

Employee Expectations

There are certain behaviors you can expect from the company you work for. You can expect your employer to:

- 1. Pay your salary.**
- 2. Provide safe working conditions.**
- 3. Provide some training related to the specific needs of your job.**
- 4. Provide reasonable accommodation for disability related needs.**
- 5. Introduce you to your co-workers.**
- 6. Explain company policies, rules, and regulations.**
- 7. Tell you about changes in your duties, responsibilities, working relationships, rate of pay, vacation schedule, etc.**
- 8. Evaluate your work by telling you both the positive and negative aspects of your performance.**

If you believe that your new employer is not meeting these expectations, schedule a meeting with your supervisor to discuss your concerns.

Be sure you understand how often you will be paid so you won't be confused later. If you don't understand the pay periods, or if you have a question about your check, ask your supervisor or someone in the personnel office for more information.

There are generally four different methods of pay periods.

- 1. Weekly - Paid every week.**
- 2. Bi-Weekly - Paid once every two weeks.**
- 3. Semi-Monthly - Paid at the first of the month and at the end of the month.**
- 4. Monthly - Paid once a month.**

Employer Expectations:

As a new employee, there are certain behaviors/characteristics the company will expect from you as an employee. Listed below are expectations the employer will have for you as an employee:

1. **Initiative:** Employers will expect you to complete your own job and if you haven't been told what to do, look around to see what needs to be done and do it.
2. **Willingness to Learn:** Your employer will expect you to learn the way things are done in the company.
3. **Willingness to Follow Directions:** Always follow directions exactly as you are told.
4. **Honesty.** Employers will expect you to be honest and to tell the truth. Other forms of dishonesty on the job are: starting work late, leaving work early and stealing company property. Stealing time is the most costly form of dishonesty on the job. You "steal" time when you come in late or leave early.
5. **Dependability.** Your employer will expect you to be on the job every day and on time. If you will be absent or late, you must call your supervisor. If you have an appointment with your doctor, dentist, etc. let your supervisor know in advance. Try to make appointments before or after work so you won't lose time from your job.
6. **Enthusiasm.** The most successful employees are those who are enthusiastic about their work.
7. **Acceptance of Criticism.** Criticism is the way a supervisor tells you how they want a job done. You are expected to improve because of it. Listen and learn from the constructive criticisms your supervisor will share with you. Try to see how it can help you become a better worker. Even if you feel the criticism is unfair, try not to lose your temper.
8. **Loyalty.** Show loyalty to your company.
9. **Punctuality.** Arrive at work on time and don't leave early.
10. **Dress Appropriately.** Dress the way your co-workers do.
11. **Ask for further instructions** if the task is unclear. Request clarification if you are unsure how to complete an assignment.
12. **Be flexible** and accept assignments that may not fall under your specified job duties, because of time and/or staff constraints.
13. **Observe and respect chain of command.** Learn what position each of your co-workers hold in the office and how their position relates to yours.

When someone offers to help you, accept the assistance pleasantly and with a smile. But don't depend too much on others because they have their own jobs to do.

If someone asks for your help **never** say "That is not my job." It is good to share unpleasant tasks (duties) because sharing is important in working relationships. Also, remember if your work is finished you can offer to help someone else. Sharing works helps to build good relationships.

When in doubt, ask questions. Don't hesitate (wait). When you need help, ask for it. But when you are sure of what you are doing, do it. People will respond to you if you let them know you want to learn and want to work.

Learning the Corporate Culture

The Corporate Culture of an organization is the set of unwritten rules that dictate how the organization runs. As a new employee, rarely will there be someone who will teach these rules to you. Therefore, it is up to you to observe and watch the social interactions of your co-workers, to see "how things are done in this office."

During your first days at the organization, keep your eyes and ears open and watch to see how the office runs. You will be evaluated not only for your work performance, as well as how well you "fit" into the company's culture. For example, you might look for the following things:

1. **Watch how your co-workers interact with each other.** Are there certain cliques (groups) that you can see are formed? Is this an informal atmosphere where the co-workers are casual and friendly with each other? Or is it a formal atmosphere, that does not tolerate much socializing?
2. **Watch to see how your co-workers complete their assignments.** Is there a particular format that everyone appears to follow?
3. **Is there a chain of authority that exists depending upon a person's position within the company?** That is, as a new employee, are there certain things that you are not "supposed to do" because you would be overstepping your boundaries?
4. **What are your co-workers' attitudes towards the supervisor (s)?** Does the supervisor (s) tend to treat all employees the same or does it appear that some employees are given the favored assignments?
5. **What type of office politics exist in the workplace?** Are there certain unspoken policies and procedures that are followed?
6. **Do individuals in the office tend to help one another, or is work is carried out independently?** Is this a competitive atmosphere, or is the management trying to promote a "family-like" atmosphere and encourage team-work.?
7. **Is there a person in the office who can officially or unofficially act as your mentor,** and be a person that you can refer all your questions to, rather than having to ask your supervisor?

Building Work Relationships:

- Networking/Meeting people is important.
- Don't forget you are the new person.
- Try to meet people in your work area.
- It takes time! So be patient with yourself.
- Good co-worker relationships help to give you a positive image.
- Use caution when sharing personal events in your life with co-workers.
- Try to resolve problems with co-workers on your own.

Your First Career Experience

Don't be surprised if:

- This job does not satisfy all your personal cravings.
- It does not keep you intellectually stimulated every minute.
- It does not use all the brains and abilities you think you have.
- It does not guarantee instant expertise.
- You are given some mundane chores (Xeroxing, faxing, etc.)
- You don't receive regular feedback.
- You rarely see your boss.

On the other hand, you should be able to:

- Develop related career skills.
- Have the opportunity for career exploration.
- Gain personal satisfaction.
- Learn the importance of positive work attitude.
- Have the opportunity to practice thinking and observing skills.
- Enrich your work experience by remembering and applying classroom concepts.
- Improve your ability to seek and maintain employment.

Getting Along with your Supervisor:

- Understand that not all supervisors are the same... many different work styles and temperaments.
- Adapt to your supervisor's way of doing things.
- Don't be upset if your supervisor has a bad day.
- Don't "go over your supervisor's head" without permission.
- Ask for a few minutes now and then to discuss how you are doing on the job. Be sure it is a convenient time.
- Express your appreciation and satisfaction.
- Don't let fear get in the way of a good working relationship with your supervisor.

Resolving Conflict:

- Observe and survey the situation first!
- Ask to speak with your supervisor or co-worker. Find an appropriate time to meet.
- Describe the situation in objective, neutral terms. Avoid accusations or negative remarks. Express your feelings using "I" statements.
- Suggest a change or compromise; remember, your idea may still not be accepted!
- After all this, put the problem aside.

Start on the Right Foot

Try answering the following questions after you have been in the new setting for a few days. If you can get the answers to these questions, you'll be off to a good start!!

Who

- Who does what in your work environment?
- To whom are you responsible?
- Who are good sources for special types of information?
- Who are the important people?

What

- What are your responsibilities?
- What specific tasks are you expected to do by yourself, with co-workers, with your supervisor?
- What, if any office policies should you know? List them and check with supervisor to clarify, if necessary.

How

- How does the work get done?
- Do individuals help one another, or is work carried out independently?
- Are you expected to seek instructions frequently, or is your work reviewed as you work?
- How do you get in touch with the right person in case you are sick, or some emergency comes up?

Where

- Where are important items kept?
- Where can answers be found? (Ask questions about such details. People like to keep newcomers informed.)
- Where do you fit into the organizational chart?

When

- When are deadlines for work assignments?
- When is the appropriate time to ask questions?