

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST (CLASSIFIED POST)

Job Coach

Written by
Helen Hanson

Make first impressions count when starting a new job

During the early days in a new workplace, impressions are being created and views formed constantly by you and about you. These first images and ideas may have a big impact on your future success with the organisation. Here's how to make the best start.

Nothing works better than having a positive attitude Show your enthusiasm for being part of the team and express this appropriately with everyone you meet. Leave your personal problems and distractions at home and focus on your new role.

Dress appropriately Notice how others in the office dress and blend in rather than stand out from the norm. Present yourself as groomed and professional, and people will assume

that your work will also be produced in this way.

Be proactive, a self-starter and show initiative Ask questions, find out information and, once a task has been completed, don't wait to be asked to complete the next one. Check with your manager or colleagues and be the one asking for the next activity. Show that you are organised and interested in achieving goals.

You will most likely either attend a group induction session or at least be partnered with an individual during the first few days. Listen attentively, ask questions and take copious notes regarding processes and procedures. These can be referred to during later days when you may have forgotten important items.

As part of your induction process, get hold of a job description. This document will assist you greatly in understanding your remit, role and responsibilities. Discuss it with your manager to gain clarity regarding priorities, core objectives of your role, the way your job meshes into others, the resources you will have, the main issues and the uniqueness of your role.

Remember names promptly In particular, learn the names of your immediate team members. No one will expect you to remember the name of every person during your first few weeks, but it is a good idea to make notes of those you meet and what their role is. Ask about your co-workers' interests and start to build a rapport with those with whom you

will be working closely over the coming months.

Handle politics and gossip carefully These things are best avoided for as long as possible. You do not want to be drawn into discussions about things you do not know much about or be seen to be associated with the office gossips.

Be present This includes being on time or even ahead of time every working day and staying through to the close of business. Don't leave ahead of the majority of your colleagues in those first few days. Be seen to be committed, dedicated and active through your actual physical presence in those first few weeks. There will be time for flexibility in the months to come. Be mindful of the

impression you are creating just by being there.

Listen more than you talk Don't act like a know-it-all from the word go. Don't spend all your time talking about how you used to do things at your previous organisation. You are in this one now, so focus on this reality and do your learning and listening in the early days.

Appreciate others There will be lots of people helping you out in the first few weeks. Express your appreciation and thank them for their efforts in supporting your transition.

Helen Hanson is an executive coach at Links Recruitment, which specialises in recruitment, HR services and payroll solutions.

Publication: South China Morning Post (Classified Post)

Frequency: Weekly

Readership: 322,040