

WORK CENTRAL AB

Workplace Etiquette

Professional Habits That Help You Thrive on the Job

A Career Resource from Work Central AB

Workplace Etiquette Essentials

Strong technical skills get you hired; professional habits are what help you thrive once you're there. Whether you're starting your first job, returning to the workforce, or new to the Canadian workplace, understanding common expectations helps you settle in with confidence.

1. Communication Norms

- Respond to emails and messages within one business day, even if just to acknowledge you've received them.
- Use a professional tone in written communication, and proofread before sending.
- Ask clarifying questions rather than guessing - most managers prefer questions over mistakes.
- Address disagreements directly and respectfully with the person involved, rather than through others.

2. Punctuality and Reliability

- Arrive on time, or a few minutes early, for shifts and meetings.
- Give as much notice as possible if you'll be late or absent, following your workplace's specific process.
- Meet deadlines, or flag early if a deadline is at risk - surprises close to a due date are harder to manage.

3. Workplace Relationships

- Be respectful and inclusive with colleagues from different backgrounds, roles, and seniority levels.
- Keep personal conflicts and strong political or religious opinions out of general workplace conversation.
- Give credit to others for their contributions, and avoid taking sole credit for team efforts.

4. Meetings and Collaboration

- Come prepared, and mute yourself in virtual meetings when not speaking.
- Stay off your phone during meetings and in-person conversations.
- Follow up on action items you've committed to, and communicate proactively if something changes.

5. Adapting to a New Workplace Culture

Every workplace has its own unspoken norms, from communication style to how formal or casual the environment is. In your first few weeks:

- Observe before making assumptions - watch how established colleagues communicate and collaborate.
- Ask a trusted colleague or manager if you're unsure about a specific norm or expectation.
- Be patient with yourself; adjusting to a new workplace culture takes time.

Workplace Etiquette Checklist

- ✓ Responding to communications promptly and professionally
- ✓ Consistently on time and reliable
- ✓ Respectful and inclusive with all colleagues
- ✓ Prepared and attentive in meetings
- ✓ Observing workplace norms before assuming

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New to the Canadian workplace or relocating to Central Alberta? Pair this guide with our Moving to Central Alberta resources at workcentralab.ca/resources.