

# [ WORK ETIQUETTE FOR SUCCESS ]

MONDAY JUNE 11, 2007

**Good mannerisms are essential in building good relationships with other people and this ensures that you will always have their support and cooperation. You would observe that people with pleasing mannerism are very popular and they have an edge over the others.**

WORK WISE - A fortnightly column by Rahul Kapoor

In this article, I will highlight a few examples of our day to day work life behaviors and illustrate how that affects us and other people.

## **The first hour**

The first hour at office is very critical, answer the following question - When you walk in to your office do you carry energy and smile with you or do you carry lethargy and a sleepy look on your face?

People feel refreshed when they see their colleagues look enthusiastic and cheerful in the morning. It almost defines the manner in which you will spend the rest of your day at the work place. Remember there can be an exception for this rule once in a while when you are partying late night, but a frequent dull appearance to office will certainly put people off.

## **Flexi Timings**

In spite of the luxury of flexi time, one has to consider what a good time is to enter the office because even as you would like to believe that your responsibility is to finish your task as per deadline, you also need to remember that we do not work in isolation and that there are others who rely on you for various kind of support or discussions, your non-availability can cause a lot of frustration to others. That apart, you would lose your popularity with your team mates and others who are associated with your work.

Sometimes we do get a feeling that it is unfair that there is no closing hours for work. People expect you to invest long hours, ask you to take ownership and see the day's job done, yet they expect you to be in the office on time the next day.

But consider this as today's jobs have become so demanding and dynamic. Team work has suddenly become the buzz word. Salaries, remuneration, incentives, awards and recognitions were never so attractive. So, truly speaking even as the corporate world is very demanding in terms of working hours, it is at the same time rewarding as well.

More importantly the rule is the same for all and therefore if you are seen coming late regularly then over a period of time people will begin to feel that you are not responsible enough to the growing needs of the team and start losing faith in you.

## **Mobile Manners**

Avoid making and receiving too many personal calls at work place. It not only takes away your focus from the job on hand but also requires a lot of time to get back to work

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in full swing. Some people are excessively addicted to SMS; they can be a complete turn off, especially, when you are in the middle of some discussions. Some have a habit of getting the hands free on and they take calls from their work station and carry on working while they whisper through the conversation without caring for the fact that a regular habit like this will prompt people to brand them with a wrong tag.

I suggest that you have a regular time for personal calls. May be you can make and receive personal-casual calls for some time, after lunch or may be during a coffee break or even after work hours. In case, you need to take personal calls otherwise, then excuse yourself and move to a place where you do not disturb others. This habit will automatically discourage you from taking too many calls during work hours, since people around you will notice the frequency with which you leave your work station.

## **Meetings must be productive**

Always make sure that you allow the other persons to warm up before you start the meeting. Make it a habit to allow people to relax, offer them some water and give them time to open their diary or get a pen to make notes during the meeting. In case they plan to use their laptops, then give them time to boot the system and open the relevant file for the meeting. Check if they need power back up and if yes, quickly show them the power socket. Just break the ice by couple of chit chat questions and then ask the question Should we start? If yes, then, get underway.

This way you will create a good atmosphere for you and the other persons to achieve maximum results in little time. Use this technique with all people whom you invite for a meeting. Yes, the known faces in the office, your regular vendors and even absolute strangers who are meeting you for the first time.

Some people may argue that this might take a long time to start the meeting but you will be surprised to know that the entire process will take less than 2-3 minutes. I guess it's a worthy investment of time.

## **Interruptions during a meeting**

Some people are super busy while some look busy because they do not plan their time well. They take up too many back to back meetings without planning buffers. Invariably, they run from one meeting to another without achieving anything at all. Most of their meetings end abruptly without achieving the desired results.

Some people have a very bad habit of getting into a meeting and then taking calls,

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allowing other people to walk in or they keep looking at their e-mails and replying. Such people are the most annoying bunch you will ever get to see in the corporate world. They take a very long time to close the meeting and waste the other person's time. Once in a way there can be an exception to this behavior but a habit of this kind will make you unpopular in a very short span of time.

Closing the meeting Remember to summarize and reiterate the next step before you end the meeting. Ensure that you allow the other person to close his book or laptop, pack his bag and stand up. This one minute's patience on your end will create a great last impression of the meeting.

In conclusion, be reminded that cultivating correct mannerisms and using them constantly can help one to tackle various work and social occasions with confidence. Our skills in the areas of courtesy, politeness and etiquette can never go wasted.