College to Career

Tips on how to make the transition into the world of work.

10 Ways to Develop and Practice Professionalism

1. Use your time productively at work. Focus on your job responsibilities and avoid getting pulled into social media, web browsing, and phone activity while on the clock.
2. Project a professional presence and dress appropriately. A good rule of thumb is to dress for the position you aspire to have.
3. Take the initiative. Ask for more projects to be given to you or think of assignments that will meet your organizations goals. You don’t want to be under-utilized.
4. Maintain effective work habits. Prioritize, plan, and manage your assignments and projects.
5. Manage your time efficiently. Establish priorities, set goals, and create action plans to meet deadlines.
6. Be accountable for your work and actions while behaving ethically at all times.
7. Produce work and results that reflect a sense of pride and professionalism, often exceeding expectations.
8. When you run into problems and obstacles take the time to brainstorm a few solutions and alternatives before you meet with your supervisor.
9. Be resilient. Develop coping skills to manage setbacks and challenges with a positive and constructive attitude.
10. Practice professionalism online and in-person, and interpersonal communication skills.

Tips on How to Be Successful at Your New Job or Internship

• Follow the rules at all times. Read through your employee manual (if there is one) and make sure you understand all the policies and procedures.
• Prove yourself to be dependable and trusted early on through consistency in your actions.
• Pay attention to office culture. Observe how others behave, interact with others, and communicate with each other. Model those who do this well.
• Attend all business functions and participate in office events and traditions. For example, contribute to the office pot luck and join in on office games and activities.
• Take your work and assignments seriously even if it seems like a menial task, recognize how it plays into the bigger picture of organizational goals.
• Ask for feedback and use it. Make it easy for your supervisor to give you constructive feedback because this is how you will learn, grow and improve through your experience.
• Own up to your mistakes and don’t make excuses. Everyone makes mistakes.

Develop Your Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is described as “your ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships.”

Bradberry and Greaves

The four skills that make up Emotional Intelligence are:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management

The development of your Emotional Intelligence skills can have a huge impact on your career success.

Five Key Points About References

Three to five people is a good number of references to have. Who should you ask? Current or former supervisors, faculty members, coaches, or advisors. Family or close personal friends are not recommended.

Always ask permission before listing someone as a reference. As you ask, provide your references with a copy of your resume or CV, and any other materials that may be relevant like a job listing, cover letter, or graduate school essay.

Keep your list of references in a document separate from your resume. Usually references are not needed at the initial time of application. Bring copies of your reference page to your interview. If you have a CV, references are often included in an academic job search.

Share the contact information for your references including their job titles, employers, mailing addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.

Keep your references up to date on your progress and be sure to thank your references after your job search or your graduate school application process is complete.

Sample Reference List

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