



# JOB SUCCESS SKILLS

Georgia Department of Labor

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Once you have made the big transition through job searching and landed the job, the next goal is job success. There are specific skills you need to know and use to be successful at your job. It is important to practice these skills prior to starting the job. First impressions show from day one. You only get one opportunity to make a first impression.

This is not a complete list. It is a good idea to check with your supervisor about what is most important. Employers say more people lose their jobs because they do not use good work habits, rather than because they are unable to do the work. The following list of suggestions is based on feedback from a majority of surveyed employers.

## Employer Expectations

- A positive attitude is one of the most important factors in achieving job success. Do not carry negative feelings into your new workplace. Resolve them elsewhere.
- Always be on time. How long will it take to get to work? Allow a few extra minutes for traffic problems and getting children to daycare. Set an alarm clock to help you get up. Being reliable and dependable gains the trust and respect of your new employer.
- Good attendance and promptness are always important. If you are going to be unavoidably late or out sick, ask your supervisor for the proper method and timing when informing them.
- Know and follow all office rules, policies, and procedures. Read the employee manuals and ask questions.
- Listen and learn. Be open to new ways of doing things, even if you were taught differently in school or in a different job. Do not be quick to find fault, criticize, or complain until you can prove you can do something a better way.

- Meet and exceed your employer's expectations. Come prepared mentally and physically to do the work.
- Learn all you can about the job you were hired to do before thinking about moving up.
- Support management decisions once they are made.

## Communication

- When you need to talk with your supervisor, ask when a convenient time would be to meet.
- 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 job success is also their success.
- Be a team player. Be willing to help. Know the goals of your job and how your job fits into the overall organization. Avoid a "know-it-all attitude." Try to fit in with the team. Keep your sense of humor.
- Ask for help when you need it. If you make a mistake, let your supervisor know immediately. Find out how you can fix it. Try to solve problems.
- Follow the proper chain of command. Discuss issues with your supervisor first. Try to respect management structure.

## Personal

- Prior to starting the job, have all of your appointments with doctors, dentists, etc. out of the way. Have your transportation and daycare lined up so you do not immediately have to take time off. Have an emergency plan for daycare and transportation.

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- 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.
- Take time to make new friends. Find positive and upbeat co-workers. Avoid negative, critical and gossiping people.
- Take charge of your own self development. Sometimes an employer will train you; sometimes you may need to seek training outside the company. It may be that where you received training is less important than that you got the training.
- 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 and noisy jewelry.
- Keep your personal life and problems at home. Do not use the employer's equipment and time to do personal things like making personal phone calls, using the copy machine, or resolving your personal problems on the job. If you are having trouble resolving personal problems, counseling, support groups or employee assistance programs may be useful.
- Create your image. Dress and impress for the job you want next.
- Be patient with yourself and your employer. It takes time to get used to, learn and like a new job and co-workers.
- Volunteer for projects and committees, so long as this would not interfere with your regular work and your manager approves it.

## Getting Along with Others

- Do not express your opinions, biases or prejudices about others while you are at work. Understanding and respecting diversity is a priority in the modern workplace.
- Accept criticism as constructive. Do not become defensive or take criticism personally. Thank the person for their input. Consider changing the way you do things, if it is warranted. If you are unsure how to handle the situation, check with your supervisor.
- Always be friendly to everyone. Be willing to go the extra mile. This creates goodwill with employers, co-workers and customers.
- 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.
- Realize playing politics or power games could be dangerous and backfire on you.
- Treat everyone with courtesy and respect. Remember, as you climb the career ladder, you may meet the same people on the way up the ladder.
- Keep your emotions under control. The workplace is not the place to express or show strong personal opinions or feelings.
- Show appreciation. Let your supervisor know you appreciate their training, support, input, feedback, etc.
- Strive to be positively recognized. Be friendly and helpful to everyone at all levels.

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