

9 tips for success after landing a job

Congratulations! You've landed your first real job after school, no small feat in the current economy. Now it's time to apply what you've learned in the classroom and put it to good use in the working world.

But this is the big leagues now. Every day, your skills will be put to the test, and supervisors and other employees will rely on you. Don't let that scare you, though. Follow these lessons and you'll have an easy time climbing the corporate ladder.

Lesson 1: Prepare to pay your dues. Yes, that means you may have to go on the occasional coffee run, send out a mass mailing or file till your fingers bleed. Don't worry -- everyone has to do it. Seize menial tasks as an opportunity to learn what goes on behind the scenes or bond with another "newbie."

Lesson 2: Listen and absorb. See how the company does its job. Figure out the chain of command and what it takes to get things done.

Lesson 3: Dress for the job you want, not for the job you have. In college, you can roll out of bed and head to class in your pajamas, but that isn't quite the best wardrobe strategy in the workplace. Not sure what to wear? Stick with conservative and classic pieces in solid colors. You can also use your boss as a model of how you should dress.

Lesson 4: Avoid office politics. It's guaran-

teed that the office gossip will tell you who's dating whom, or you might hear a few choice words about your boss -- even on your first day. Sure, it's fine to store such information in the back of your head so you can learn about coworkers' personalities, office dynamics, and who's in a bad mood, but don't say anything that can be added to the rumor mill. It's a surefire path to ruining your reputation.

Lesson 5: Watch what you say and do. That means you should mind your manners.

Leave inappropriate stories and jokes for your social life. Don't use company e-mail to forward jokes or chain letters to friends; do that on your own time, using your own personal e-mail account.

Lesson 6: Ask questions. You're new in your position, so don't be afraid to ask questions. It will help you understand the company, the hierarchy, and what it takes to make the company run.

Lesson 7: Find a mentor. Maybe it's someone who has been there years or someone who has the job you want. Find a person who can show you the ropes or tell you how they got started in the business. Some companies even offer formal mentoring programs that involve mentor lunches, meetings and more.

Lesson 8: Volunteer for something that's not in your job description. Maybe you are an

administrative assistant at a newspaper and the research department needs help fact-checking a story. Or perhaps the legal department at your company needs extra hands. By volunteering for work beyond the scope of your position, you are showing that you are willing to take on anything. But just make sure you don't get so swamped that you can't finish your own assigned tasks first.

Lesson 9: Do what you are told. If your su-

perior asks you to do something, do it -- with a smile. Sounds simple, right? "You'd be amazed at how many others at my entry level would roll their eyes at doing menial tasks or complain about things like getting coffee or filing," says Melissa Walker, 28, of Brooklyn, New York, about her first job as an editorial assistant at a now-defunct magazine. "Hey, if you can't even do those things well (and with a smile), how will you handle more responsibility?"



Hard Working Women of First State Bank



Pictured from left to right, front row: Elana Gosselin, Lee Ann Shearer, Kaylynn Lantz, Amber Milnes, Lindsay Wilson, Sabrina Richards; back row: Kelli Cole, Sandra Preuss, Tosha Lyon, Sherry Rushton, Christine Wayland, Susan Hillebrand, Carol Erlenbusch.



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SALUTING the Working Women of Norton County



Pictured front row, left to right: Teresa Fritz, Trendy Striggow, Brenda Holmes, Mona Saetern, Cristy Harding, Marsha Fowler; middle row: Lisa Millan, Amy Vacura, Janet Walter, Alice Nelsen, Linda Long; back row: Deanna Herredsberg, Rhonda Obermiller, Christine Welch, Angie Feldt, Missy Amlong, Renee Bruinekool, Robin Sproul. Not pictured: Ranelle Hays, Jeanne Ray.



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