



## 20 PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

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1. Dress appropriately. Business casual dress is:
    - a. Guys: button down shirt, not blue jeans, not sneakers.
    - b. Gals: not miniskirts, low-cut blouses.
    - c. Be low profile with piercings, tattoos, jewelry, perfumes and colognes.
  2. Be on time always (half of success is showing up). If traffic or something has delayed you, consider calling to let the office know, especially if there's a meeting.
  3. Keep track of your hours, even if you don't have to. Create an excel file, with project name, task, date and hours spent, so you will know how to pace yourself, cost projects, and also provide documentation to your supervisor.
  4. Be proactive about learning. Read about the things your company does, about your customers.
    - a. Every industry has a trade association with lots of information in it. Google is your friend.
    - b. Join an association or society relevant to your business and/or profession. But do so with the intent of achieving a leadership position -- don't just be a member.
    - c. While it's useful to read your business's trade press -- it's better for you to read the press your customer's customer reads. If you're in a consumer product/service business, read Good Housekeeping, Reader's Digest, et al.
    - d. Learn all about the services and products your employer provides.
  5. Learn about business operations, marketing and management. There's a lot of audio recordings you can listen to while exercising or commuting. There's a lot of fluffy books to read but they can be helpful.
  6. Get into the topic you are studying. If your project is about flat panel TVs, go to an electronics store, talk to sales people, etc. If you are studying text messaging and you haven't text messaged before, start doing so.
  7. *Be proactive*: Try to anticipate the needs of your supervisor. Work on making a contribution as soon as possible -- it's no longer do-what-your-told, keep-your-nose-clean and wait-your-turn. You need to be assertive without being a "hot-dog."
  8. But don't be *too* earnest, especially when working in the political world. It may take a week or more to get a good read on the culture of your new workplace.
  9. Don't wait till last minute to let anyone know that there are problems on a project. Try to solve it initially and if it doesn't work, then swallow your pride and tell your supervisor.
  10. If you see a problem, try to figure out what the solution is and present it to your supervisor.
  11. Losers blame others. Winners take responsibility. Give credit where credit is due.
  12. Don't say bad things about other people at work. This is incredibly hard to do but very important. If someone starts complaining, at some point draw the line and say something like "I hear you but I'd rather not think too much about negative stuff, so can we move on?" Or excuse yourself and leave the room.
  13. Learn what your fellow employees do, and do it too if it's good work practices, avoid it if it's unethical. The world is your data. Observe, interpret, apply.
    - a. Use existing reports to model yours on. If they don't give you one, ask.
    - b. How people take time for lunch, when to leave work, etc., do what they do unless otherwise instructed. But make your borders clear (e.g., "I am not available on Saturdays.")
  14. Have a notebook for notes at meetings and phone calls. Practice your listening skills.
  15. Follow through. It's not enough to send an email or a fax; always confirm that important pieces of information were received.
  16. Methodically double-check your work for numbers, grammar, spelling, company names, etc.
  17. Be REALLY careful when sending email.
    - a. Never use your work email for personal email.
    - b. Before sending a client files, make sure you have the right file attached.
    - c. Make sure that the recipients are correct before hitting the SEND button, especially if you did a reply to all instead of a reply to one.
  18. Always test your equipment (laptop, projector, open the ppt.) before a presentation.
  19. Bring your e-file and a printed version to presentations. Even if you aren't responsible for it.
  20. Bring business cards to meetings.
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