

# First Days at Work



Getting hired for a new job is exciting, but excitement may turn to worry as you face the first days of your new job. Being worried and slightly scared are normal feelings as you are entering a new world, the U.S. work world. To help you relax, remember that the employer selected you as the person to hire and wants you to succeed.

To help you learn and feel comfortable at new work sites, the employer will most likely provide a new employee orientation (or introduction) to the company which may include the following:

**You will be shown your work site and job task.** Work sites range from simple areas with no equipment to big areas with computers and tools. Your employer wants you to understand your work site so that you can do the best job possible. As your job and work site is explained, take notes so that you can look back to what you were told. You may need to read your notes as you try to do the job the first time. If you are unclear about how to do a task, ask questions. It is better to work slow and accurate during your first days on the job.

**You will be introduced to your coworkers and supervisor.** Be sure to listen to learn if coworkers and supervisors want to be called by their first name (for example, Tom) or last name (Mr. Johnson).

**You will be told the company rules or given a booklet of rules to read.** If rules are given verbally (spoken), take notes to help you remember. If the rules are in a booklet, read it from cover to cover during your time at home. You are responsible for following all verbal and written rules.

**What does the employer want of you, the new worker?** Employers were asked what young workers need to do to make a good start at a new job. Here are the answers from employers:

- 1) **First.** New workers must ask questions if unclear about something. This is because employers would rather answer questions from a new worker than have the job done incorrect. Since employers know the job, steps may be left out when the job is explained to the new worker. Employers cannot read your mind, so you, the new worker, need to listen, then speak up and ask questions to understand all steps in the job or to understand information that is unclear.
- 2) **Second.** New workers need to listen and take notes. When the employer speaks, you are paid to listen and remember. Because there is a lot to learn, the employers want new workers to take notes on what is said to help the new worker remember instructions. New workers can use the notes later to help remember how to do the job. Also, all directions are to be followed. You do not change the steps or take short cuts on a job task until after you ask your supervisor if the change or short cut is OK.



- 3) **Third.** New workers need to be confident and accept each new job duty as a learning experience. What is meant by confident? 1) Confident is not afraid to speak to customers, coworkers, supervisors. 2) Confident is to look relaxed and greet others with a smile. 3) Confident is doing a good job. Confident workers want to learn new tasks and things about the job — and enjoy learning. Confident workers may make mistakes. But, confident workers know that mistakes happen, and that mistakes can be corrected.

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- 4) **Fourth.** New workers need to prove a positive attitude. Workers shows positive attitude by **enjoying** the: a) job duties; b) job site — such as store or restaurant; c) different people at the job — customers, coworkers, and supervisors. Workers show positive attitude when **speaking kind, good words** about: a) job duties; b) different people — customers, co-workers, supervisors; c) company. A worker with a positive attitude is thinking how to provide better customer service, how to earn a raise, and how to get a promotion — rather than complain or gossip.
- 5) **Fifth.** New workers need to plan ahead and be prompt (act at once without delay). Employer want workers to make an effort to work when scheduled and to give as much advance notice as possible if unable to work because of sickness. Time off for special occasions such as family events and school dances need to be requested at least two weeks or more in advance so that a replacement worker can be found.
- 6) **Sixth:** New workers need to value customers. Who brings money into the business? Customers do! Where does the business get money to give you a paycheck? Money comes from customers spending money in the business. Customers are special people valuable to survival of a business. Customers are to be treated with respect, politeness, service, and a smile.



### QUICK CHECK:

- To help you relax during your first days at work, what should you remember?
- a) What is another word for orientation? b) Why does the employer want you to understand your work site?
- a) What should you do as the job and work site is explained to you? b) Why?
- As you are introduced to your coworkers, what do you need to learn?
- a) If rules are in a booklet, what should you do with it? b) When? c) Why?
- a) What is the first thing that employers say is important for new workers to do? b) Why?
- a) When the employer speaks, what are you being paid to do? b) What do employers want you to do to remember instructions?
- a) List 3 things that confident is. b) What do confident workers know about mistakes?
- List 3 things: a) Workers with positive attitudes enjoy. b) Workers with positive attitudes speak good words about. c) About what does a worker with positive attitude think rather than complain or gossip?
- Define prompt.
- a) Why do workers value customers? b) List 4 ways customers are to be treated?
- You are an owner of a bike shop. a) List 5 things you will show or tell new workers their first day at work. b) Why do you want new workers to ask questions if unsure how to change a tire? c) What will you say if the new worker is late the first day? d) How will you know if the new workers has a positive attitude?