

8 Things Never To Do While Formally Employed And How To Avoid Them

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Every *formal workplace* has systems and processes in the form of vision, mission, culture, and values, etc. that exist to set parameters and focus areas for organisations. These translate into a way of doing things. Thus they exist to govern behaviour, organisational interaction and determine thrust for effort. In formal workplace settings, there is behaviour that is expected and obviously that which is not expected or tolerated. The expected behaviour is *incentivised* and *reinforced* through different actions, programs and schemes whilst on the other hand behaviour that is not tolerated is punished one way or the other. The chief reason for these reactions being that organisations want to be highly efficient and effective in what they do such that there is maximum utilisation of resources to drive bottom-line growth. Below are 8 things one should whilst *formally employed* and suggested steps as to how to avoid them:

1. Never be a perennial late comer

One should never be consistently late when it comes to coming to work. This is because it creates a negative impression especially if one is still new within the organisation. The lateness behaviour speaks more as it shows that the latecomer has no regard to follow set rules by being on time and that they do not know how to prioritize their activities. Being late *disrupts workflow* especially if one works in a department where there has to be constant customer interaction in delivering a service or product. It causes inconvenience both to the company and the clients thereby creating a possibility of financial loss, loss of customers and bad customer service. Thus being late to work is to be avoided at all times.

How to avoid being a perennial late comer?

To ensure that one will be on time if they drive to work they should test drive the route to their workplace before they start so that they will know how long it takes to get there. They also have to factor in extra time if there's traffic, construction, or other reasons to expect a delay. The same goes for those employees that commute using public transport. They should time their travel factoring in delay time also such that it becomes a well-programmed routine. It is important to note that for all this to be achievable one has to work up early.

2. Do not dress unprofessionally

In a formal dressing appropriately is of paramount importance. There's nothing more embarrassing than showing up in a getup that doesn't fly with your supervisors and making an *unprofessional* first impression. In the service industry where there is constant interaction with the outside world dress code is also part of how your organisations brand is perceived. Thus one should not dress shabbily or unprofessionally as this might have a negative impact on the perceived image. Dress code is of

importance such that across industries you get to see some organisations having a standard dress code laid out or uniforms so as to maintain uniformity and acceptable dressing standards.

How to avoid dressing unprofessionally?

Before starting a new job, one should talk with the hiring manager or human resources professional to make sure they get to have an understanding of what constitutes acceptable attire for the new workplace.

3. One should not expect hand-holding

In a formal work setting, there are certain processes, tools, and forms that make up the standard operating procedures of your company. You may have been introduced to these through a very organized, systematic orientation, or you may feel like you're expected to absorb them by osmosis. If you were formally informed, "consider yourself fortunate," writes Heather Huhman (2017), Glassdoor career and workplace expert.

How to avoid feeling the need for hand-holding?

One should take initiative and master the basics on their own. This will prove to be a valuable learning curve and the skills and knowledge gained during such experiences will be lasting.

4. Don't ask co-workers to do your work

During the first days it is understandable that one may need help or guidance during their first few weeks at a new job, and asking co-workers for assistance or just to answer questions can be perfectly acceptable. But there's no quicker way to make enemies than to ask or expect one's new co-workers to do your job for them. Remember, as a new job holder one would have been hired because managers believed in their ability to get the job done.

How to avoid it?

Ask for help if you need it, but believe in yourself and prove that you can do the work yourself.

5. Don't take too much personal time

Time spent at work is for, well, work. An employer isn't paying you to chat with your girlfriend or even your kids' babysitter. If friends or family members are prone to call you during working hours, remind them before you start the new job that you will now be working during certain hours and request that they avoid calling you during those hours.

How to avoid having too much personal time at work?

One should make it a personal policy of limiting personal phone calls and texts to your lunch break,

except for during emergencies.

6. Do not spend much time doing non-work activities

In a formal set up the focus should be on performing beyond expectations. An employee has to concentrate on the core activities most of the time. Whilst it is understandable that one might want to refresh by taking a break from work-related activities and engage in activities such as social media surfing these should be limited as they tend to be addictive and luring such that more time might be wasted on these now-work related platforms at the expense of actual work that needs to be done. This will mostly affect the performance of the individual, department and ultimately the whole organisation.

How to avoid stealing time from your organisation?

Similar to spending much time on personal stuff one should have designated times to refresh or reboot and these have to short stints and the employee after taking one has to quickly get back to the core activities which they are actually paid for.

7. Don't be afraid to ask for help

One may be so eager to start a new job that they don't want to stop and ask questions. But by skipping even the most basic questions, one will be setting themselves up for failure. Rather than making a mistake that could cost the organisation time and money, one should ask questions about everything they need to know, from what their job responsibilities are to who can help them with Internet or phone problems, to how they get paid and much more. In a formal work setting, there will always be a learning curve, and effective managers understand that. Inevitably, one will be asked to do something or expected to know something that they don't yet know or know how to do. Rather than saying one can complete the task on their own, one has to be honest and not afraid to say, 'I don't know.'

How to avoid being afraid to ask for help?

One has to be truthful with themselves that they do not know how to accomplish a certain task. This opens them up to an opportunity to seek help from colleagues who will be better able to help them the knowhow needed in accomplishing the task.

8. Do not use informal channels of communication

An employee in a formal work setup has to use the formal channels of communication at all times. This is professional and helps with keeping track of information, progress made and allows others can quickly get up to speed just in case one is to leave or sick at home. This, therefore, means that adherence to formal communication channels allows for continuity in work just in case there is a challenge that arises.

How to avoid not using formal channels?

Make sure that all communication is done through the formal stipulated channels and in cases of emails make sure relevant people are copied in the communication.

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