

Following rules at work



Learner guide

Ready for work

Pre-employment skills

Following rules at work

Version 1.2



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Following rules at work

When you get a job, you must work hard. Your employer expects you to do your work well. They want you to follow the rules of their workplace. You must know what the rules are in your workplace. The rules tell you what you can and can't do.

There are different rules for different workplaces. For example, a rule for a builder may be that they start work at 7 o'clock in the morning. A rule in a cafe may be that you must wear a uniform.

Many workplaces write down their rules in a manual or book. The rules may also be listed on the computer. Workplaces must explain the rules to each new employee. You may be given a copy of the rules on your first day at work. Ask your supervisor to explain the rules if you don't understand them. Asking questions shows that you are interested and want to learn.



Rules to follow

Here are some important rules you must understand.

What the rule is about	What the rule means
<p>Working hours</p> 	<p>You must work the right number of hours for your job. Many workplaces begin work at 9.00 in the morning. Some workplaces start earlier or later. Make sure you know what time you start so you can be on time.</p> <p>If you get a lunch break, make sure you know how long it is and that you take the right amount of time. Employees in some workplaces have 1 hour for lunch. Some people only have 45 minutes for their lunch.</p> <p>Many workplaces finish at 5.00 or 5.30 in the evening. Make sure you know what time you finish, so you work the right number of hours.</p>
<p>Leave</p> 	<p>Leave means any time you are away from work. In many jobs you are allowed to take time off for a holiday. This is called annual leave. Your employer will tell you how many days you can take. You must tell your employer when you want to take time off. You may have to fill in a form with the dates you will be away.</p> <p>Employers may also pay their workers when they are sick and cannot work. You may also need to take a day off to look after a sick child. This is carer's leave. Your employer will tell you how many sick/carer's leave days you can take. It is usually up to 10 in one year.</p>

You must always tell your employer if you are sick and cannot go to work. Telephone them and explain that you are sick. Tell your employer when you think you will be back at work. After you have been away sick, you may need to fill in a form. Sometimes you may need to show your employer a certificate from the doctor to prove you have been sick.

Safety at work



Everyone at work has a responsibility to keep their workplace safe. You must follow all the safety rules. This means you must use machines carefully. You must wear special clothing if you work in a dangerous or messy job.

Understand any safety signs. For example, do not smoke if there is a 'No smoking' sign. Ask someone if you are not sure what a sign means. Tell someone if you see something that does not look safe.

Smoking



By law, people are not allowed to smoke in their workplace. People must go outside their building if they want to smoke. Your workplace will tell you the rules for smoking, like when and where you can smoke. Follow the rules. You must not spend too much time smoking.

Story

Jake works in a nursery. He helps look after the plants. He also gathers the plants to fill customer orders. On his first day his boss gives him a list of the workplace rules. This is what it says about his working hours:

Hours of duty: Nursery Assistant – full time

Staff must work 40 hours per week.

Staff hours are from 8.00 am until 4.30 pm Monday to Friday; and 8.30 am until 12.00 noon on Saturday.

Lunch breaks must be taken between 12.30 pm and 1.30 pm.

Rosters will vary and are written two weeks in advance.

Activity 1

Ask your trainer, parent or a friend to tell you about their work rules.

1. What are the working hours for their job?

2. What are the leave arrangements at their work?

[Click to complete Activity 1](#)

Being a good employee

There are many things you can do to be a good employee. Consider these things.

Be punctual

Being punctual means that you arrive at work on time every day. Your work contract tells you what time you have to start. A 9 o'clock start means you must arrive by 9.00 am, not 10 minutes after 9.00 am. You must work until finishing time. Do not leave early – not even five minutes early.

Sometimes you may be running late for work, for example if you are stuck in traffic or your train is late. Telephone your employer and tell them you will be late. Let them know the time you expect to arrive at work. This should not happen often. Set your alarm if you find yourself running late. Sleeping in is not a good reason for being late. It shows you are unreliable.



Be polite

Your employer expects you to be polite. This means:

- You should speak in a friendly way.
- You must not interrupt someone when they are speaking.
- You should always greet people nicely, and with a smile. For example, 'Good morning Mrs Brand', 'Hi Jane' or 'Hello Craig'.

Never use bad language at work. Bad language may be swear words or mean comments. Don't make negative comments about your job, customers or workmates.

Think about the right way to speak when you are at work. For example, you may say, 'Hi Bob' to your friend, but you should say, 'Good morning Mr Bradford' when you speak to your boss. However, all workplaces are different. Some bosses may like you to say 'Hi' to them.

Listen to how other people talk to each other. Always be polite to everyone you deal with. This means your boss, your supervisor, your workmates, customers and visitors.



Activity 2

It may sometimes be hard to stay polite. For example, a customer may be rude to you if they are very unhappy or angry.

1. What should you do or say if someone is rude to you?

2. Why is it important to stay polite?

3. Ask other people how they stay polite when they are upset. Write down their answers.

[Click to complete Activity 2](#)

Be honest

Being honest means you must always tell the truth. If you make a mistake, tell someone. Never try to cover it up or blame someone else.

You have to be very honest if you work with money, for example, as a sales assistant. Honesty is a very important quality to have as an employee.

Be a good team member

There are many ways you can be a good team member. Here is a list of things you should do:

- Speak to everyone in a friendly way.
- Do the work you are given as quickly as you can.
- Offer to help other people.
- Do extra work if you are asked to help.
- Ask questions if you don't understand something.
- Be on time for meetings.
- Accept everyone – don't worry about their age, what they look like, where they have come from or if they think differently from you.



Activity 3

Read the list about how to be a good team member again.

Do you think you can work well with other people?

Place a ✓ next to the things you think you can do.

[Click to complete Activity 3](#)

Behave well

Every workplace is different. When you get a job, find out how you should behave. For example, you should not yell across the room to someone if you are in an office. Calling out may stop other people from working. However, this may be okay if you are working on a building site.

Acting badly is called 'poor behaviour'. Here are some other examples of poor behaviour that you must not do:

- Do not put your feet up on a desk.
- Do not speak loudly when someone is talking on the telephone close to you.
- Do not send private emails to your friends in work time.
- Do not swear.
- Do not call people rude names.
- Do not chat too much to workmates during your work hours.
- Do not come to work with a hangover.



Activity 4

Look at each of the pictures in the table below. Write if the person is displaying good or bad behaviour, and why.

Behaviour	Good or bad and why
	
	
	

Behaviour	Good or bad and why
	
	

[Click to complete Activity 4](#)

Look after your appearance

You must care for the way you look. This means coming to work dressed properly and looking neat and clean. You should do these things every day:

- Comb your hair and wear it neatly.
- Wear clean, neat clothes (or uniform).
- Have a shower.
- Clean your teeth.
- Clean your nails.

Customers or clients expect you to look neat, clean and well presented. This shows them you take pride in your appearance. It also shows you care about your job.

It may be difficult to keep clean if you work in a messy job. Do the best you can. As long as you start each day neat and tidy, your employer will be happy.



Story

At the nursery where Jake works, everyone must wear a uniform. Workers must start each shift wearing a clean t-shirt and apron. They can wear their own clean, neat jeans. Jake takes pride in his appearance. He makes sure his hair is neat and that he wears a fresh uniform for every shift.

His work at the nursery can be quite messy when he needs to move plants. However, his boss, Katrina, understands that Jake may get dirty throughout the day. She likes how Jake makes an effort with his appearance. Katrina offers Jake another apron if he gets too dirty.

Why people lose their jobs

Most people want to keep their job. At a job you earn money, learn new skills and meet new people. Employers need people to help them run their businesses. Employers don't like to tell someone they can no longer work in their company.

Have you ever heard someone say, 'He got sacked', or 'He got fired'? This means the person lost their job. Employers fire someone when they don't work well or they don't follow the company's rules.

Here is a list of good behaviour and poor behaviour.

Good behaviour	Poor behaviour
You arrive at work on time every day.	You are often late.
You are polite to your boss, your workmates and your customers.	You are rude to people.
You look after your appearance.	Your appearance is messy.
You try to get your work finished on time.	You work slowly and often don't finish jobs on time.
You listen carefully to instructions and ask for help when you don't understand something.	You do whatever you want and often make mistakes as a result.
You always tell the truth.	You lie so you don't get in trouble.
You offer to help people when they are busy.	You only do the work you are given and never offer to help others.

Work hard to be a good employee and you will succeed in your job!

What you have learnt

Put a ✓ in the box when you have learnt these things.

- Workplaces have rules about:
 - the hours of work
 - what to wear at work
 - what to do if you are late
 - what to do if you are sick
 - annual and sick/carer's leave
 - smoking
 - safety.
- A good employee is:
 - on time
 - polite
 - honest
 - helpful to workmates
 - well behaved
 - neat and clean.
- People may lose their jobs if they don't follow the rules.

Check your learning

Read the 10 sentences in the following table. The sentences describe good behaviour or poor behaviour. In the column next to each sentence, write if the behaviour is good or poor. If it is poor behaviour, write what the person should do instead.

Behaviour	Good or poor? What should the person do instead?
Yoko always finishes her work on time.	
Brett always says 'Good morning' to his boss when he gets to work	
Megan spends a lot of time chatting to her workmates.	
Carla offers to help when she sees her workmate is very busy.	
Jan is five minutes late for work every day.	

Behaviour	Good or poor? What should the person do instead?
Lara has at least five extra breaks to smoke every day.	
Alan makes sure he always wears his safety glasses in the garage.	
Trent swears when he hits his hand with the hammer. Everyone can hear him.	
Fran rings her boss when her car breaks down on the way to work.	
Dan says to his workmate, 'You're an idiot'. He was only joking.	
Muhammad plays games on his phone when there are no customers to serve.	

[Click to complete](#)

Answers

Answers to activities

Activity 1

Answer to Question 1

Answers will vary depending on the job and how much the person works; for example, full-time, part-time or casual hours.

Answer to Question 2

Answers will vary depending on the job. However, most companies pay for 10 sick/carer's leave days per year and 20 annual leave days.

Activity 2

Answer to Question 1

Try to remain calm and polite. Things will only get worse if you get upset. If you can't handle the situation, get your supervisor or manager.

Answer to Question 2

It is important to remain polite so the situation doesn't get any worse. It also shows that you are calm and professional.

Answer to Question 3

Answers will vary according to the individual.

Activity 3

No written answer is required here.

Activity 4

Here are example answers.

Behaviour	Good or bad and why
	<p>The man is displaying bad behaviour because he is being angry and aggressive and making the woman feel upset.</p>
	<p>The man is displaying bad behaviour because he is asleep under his desk. He should be working during work hours, not sleeping. If he is sick, he should take a sick day.</p>
	<p>The shop assistant is displaying good behaviour. He looks friendly, helpful and polite.</p>
	<p>These women are displaying good behaviour. They are having a friendly, polite conversation. The older woman looks like she is helping the younger woman with her work.</p>

Behaviour	Good or bad and why
	<p>The man in the red overalls is displaying bad behaviour. He is not wearing his safety hard hat. He is not working safely and could be injured.</p> <p>The man wearing the yellow vest is displaying good behaviour. He is trying to help the other man by reminding him to wear his hard hat.</p>

Answers to check your learning

Here are example answers.

Behaviour	Good or poor? What should the person do instead?
Yoko always finishes her work on time.	Good behaviour.
Brett always says 'Good morning' to his boss.	Good behaviour.
Megan spends a lot of time chatting to her workmates.	Poor behaviour. Megan should be working, not chatting to workmates.
Carla offers to help when she sees her workmate is very busy.	Good behaviour.
Jan is five minutes late for work every day.	Poor behaviour. Jan is unreliable, and five minutes every day can add up to a lot of lost time. She should get to work on time, or work five minutes later in the evening.
Lara has at least five breaks to smoke every day.	Poor behaviour. Going out to smoke five times a day can add up to a lot of lost time. Lara should only smoke during her allocated break times.

Behaviour	Good or poor? What should the person do instead?
Alan makes sure he always wears his safety glasses in the garage.	Good behaviour.
Trent swears when he hits his hand with the hammer. Everyone can hear him.	Poor behaviour. Trent should not swear at work, especially if other people can hear him. Perhaps he can use some safety equipment, so he doesn't hurt himself.
Fran rings her boss when her car breaks down on the way to work.	Good behaviour.
Dan says to his workmate, 'You're an idiot'. He was only joking.	Poor behaviour. Dan should never call people names, even as a joke. He should treat his workmates with respect and kindness.
Muhammad plays games on his phone when there are no customers to serve.	Poor behaviour. Muhammad should not play games on his phone during work time. He can do other tasks like cleaning if there are no customers.