

STARTING FRESH

Starting a new job can be a scary and stressful experience. Everyone wants to fit in and be liked, but that can be hard when meeting a new group of people that know nothing about you or your work ethics. When starting something new, the best advice is to listen rather than speak. Don't rock the boat with your own opinions too early; instead, ease into a comfortable relationship with your new colleagues.

Ten Tips for Starting a New Job



- 1. Get to know people.** First meet those people in your department and then those in departments you interface with. Listen more than you talk. Ask lots of questions and get clarification if necessary so you truly understand how the office/department/business works.
- 2. Don't try to change everything at once.** Be open to learning "their" way before you suggest "your" way.
- 3. Get in synch with your boss' priorities.** What are his/her expectations of you? Make sure you are living up to them.
- 4. Have lunch with different people** in the organization. Learn the "unwritten rules" of your new workplace.
- 5. Learn about the culture.** Seek out those people who have been there a long time and schedule time to talk with them.
- 6. Get to know the key players.** Seek out people both inside and outside your area who have roles that are critical to your team's success. Ask for their support and offer yours to them.
- 7. Identify the critical challenges.** Develop a plan that shows the way you will address your most critical challenges and the time frames that you expect completion. Share this with your boss.
- 8. Complete a project.** Select at least one visible project to be completed within your first 60 days in the job.
- 9. Take care of yourself.** Create a schedule for yourself that includes time off and good self-care. Changing jobs is stressful so include activities that you know reduce stress for you (i.e., proper rest, exercise, good diet, family time, etc.).
- 10. Celebrate your success!** Feel good about what you have accomplished. Confidence is an important part of your success in your job.

Source: www.bharatbhasha.com/careers.php/16589.

toolbox



How to Fill Big Shoes: Replacing Everyone's Favorite Co-Worker

So you've just started a new job and you're excited and ready to go. It's a great position with a great company, and is just the job you were looking for. The only problem is all anyone talked about during your first week of work was the person who came before you. It turns out you're taking the place of a company legend, and you have mighty big shoes to fill.

Taking the place of a company favorite is not always easy. Strong relationships are built in the workplace, and new employees are sometimes seen as intruders. Here are some strategies you can use to demonstrate you are worthy of the job.

1. Tread lightly on the memories.

Understand the loyalty your new co-workers have for their former colleague, and be respectful of it. Keep any frustration or criticism of the former employee to yourself. Yes, you may have inherited all of his or her unorganized old files, but badmouthing everyone's favorite will not win you many friends.

2. Suggest change carefully.

Many people are extremely resistant to change, and while you probably have some great new ideas, don't attempt to put them into practice all at once. Instead, implement one change at a time. If you can get your colleagues to ease into your new practices, or better yet, think the changes were their ideas, they will probably be more willing to accept them.

3. Ask questions.

While you might be sick of hearing about your predecessor, try to embrace some of the former employee's qualities. Ask your new colleagues why things are done the way they are, and seek feedback from people whose support you need.

4. Applaud new ideas.

Poll your team to see what ideas they have or changes they would like to see. Some employees may have been hiding in the shadows of the former golden boy and have some pretty good ideas of their own. You'll win your team's approval by recognizing others.

5. Build a niche for yourself.

While it can help to adopt some of your predecessor's qualities or strategies, it is also important to not be a clone. You have your own unique personality and qualifications, and you need to demonstrate these to your new team. Figure out what voids you can fill with your own talents.

6. Don't try to fill the shoes.

Sometimes you just can't fill the space left by a former employee. No matter what you do, your team might still miss their friend. In these cases, realize that you don't need to fill another's shoes, but rather wear your own new shoes. Develop your own personal goals and objectives. Write a list of things you can offer that no one else can.

7. Be patient.

It can take time to go from being the "new guy" to being one of the team. Be patient and realize that everyone is the new kid on the block at some point in time. Chances are, in another month no one will even remember what life was like without you!

Source: Kate Lorenz, editor, CareerBuilder.com

20 Tips to Help You Make a Great Impression at a New Job

How can you improve your chances for making a great first impression when you're starting a new job? Here are 20 tips to help you make a great impression.

- 1. Have a positive attitude.** Nothing works better – in all situations – than having and expressing a positive attitude. Let your enthusiasm for being part of the team and the organization show to everyone you interact with. And always leave non-work problems at home.
- 2. Dress professionally/blend in with co-workers.** You should never underestimate the importance of dressing professionally in your new job. And in the beginning, even if your department has casual days, you should dress professionally because you never know when you'll be called out to meet a top manager or key client.
- 3. Show your team spirit.** You are now part of a work team, and teams work together to solve problems and get the job done. Show loyalty to your co-workers and focus more – initially at least – on sharing any recognition you get with the team. Always give credit to the team.
- 4. Learn co-workers' names quickly.** No one expects you to have everyone's name down pat by the end of the first day or week, but if you are bad with names, now is the time to research some of the neat memory-aid tricks you can try to use. Certainly, as soon as possible, learn the names of every member of your team. And if you are in a situation in which you forget a person's name, the best solution is simply to apologize and ask the person's name again.
- 5. Ask questions/ask for help.** No one expects you to solve all the organization's problems on your first days on the job – so, relax a bit, and always ask questions or ask for help when you need it. Remember that it's better to ask before you've completed the task the wrong way and wasted all that time.
- 6. Take notes/go to orientation.** Unless you have a photographic memory, consider taking notes on all the various systems and rules of the organization. And no matter how boring they may sound, attend all orientation sessions. Nothing gets old faster than someone repeatedly asking how something works; such behavior shows a lack of attention to detail.
- 7. Be a self-starter; take initiative.** In most situations, in your first days on the job, you will be given small doses of work – to let you get your feet wet. As you finish assignments and are ready to handle a bigger workload, take the initiative and ask for more assignments. Whatever you do, don't just sit there waiting for your next project.
- 8. Discover everything about your new employer.** In theory, you should have already done your homework during the interviewing process, but there is always more to learn now that you are on the inside. Get an employee handbook and other company literature and read up and become an expert on your organization.
- 9. Work full days.** There's nothing that can affect your reputation faster than routinely coming into work late or leaving work early. Especially in these first days/weeks on the job, be sure you get to work early and leave no earlier than when the majority of your co-workers leave.
- 10. Establish a good attendance record.** Just as with working full days, it's important to show up to work every day and establish a good attendance record. Yes, there will be emergencies, and yes, you may get sick, but as best you can, try to make it to work every day during those first weeks/months on the job.
- 11. Avoid office politics and gossip.** As with any social organization, the workplace is full of rumors and gossip. Your mission is to keep your nose clean of all of it, and be sure not to associate too often with the office gossips or risk having your image associated with them.
- 12. Keep personal business on company time to a minimum.** Studies show that just about everyone conducts some amount of personal business on company time – checking e-mail, making dinner reservations, online shopping. Your goal is to keep your personal business to a minimum and stay focused on work.
- 13. Take advantage of after-hours activities.** Many organizations have formal or informal after-hour activities, such as sports leagues and happy hours. Get involved – even if only as a cheerleader – because these types of activities are great ways to bond with your co-workers. Do be on your best behavior during these outside-work activities, though.
- 14. Listen more than talk.** One of the hardest skills to learn for some of us is that, when we are new to the organization, it's better to listen than talk. You don't want to get the reputation as the office know-it-all – or worse, someone who always has to have the limelight. If you have a legitimate contribution, make it, but if not, do more listening and absorbing those first days on the job.
- 15. Track accomplishments.** It's up to you to track your accomplishments; no one else will do it for you. Tracking your accomplishments is great for any number of reasons – for your personal satisfaction, for raise and promotion meetings and for future job-hunting.
- 16. Show appreciation.** Nothing works like kindness and genuine appreciation. So, show your appreciation to everyone who helps you learn the ropes during your first days on the job – from your co-workers to receptionists to the human resources staff.
- 17. Find a mentor.** You don't need to jump on this task your first day, but as you get introduced to senior staff, begin thinking about developing a mentoring relationship with a member of management above you – and outside your department – in the organization. Mentoring has numerous benefits, from a simple sounding board to someone who helps direct and advance your career within the organization.
- 18. Get and stay organized/set goals.** Get an organizer or planner and keep on top of all your work. You certainly don't want to miss an early key deadline or meeting. And as you look ahead, set goals for yourself – and then strive to achieve them.
- 19. Keep your boss informed of everything.** Your boss is not a mind-reader, so keep him/her informed of how you are doing. Especially in those early days, meet with your boss to further establish a rapport and relationship. Be sure she/he knows you are a self-starter and hard-worker. Just don't bring the boss every little problem; instead, for minor issues, ask for help from co-workers.
- 20. Meet and network with key people in organization and profession.** Take advantage of every opportunity to network with key people in your organization and profession – attend staff meetings, professional organization conferences, trade shows – every opportunity to meet colleagues in your field.

Source: Randall S. Hansen, Ph.D. and Katharine Hansen, www.quintcareers.com/first_days_working.html