



UNIVERSITY OF MONTEVALLO Career Development Center

WORK ETHIC



Be More Achievement-Oriented... Complete every assignment you're given, regardless of whether it leads to more pay or promotion. Be more results-oriented. Display a sense of urgency. Finish what you begin. Don't procrastinate. Strive to achieve all your goals all the time in a first job. Even with routine tasks, never let work stack up and never postpone a project.

Stop Watching The Clock.... Nothing bugs managers more than knowing employees want to leave exactly at quitting time. If you never arrive a minute early or never leave a minute late and complain about cutting short a lunch hour or working an occasional evening or weekend, you'll be branded a slacker. Even taking all your sick days, although you may be entitled to them, is another sign that you are not serious about work.

NEW ATTITUDE

New employees, fresh out of college, can either rebel or they can attempt to understand and adjust to the demands of the new work environment. Achieving success in your first job requires learning what your manager values. The following tips will give you some insight into the mindset of the typical manager and help you relate to your new boss more effectively, plus give you the perspective you need to succeed in the workplace.

Be Patient With Your Progress.... You've grown up with speed and you're used to getting what you want quickly. Consequently, you may expect raises and promotions to come equally fast. While it's true that too much patience leads to exploitation, your version of patience may differ from your manager's. You may not be able to come right out of school and jump straight up to the top. There are dues to pay in any profession, and you may have to spend some time in the minor leagues before advancing to the majors. Companies are seeking new hires who are more content with slower upward progress.

Pay Your Dues.... Don't think of paying dues as suffering. Think of paying dues as developing appreciation while learning the ropes. Manager's believe that you not only need the skills but the seasoning before being promoted. To veterans, there's no substitute for time and experience. Maintain a good attitude about learning new things and be willing to invest the time it takes to become proficient. You'll also learn to appreciate what it takes to do a job well and to make better decisions.



Fun Isn't Everything.... While many young employees believe that work should be fun, many daily assignments can in fact be routine and boring. In reality, no job is 100% fun, and fun shouldn't be the sole measure of a job's value. You have to start somewhere, sometimes doing things that may be unpleasant. Veteran managers believe the career fitness philosophy: no pain, no gain. Ask anyone to name a meaningful accomplishment and they'll likely identify a tough, rather than a fun endeavor.



BEYOND KNOWLEDGE & SKILL

When asked to identify the criteria used to rate good employees, employers generally point to three general areas... Knowledge... Skill... Attitude.

Every candidate who has received any kind of training or education possesses knowledge. Most candidates who have had the opportunity to apply their knowledge, and gain some experience, have developed some level of skill.

Beyond knowledge and skill, employers also seek another rarer trait... attitude. Attitude encompasses a range of personal traits that may or may not have come from one's acquisition of knowledge or exposure to training, or from one's professional experience or impressive skill set. Attitude is about work ethic, dedication, dependability, responsibility, a sense of initiative, and a collection of traits related to effective interpersonal skills. A positive work attitude includes flexibility, adaptability, cooperation, teamwork, and a service orientation. The mindset of the candidate who possesses a positive attitude is one that seeks to go beyond the call of duty and performs above expectations.

CAREER SUCCESS

Consider these comments from Bradley Richardson, author of *JobSmarts for Twentysomethings*:

What separates the winners from the losers? What will it take for you to stand above the rest and succeed in your career? Do you think that your degree, limited work experience, and charm will make you the most desirable employee in the world? The days of just getting by on your degree are over. You need a lot more than good grades, experience, and an impressive resume to make it. There are certain skills that you won't find in class. You won't find them in the syllabus of life, and you must have them to make it today.

C+ doesn't cut it in the real world. The days of doing only what it takes to get by, or doing things less than 100 percent, are gone. Think of business as a giant pass/fail class. You must be exceptional. Doing just enough to get by or only what is asked of you is a major reflection on your work. Keep that up and you won't get very far. You must go above and beyond. You cannot afford to turn in late, incomplete, or sloppy work. You cannot afford to not return phone calls promptly. And you definitely can't afford to make excuses.

The self-motivated individual looks for projects on their own, and doesn't always have to be told what to do. These individuals are recognized first and viewed as exceptional.

Average performers don't stay around very long. There are millions of young, educated, talented, and hungry people who need work. And if you think you are secure by only doing enough to get by and collecting a paycheck, you are sadly mistaken. Everyone is expendable.

There's no place is your career for mediocrity, procrastination, sloppiness, or not paying attention to details. The competition is too tough. What makes an A+ performance? Doing more than is asked of you. Making the extra effort and seeing that the job is completed thoroughly. Taking the initiative and not waiting for someone to tell you what to do. And, most of all, doing it with a smile.

Become a Renaissance person. The most successful people are those who are well-rounded and know a little bit about a lot of things. Having interest in or knowledge of a wide range of subjects makes you a more marketable and interesting person.

Success in business revolves around communication. The better you communicate, the more success you will achieve. Polish your grammar. Make a conscious effort to clean up your speech and communicate more clearly. Improve your vocabulary.

"Get going. Move forward. Aim High. Plan a takeoff. Don't just sit on the runway and hope someone will come along and push the airplane. It simply won't happen. Change your attitude and gain some altitude. Believe me, you'll love it up here."

-Donald Trump

"I'm willing to put in a few extra hours every day to get better. That's just the kind of hard worker I am."

-Jarod Kintz

"If you work hard enough and assert yourself, and use your mind and imagination, you can shape the world to your desires."

-Malcolm Gladwell

"Being a professional is doing the things you love to do, on the days you don't feel like doing them."

-Julius Irving

