



Professionalism in the Workplace and Early Time on the Job



Written and reviewed by Seasoned Match Mentors

This module is aimed at students getting ready to enter the workplace by outlining what to expect and how best to prepare for the transition from college to a work environment.

Mentee Objective covered

The mentee should share their experience and understanding of professionalism and corporate culture in jobs or internships held to date. Discuss takeaways and how to build on what is known to prepare for the future.

Goals / Objectives of this Module

Cover the transition process from the academic world to full time employment. Discuss what to expect and how best to prepare.

LESSON / MODULE TOPIC COVERED

Employers are looking for attention to appearance, ability to communicate respectfully and clearly, willingness to listen carefully and with attention, and the motivation to successfully complete a task. And, while many employers appreciate the fact that many college graduates are tech savvy, they are less than impressed with the constant need for many to bury themselves in it. During the first year on the job you want to become more and more self-sufficient.

To improve your performance at work and your chances of career success, consider these professional behaviors that make good impressions:

1. Arrive on time
2. Follow your employer's dress code
3. Communicate respectfully
4. Be honest
5. Have a positive attitude
6. Take responsibility
7. Avoid social media
8. Help others
9. Act ethically
10. Be reliable

Employees who show professionalism at work are often productive, motivated and perform at a high level. Colleagues and clients enjoy working with them, and your performance might transition into leadership roles. Some companies have codes of professional conduct to help guide employees. The concept of "Professionalism" has evolved over time and will continue to do so. Traditional standards, once the norm, are changing with the times. Understand your company's culture to make the best impression.



While still in college, students can practice professionalism by:

- Turning in work on time
- Interacting politely with professors and students
- Paying attention in class (no texting)
- Not missing class unless they have a good reason, and coming to class on time
- Not making excuses, and taking responsibility for poor work or missed deadlines
- Not doing as little as possible to get a decent grade
- Not complaining that the work is too hard or too much

The first 90 days on the job, often referred to as a grace period or honeymoon, is also a probationary period. Be self-aware about how you move through this period of employment. Understanding professionalism and how to apply it to this probationary period will be important. During the onboarding/orientation process carefully pay attention to all information provided and ask questions if clarification is needed. No matter how knowledgeable you are in your field, your employer may do things in ways you never considered. Be open to new ideas and concepts. Ask for guidance if needed.

During your second and third months of employment as you become comfortable with your new position, work to develop good relationships with your peers and gage your efforts as a team member always building on best practices. Ask for a meeting with your supervisor/manager as you complete your probationary period to review your progress. Remain positive and embrace the feedback you receive. Continuously build on knowledge and expertise.

Lesson Notes

Should your mentoring relationship move beyond the academic year and into a full-time job after college, talking about the various phases on full time employment will be beneficial. Additionally, finding a mentor in the workplace might be beneficial.

Post Lesson and Pre-Lesson Assignments

Continue what is working well and evaluate if something better might work and what that might be. Determine how to best incorporate solution into your life.

SOURCES

1. Herry, J., "10 Ways to Demonstrate Professional Behavior at Work, web 31 January 2023, Indeed, <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/professional-behavior-workplace>
2. Miles, M., "Redefining professionalism in the workplace" Betterup blog, web 3 October 2022, <https://www.betterup.com/blog/professionalism-in-the-workplace#what-is-professionalism-in-the-workplace?%C2%A0-test/>
3. Hankel, I, PhD "The Exciting (or, Dreadful) First 90 Days of a New Job. Here's What to Expect", web Cheeky Scientist, <https://cheekyscientist.com/the-exciting-or-dreadful-first-90-days-of-a-new-job-heres-what-to-expect/>

