

# Being a Successful Employee



*Congratulations! You have successfully landed a job. Now your goal is to learn the skills necessary to be a successful employee.*

## Have a Good Attitude

- A positive attitude is one of the most important factors in achieving job success. Look on the bright side and focus on solutions to problems instead of complaining. A positive attitude includes being energetic and motivated and taking pride in work by improving and learning new job skills. Do not carry negative feelings into your new workplace. Resolve them elsewhere.
- Demonstrate a strong work ethic by beginning work on time, returning from lunch and breaks promptly, completing assignments timely and thoroughly, being dependable and honest and not using work time for personal business.
- Be flexible in the workplace because businesses are continually growing and changing. When you are flexible, you embrace change and move forward with decisions. The easier it is for you to adapt, the greater your chances of success.
- Employers value employees who are respectful of themselves, their co-workers and their leaders. Learn to accept feedback, avoid gossip and be courteous when expressing your thoughts to demonstrate that you are a professional member of the organization.
- the overall organization. Avoid a “know-it-all” attitude. Try to fit in with the team, and keep your sense of humor.
- Take time to get to know your co-workers. Find positive and upbeat people. Avoid negative, critical and gossiping people.
- Be patient with yourself and your employer. It takes time to get used to, learn about and like a new job and new people.

“For employee success, loyalty and integrity are equally as important as ability.”

– Harry F. Banks

## Practice Team Building

- Be a team player. Be willing to help. Know the goals of your position and how your job fits into

## To-Do List:



- Have a positive attitude *before* starting your job, as first impressions are formed on day one
- Be professional by being punctual and keeping your emotions in check
- Embrace change and be willing to learn new things; take the initiative on duties

- Be friendly, courteous and respectful to everyone. Be willing to go the extra mile. This creates goodwill with employers, co-workers and customers. Remember, as you climb the career ladder, you may meet the same people on your way up.

## Give Positive Feedback

- Show appreciation. Let your supervisor and teammates know you appreciate their training, support, input and feedback. Strive to be positively recognized. Be friendly and helpful to everyone at all levels.
- Problem-solving is a valuable asset in any organization. Be resourceful and use creative thinking to generate ideas, solutions and new approaches to problems. Be open to other's ideas, negotiate and collaborate to create win-win solutions for you and others.
- Be thankful and celebrate success. Recognize and praise everyone who plays a part in achievements, project completion or improvements. A thank you can be given verbally, in an email, in a card or even as an appropriate gift. Positive feedback and specific compliments are great ways to share the wealth.

## Exercise Professionalism

- Always be on time. Allow a few extra minutes for traffic problems and getting children to day care. Set an alarm clock to help you get up. Being reliable and dependable gains the trust and respect of your new employer. If you are going to be

unavoidably late or out sick, notify your supervisor before you are supposed to start your scheduled shift.

- Prior to starting the job, have all of your appointments with doctors, dentists, etc., out of the way. Have your transportation and day care lined up so you do not immediately have to take time off. Have an emergency plan for day care and transportation.
- When you need to talk with your supervisor, ask when would be a good time to meet. Follow the proper chain of command.
- Be clean and well groomed. Wear clean and job-appropriate clothes. Pay attention to how your co-workers are dressed. Avoid wearing strong perfumes or colognes. Dress for the job you want.
- Keep your personal life and problems at home. Do not use the employer's equipment and time to do personal things like make calls, use the copy machine or resolve your personal problems on the job.
- Do not express your opinions, biases or prejudices about others while you are at work. Diversity is a priority in the workplace.
- Keep your emotions under control. The job is not the place to express or show your opinions or feelings.



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## Be a Life-Long Learner

- Learn and follow all office rules, policies and procedures. Read the employee manuals.
- Learn all you can about the job you were hired to do before thinking about moving up.
- Ask for help when you need it. If you make a mistake, let your supervisor know immediately. Find out how you can fix it.
- Listen and learn. Be open to new ways of doing things, even if you were taught differently in school or at a different job.
- Do not be quick to find fault, criticize or complain until you can prove you can do something a better way.
- Take advantage of your performance reviews. Stay calm. Learn from them. Ask how you can improve. Show results or job-related classes you have taken. Most supervisors appreciate employees who are concerned about performance and in finding ways to improve. Your success is their success.
- Accept criticism as constructive. Do not become defensive or take it personally. Thank the person for their input. If you are unsure how to handle the situation, check with your supervisor.
- 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.
- Volunteer for projects and committees if your work is completed and your supervisor approves.
- Notice who your boss relies on and model yourself after them.
- Find a mentor, someone who knows the company and the job well enough to coach you or show you the ropes.
- Allow yourself to learn from the knowledge and experience of others.

## Work Smart

- Record your achievements, projects, assignments, daily responsibilities and outcomes on an accomplishments sheet. Create a professional portfolio with work samples, project results and recognitions to share in your next performance review. Also, forward thank you and recognition emails to your supervisor and management to let positive results speak for you.
- Keep your resumé updated. Maintain a record of specific, current examples of achievements, accomplishments and projects. Organize career documents, work samples and certificates in a file system. Completed interviews, performance reviews, letters of recommendation and awards/honors can be kept safe in your file system as well. Successfully managing your career will empower you to be ready to seize an opportunity when it comes your way.

Change happens, so continually assess your skills, strengths and weaknesses to determine areas in which you want to improve. Set SMART goals, including specific objectives, steps and timeframes to achieve your goals. Be ready for opportunities and be proactive in creating opportunities by networking, looking for new resources and looking for new ways to approach things. Initiate ideas and be open to feedback from others. Keep your options open and have a plan B (and C, D and E) to respond to change rather than react. Finally, control the things you can control to manage change successfully — take care of yourself.

Employers say more people lose their job because they don't use good work habits, not because they can't do the job.

## Find Quality Child Care

All young children need quality care, whether it be from a parent, relative or child care facility. Finding a child care provider can be a daunting task. The good news is there are plenty of quality child care providers out there. You just need to narrow your search and choose a program that will work best for your family and work schedule.

Start your search at [careaboutchildcare.utah.gov](http://careaboutchildcare.utah.gov) to find licensed child care facilities and evaluate them based on the program's strengths and your needs. On Care About Childcare® you will find quality indicators, program philosophy, pictures, links to their website, care type, hours of operation, location, ages accepted, vacancies, school districts served, years of operation, ability to provide for special needs, accreditation and licensing history for the previous 24 months.

Once you have located programs in your area, call those programs that interest you and see if they have a vacancy that fits your needs. Then schedule time for a visit. Try to visit as many programs as possible so you can evaluate your options.

During your visit:

- Ask questions. Make sure you see all the areas of the facility your child will be. Are the children watched at all times? Do adults and children wash their hands? Is the play space organized and are materials easy to use? Can your child access toys and materials throughout the day? Are positive behavior guidance techniques used?
- Spend time observing the interactions between caregivers and children. Are the caregivers warm and welcoming? Do caregivers engage in conversation with the children? Ask how many children there are per adult and how much individual attention your child will get. Learn how activities are organized to give your child opportunities to participate in each one.
- Ask about the caregivers' professional training, education and experience. Ask for at least two parent references and their phone numbers. Parents who check references say they often get information they could not have gathered any other way.

Once you choose a quality provider, stay involved by meeting with your provider regularly and by participating in special activities. Staying involved conveys a message to your child and to the provider that what your child is doing and learning is important to you.

Quality Indicators:

- Family involvement
- Outdoor environment
- Indoor environment
- Administration
- Health and safety
- The program
- Professional development

