

Tips for Job Success



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Introduction



Congratulations - You've landed a job!

Here are 20 points to help you keep your new job:

1. Report to work on time (10 minutes before your shift starts, so that you can put your belongings away, etc, and be ready to work when your shift starts.)
2. If you must be absent, be sure to notify your supervisor (in advance, if possible) and be absent only for a good reason.
3. Dress appropriately for your work.
4. Keep yourself and your work area neat.
5. Listen to your supervisor and follow instructions carefully, ask questions if you are unsure.
6. Whatever your assignment, give it your absolute best, with a good attitude.
7. Be mindful of your cell phone use; cell phones should only be used on your breaks.
8. Show interest and initiative in your work, be excited.
9. Be dependable - be sure your assignments are completed properly and on time.
10. Take every opportunity to improve your job skills and knowledge.
11. Be courteous to customers and fellow employees.
12. Observe all safety rules. Learn and follow company policies.
13. Be honest: don't take equipment, services or goods from your employer.
14. Earn your wages by giving a fair day's work for a day's pay.
15. Don't overuse your break time, adding a few minutes here and there will be noticed.
16. Don't use company supplies for personal use.
17. Avoid using the company phone and internet for personal calls or personal use.
18. Ask for feedback.
19. Come up with solutions.
20. Stay on top of deadlines.



“A new job is an amazing chance to show the world what you are capable of. You have everything you need to be great. Just use it and never give up on your dreams.”



Employer Expectations

Employer expectations are the skills and abilities that employers expect of their employees. These are related to the roles and responsibilities of the job and position you were hired to do. Below are a list of some common employer expectations:

1. **A positive attitude** is one of the most important factors in achieving job success. Do not carry negative feelings into your new workplace. Resolve them elsewhere.
2. **Always be on time.** How long will it take to get to work? Allow a few extra minutes for traffic problems and getting children to daycare. Set an alarm clock to help you get up. Being reliable and dependable gains the trust and respect of your new employer.
3. **Good attendance and promptness** are always important. If you are going to be unavoidably late or away sick, ask your supervisor the proper method of informing them.
4. **Know and follow** all office rules, policies and procedures. Read the employee manuals and/or policy and procedures manual(s).
5. **Listen and learn.** Be open to new ways of doing things, even if you were taught differently in school or on a different job. Do not be quick to find fault, criticize, or complain until you can prove you can do something a better way.
6. **Meet and exceed** your employer's expectations.
7. **Learn all you can** about the job you were hired to do before thinking about moving up.
8. **Be a team player.** Be willing to help. Know the goals of your job and how your job fits into the overall organization. Avoid a "know-it-all" attitude. Try to fit in with the team. Keep your sense of humour.
9. **Ask for help** when you need it. If you make a mistake, let your supervisor know immediately. Find out how you can fix it.
10. **Follow the proper chain of command.** Discuss items with your supervisor first.
11. **Ask about the business cell phone policy.** Cell phones should only be used during breaks and lunch.

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“Every skill you acquire doubles your odds of success.”

- Scott Adams

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Your First Day on the Job

Your First Impression

The first impression is important as this sets the tone for your future workplace relationships. First impressions are based upon your actions, comments, dress and non-verbal behaviour.

Surviving your First Day

Being nervous on your first day is normal. Be humble and accept that this is a natural part of this new experience. Don't be hard on yourself, everyone had to start somewhere.

Bring a notebook with you and use it to keep track of information and to write down names, and roles of the people you meet.

Introduce yourself to other staff members. Be nice to others first; don't wait for others to be nice to you. Be mindful that this is a transition day for people at your new workplace. Have a sincere desire to join the group, let them know either verbally or non-verbally you want to be a contributing team member.

Try to do everything in your power to have a positive start. Take time to look around and observe others. What social cues can you take in and apply? Watching the activities in your new surroundings can give you a clearer definition of the way things work.

If you have any confusion about expectations or have perceived "silly questions" make sure to ask those questions and seek clarification.



First Day Planning

Planning for Success

Starting a new job is stressful. Taking steps to remove additional stress can make your first day a great success and reduce your overall stress. Try out some of these tips to help you in having a great first day!

Successful First Day Tips

During the days leading up to your first day think about the following:

- Create a plan for getting to work - plan your commute and have a back up plan to arrive on time for your first day.
- Lay out your clothes for your first day of work the night before, this will save you time as you start your day.
- Make sure your alarm is set and set the secondary alarm as a just in case step.
- Think about your introductions during your first day. You will likely have to introduce yourself more than once and coming up with your personal opening statement will take some stress out of the experience of meeting new people. An introduction should be approximately 30 seconds. You don't need a rehearsed statement but thinking about how and what you'll share with others can take away some of the nervousness of meeting new people.
- Breaks and lunches can be unknowns on the first day, bring snacks and/or lunch to get through the day.
- Plan your dinner a day ahead; giving yourself some breathing room after your first day. If you are able to head home with a meal plan ready to go, you will be giving yourself the space to reflect on your first day and lightening the load of needs following what may be a high stress or high demand day.



“Success is not about luck; it’s about preparation, hard work, and perseverance.”

- Chris Hadfield, Canadian Retired Astronaut, Engineer, Fighter Pilot, Musician and Writer

Your First Week on the Job

Survival Skills for the First Week

Your first week of work is about exploration and learning. It is balancing first impressions, while also avoiding putting too much pressure on yourself. Your goal should be learning the job and getting a feel for your new space.

Be Part of the Team

Make an active effort to become a part of the team. A major part of working is being able to get along well with colleagues.

Learning the Ropes

- Expect lots of learning, as you start the process of understanding the policies and procedures of your new workplace.
- Take all jobs seriously. If your employer/supervisor can see that you have a professional attitude and respect the fact that all tasks, no matter how small, are important, it won't be long before you find yourself working on the more complex and interesting jobs.
- Learn all of the tasks associated with the job. Stay positive and prove you are team player!
- Ask your employer what things can be done when things aren't busy - take initiative.

Expect the Unexpected

- There will be surprises.
- You will experience every emotion possible.
- Keep your wellbeing and mental health in mind. If this is your first full time job or you are returning to the workforce after being away consider getting out on your lunch break. Give yourself the room to break up your day and come back feeling refreshed.
- You are expected to take initiative; don't expect someone to tell you where you should be or what you should be doing all the time.

Own Up Immediately to Mistakes

Don't cover up mistakes or errors. Don't blame someone else or make excuses. It will only make the situation worse. You can't know the ins and outs of a brand new job. Ask questions and speak up when things aren't going well or if you need assistance or support.



“There are no mistakes or failures, only lessons.”
- Denis Waitley



Personal Planning

Trying to balance your responsibilities in your new position and your personal responsibilities takes adjustment and time. Below are some ideas to help you support that transition and give you some ideas to help plan your personal life:

1. Prior to starting the job have all of your appointments with doctors, dentists, etc, out of the way. Have your transportation and daycare lined up so you do not immediately have to take time off. Have an emergency plan for daycare and transportation.
2. Be willing to learn new skills. Keep a record of classes you are taking that relate to the job. Review this with your supervisor at an appropriate time.
3. Take time to make new friends. Find positive and upbeat co-workers. Avoid negative, critical, and gossiping people.
4. Keep your personal life and problems at home. Do not use the employer's equipment and time to do personal things like making personal phone calls, texting, using the copy machine, or resolving your personal problems on the job. If you are having trouble resolving personal problems, counselling, support groups, or employee assistant programs may be useful. Speak with your supervisor to address assistance programs available with your new job.
5. Create the image. Dress for the job you want next.
6. Be patient with yourself and your employer. It takes time to get used to, learn, and like a new job.
7. Volunteer for projects and committee, if your work is completed and your supervisor approves.

Planning Tools

Using online and personal tools to stay organized and on top of your personal life while taking on your new job can be helpful in reducing stress and benefit your overall health and wellness.

Tools:

- Use an agenda book to keep track of appointments (paper or digital)
- Many personal tablets and cellular devices have application (app) options to support planning. Use a search engine and search up “personal planner tools” and you will get a variety of options (free or with membership fees).
- Bring a notebook to write down important information.
- See the resource section of this guide for a worksheet on personal planning



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Getting Along with Co-Workers

Making friends and getting along with co-workers comes with benefits like the ability to thrive and work productively in your work environment. Creating an environment where you get along with co-workers can also benefit you by growing your social and professional networks.

✓ Tips and Benefits of Getting Along with Co-Workers

1. Build relationships from the start of your employment. This starts with being friendly from the start of your employment. Greet the people you work with. Remember your co-workers names and the job they have with the business. Asking questions and accepting advice also conveys your interest in others and the business you work for. Where possible, join colleagues for invitations to activities outside of the workplace. Participating in this way creates an opportunity to learn more about the people you work with and build relationships.
2. Accept criticism as constructive. Do not become defensive or take criticism personally. Thank the person for their input. If you are unsure how to handle the situation, check with your supervisor.
3. Always be friendly to everyone. Be willing to go the extra mile. This creates goodwill with employers, co-workers and customers.
4. Notice who your boss relies on and model yourself after them.
5. Realize playing politics or power games could be dangerous and backfire on you.
6. Treat everyone with courtesy and respect. Remember that as you climb the career ladder, you may meet the same people on your way down the ladder.
7. Keep your emotions under control. The job is not the place to express or show your opinions or feelings.
8. Show appreciation. Let your supervisor know you appreciate their training, support, input and feedback. Thank your new co-workers for their support of you joining the team and acknowledge the ways they are helping you and taking time to support you in your new position.
9. Strive to be positively recognized. Be friendly and helpful to everyone at all levels.
10. Use professional etiquette. Consider the appropriate language and manners to use at your new workplace by looking to the example of others.
11. Review and follow the workplace policies related to dress code and scent policies.
12. Be approachable by being available to your co-workers and colleagues and by showing a genuine interest in them.
13. Use active listening skills when participating in activities with co-workers and colleagues. See the 'Active Listening' page in the Resource section of this guide for more information.



Inclusive Workplaces and Accommodations

Under Canadian human rights law, employers have an obligation to adjust workplace rules, policies and practices that have a negative impact on employees or job applicants with disabilities.

What are accommodations?

Accommodations are not one size fits all. Workplace accommodations are often thought of as physical environment changes like ramps, adjustable/mechanical desks, or automatic doors. Accommodations go beyond physical/space changes and can be easy adjustments and require very little time to support.

Accommodations or adjustments in the workplace look different for each disability. Adjustments like accommodations for work hours/schedules or writing down all expectations so they are clearly conveyed, or building in breaks or having meetings that meet your needs. Many accommodations benefit everyone in a workplace.

How do you bring up your needs?

You can address your needs throughout the employment process - in the job application process, interview, testing, on-boarding and on the job.

You can request a confidential conversation with an employer to address your needs or acknowledge your needs in a cover letter or career statement on your resume.



Accommodation Resources

[Here to Help](http://heretohelp.bc.ca)
heretohelp.bc.ca

[The Inclusive Workplace](http://www.theinclusiveworkplace.ca)
www.theinclusiveworkplace.ca

[Disclosing a Disability Guide](#)
[Disability Alliance of BC](#)

[Disclosing a Disability Toolkit](#)
[Family Institute of BC](#)



Resources

Personal Planning Worksheet

The next page of this guide has a blank personal planning worksheet. You can print the page and create a personal plan for the first day/week (and beyond) of your new position. Planning ahead is a great way to reduce your overall stress and improve your health and wellness.

Active Listening

Building relationships at the start of your employment can play an important role in having a great start to your new job. Active Listening is a tool to use as you start your new position.

What is Active Listening?

Active Listening is a communication skill that helps you understand the message of the person you are listening to, comprehend what they've said and respond in a thoughtful manner. When you don't participate in active listening you tend to filter information and miss important details.

Active Listening is important in the workplace and helps build trust with your new colleagues and customers/clients at your new job.

Example of Active Listening:

A colleague is explaining a procedure at your new workplace. When you are participating in active listening, you:

1. Use non-verbal techniques to follow along - nodding your head, keeping eye contact, standing or sitting without your arms crossed (open gestured), by still.
2. Use short verbal responses - "I understand", "I see", repeat back what you've heard in a condensed way to show you comprehend what was said, ask questions that show you were listening and are related to what is being shared.
3. Focus on the information being shared and try to stop yourself from interrupting or interjecting. While active listening, you are not trying to problem solve or provide an immediate response, the intent is to be zoned in on what is being shared and not formulating your response or next question.

Client/customer example:

A customer is upset about a purchase they made and they are raising their voice. With active listening you are listening, understanding and responding. Listening and responding to expressed emotions and unexpressed emotions, understanding and responding to underlying issues. In responding to the customer you respond by: demonstrating an interest in what is being said, creating an opportunity for meaningful discussion/response, deferring biases or judgement, recognize verbal and non-verbal cues to develop a relationship with the customer that is respectful and honours what they are sharing with you.

Dress Code and Scent Policies

What is a dress code?

A dress code is a set of rules that are provided by your new employer regarding what clothing you are asked to wear at work. A dress code policy is to ensure employees embody the company's brand and/or professional image.

Some companies may not outline a specific set of clothing they expect you to wear and may just state that dress code is "business casual" or "casual". Some companies have uniforms or require safety clothing. Asking about dress code in advance of your first day is important. You can take cues when you attend an interview about the expectations of the work place, but it is best to ask your supervisor what the specific expectations are.

Employers commonly suggest business casual. The definition of business casual varies based on each workplace. Work clothing can be gender neutral. During your first few days of work remember to plan for your comfort while meeting the needs of your employers dress code. Dressing for comfort allows you to focus more on everything else happening that first day/week; avoiding the distraction of new clothing that might be scratchy, ill-fitting or creating blisters (new shoes).

Keep in mind that you should avoid the following kinds of clothing (unless otherwise approved by an employer): jogging pants or athletic wear, excessively dirty or worn clothing, sandals/flip flops, and jewelry that can cause a safety hazard.

What is a scent policy?

Scent policies recognize that a growing number of people have developed sensitivities to chemicals/scents. Businesses have a scent policy to limit the exposure to workers, clients, customers, and volunteers to chemical substances.

Many employers will encourage staff to use non-scented body products, refrain from the use of optional items that give off scents, like air fresheners, and use the least toxic cleaning products, disinfectants and paints. Pay attention to signage posted in your workplace to notify you of expectations and ask your supervisor if you have questions.



First Three Months

As you start your new position take time to adjust to your new environment and remember to take care of yourself. New jobs are stressful experiences and it is important to be conscious of your wellness and health.

Some additional ideas that can help you through your first three months are some following tips and thoughts:

1. When you start the new position, and if you are using the daily planner sheets, make a point of writing down highlights and successes. At the three month mark review these points and recognize on your journey. Writing down the hard days is good too, as it will show you how far you've come in your new job. Something that might have frustrated you in the first week might be wildly simple now - progress!
2. Develop a career plan. Reflect on your new position and how you can maintain or increase your activity with your new job. Talk to your manager/supervisor about how you might advance or what the path for advancement looks like.
3. Have a performance evaluation with your supervisor/manager. Ask about your growth in the position and get feedback on how things are going. Actively seek updates/feedback meetings throughout your first year and beyond.
4. Once you've been in the position for a while, you'll start to get the hang of things and it is a good idea to share your ideas and speak up in meetings. If that sounds challenging make sure to bring up those ideas in private with your supervisor/manager.
5. Training plan. Talk with your supervisor/manager about additional training opportunities. Ask about training and conference opportunities. Take initiative and create space to grow your position with the business through training and learning new skills.

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