, it is important for you to contact your supervisor as early as possible**
- ◆ **Notify your supervisor as soon as possible when you need to leave early for a doctor/dentist appointment and vacation/personal leave days**
- ◆ **Be really sick before you are absent**

### What employers will expect from you as a team player

- ◆ You may be asked to work late or over the weekends
- ◆ Your job performance is very important
- ◆ You must get along with your peers, subordinates and superiors. You don't have to like them but you do have to get along with them.

### What to do when you finish your work

- ◆ Do "maintenance" work of filing, cleaning your work area, putting away supplies, returning business emails
- ◆ Approach your supervisor and let them know you are available for additional tasks

### The importance of reputation

- ◆ You are always being watched

- ◆ After a while, you will have a reputation whether you want one or not
- ◆ When you leave a company, people will remember the reputation you left behind
- ◆ When co-workers move to other companies, they will still know what you did or didn't do
- ◆ When companies do reference checks, they may talk to someone who is not on your list, but that person knows your work history at the same company
- ◆ It always helps your reputation to have a clean and professional looking work area

### Your work area

- ◆ Do not put anything on your desk or walls that is of questionable nature
- ◆ Family photos and related items are always acceptable as long as they don't take over your desk
- ◆ Any company related materials are allowed
- ◆ Before you go home, clean up your area
- ◆ People assume that if your area is clean and organized, you are also organized
- ◆ Make sure you don't talk too loud when you are on the phone
- ◆ Always be polite and try to keep your area as quiet as possible
- ◆ If your company allows you to listen to music during work hours, keep it low or use ear phones
- ◆ If you do use earphones, keep the volume low enough that you will hear your phone or if someone's trying to talk to you
- ◆ Allow easy access to your area, do not have boxes or piles of papers in the way or that could become a fire or safety hazard

### Dress Code

- ◆ You don't have to leave your own style at home, but you must be able to fit into the corporate dress code
- ◆ Dress for a professional and competent image
- ◆ Notice how the organization is dressed when you came in for your interview
- ◆ Most companies will have a dress code outlined in the employee manual
- ◆ Your fashion choices speak volumes about you

- ◆ **Corporate America’s unwritten rule is that you have to “look” the position you are in (or want to be in)**
- ◆ Men should avoid pants that are too baggy or too tight
- ◆ Wild hair styles should be left for the clubs and partys
- ◆ Distracting clothing, jewelry or numerous piercings are not appropriate for the office
- ◆ Women should always have manicured nails, run-free hose, scuff-free shoes, and neat hair
- ◆ Clothes should be properly tailored and loose enough to sit down comfortably
- ◆ Bare mid-drifts and shoulders are inappropriate
- ◆ Your outfits should not be too sexy or see-through
- ◆ Keep away from micro miniskirts, spaghetti straps, sheer sundresses, and strappy stilettos
- ◆ If you wear a uniform at work, make sure it is clean, pressed and fits properly
- ◆ Casual days will be defined by management or included in your employee handbook
- ◆ **You are dressing for work, not for the beach, not for dating, and not for going to a party**

### **Eight secrets of Job Behavior**

#### **1. Observe, listen, keep quiet, and absorb**

- a. You are the “new kid on the block” now, and it is important that you observe and listen to everything that you hear around you
- b. Be reserved and absorb all of the information that you can, through reading, listening, asking questions, and taking notes on everything
- c. Don’t be a know-it-all, especially if you are new to the organization

#### **2. Do not be known as a gossip or someone who is spreading incorrect information**

- a. Evaluate the “corporate culture” of the organization
  - i. Who is in power?
  - ii. Who is being looked up to?
  - iii. Who is not taken seriously and why?
  - iv. How does the organization operate?
  - v. What are the “unwritten rules”?
- b. Listen to the corporate grapevine but don’t add to it

#### **3. Be Professional**

- a. Always be courteous, and never be rude
- b. Do not use foul language or tell off-color jokes or stories
- c. Never get visibly angry
- d. Never become loud or physical
- e. Keep your hands to yourself
- f. Never flirt with co-workers

#### **4. Always have a positive attitude**

- a. Do not let problems, disappointments, or stress get to you
- b. If you get negative or start vocally complaining, your co-workers will lose respect for you
- c. People will remember if you have a “can-do” attitude, or a reputation of giving up or “pressuring out”

#### **5. Ask for feedback**

- a. Don’t be afraid to ask if you are going in the right direction and meeting acceptable time objectives
- b. You may have to work a little harder in order to meet the time goals
- c. Learn how to accept and use criticism
- d. It is difficult to be criticized, but you can learn from it

#### **6. Admit mistakes**

- a. Don’t cover them up or try to blame other people
- b. Contact your supervisor as soon as possible and explain the situation
- c. You will be looked at with a mature eye if you are honest and don’t try to cover up
- d. You are going to make mistakes in your career, so admit them, correct them, learn from them and move on

#### **7. Expect change**

- a. The only thing you can do about change is to expect it, adapt, accept it and move on

#### **8. Maintain your sense or humor**

- a. This is the best thing that you can do to maintain your sanity when pressure begins to build

In the workplace you are part of a team and it is going to be completely different from your school time. Your employer will expect you to work for your pay; get your job done, on time, within the budget and at an acceptable quality level. Your employer also wants a staff that is responsible, interested, loyal, and team players that are on time and consistently get the job done on time. If you are not interested in your job, there are a lot of other people ready to show they can do it better than you can.



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