
Professionalism In Your Workplace

Professionalism In Your Workplace by Kathleen Gage

Professionalism means being the very best you can be. This is conveyed in what you do both on and off the job, including your attitude. Your attitude is a direct reflection of who you are. Additionally, the way you treat your staff and co-workers is an interesting reflection of your level of professionalism. What you say about your company while away from work will give others a great insight into your professionalism. In other words, just about everything you do is a reflection.

It is important to understand the impact of first impressions. Within the first 30 seconds people will form an opinion of who they think we are. This will include, but is not limited to your:

- economic level
- educational level
- trustworthiness
- social position
- level of sophistication
- social and educational heritage
- success in previous and current endeavors
- moral character
- and if they like you!

Realize your non-verbals speak volumes about who you are. This would include your dress. Is it appropriate for the situation? Also, mannerisms and body language. According to a study conducted at the University of California Los Angeles, 55% of

what we communicate is in our body language. Only 7% has to do with the words we use.

Another indicator of professionalism is your workplace communication. This includes phones, voice mail, email, written correspondence and what we say and do when customers are around or not.

A few tips that will help.

Phone Etiquette

- Try to answer the phone by the third ring
- Answer the phone by identifying yourself and the department.
- Speak clearly and enunciate
- Return calls as quickly as possible
- When you're on the receiving end of a phone call, identify yourself and your department.

Voicemail

- Leave a clear outgoing message that is short
- If you will be out for extended periods, convey that on your outgoing message
- When leaving a message, speak your phone number twice

Cell Phones

- Avoid taking calls while with a client
- Turn off when in meetings
- Be careful not to shout when around others

E-mail

- Make the subject line specific.
- Keep the message short
- Add a little bit of the original message when responding to an inquiry.
- Address and sign your e-mails.

Netiquette

- Realize many email messages are misinterpreted
- Avoid spamming
- Remember, nothing is private
- Keep attachments to a minimum
- If your message doesn't need a response, let the recipient know.

The greatest reward for a high level of professionalism is your will attract the best type of business for you. You can often pick and choose. You will have an increase in confidence and credibility. And most of all, respect from others.

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