

CareerSMARTZ (CS35)

A highly effective career success strategy built around “Find a need and fill it.”



Task 8: Start Your New Job Professionally

Note: All underlined words are hyperlinks to Internet websites and will only function when viewing this document on your computer.

Perhaps you’ve heard the old expression, “Don’t shoot yourself in the foot.”

What does it mean? It refers to the fact that some people bring disaster onto themselves by their own words or actions – sometimes unintentionally, other times with full knowledge of the consequences. Whatever the reason, it’s like shooting yourself in the foot. ***As a result, there are times when you can be your own worst enemy!***

Such a situation often occurs when someone begins a new job. They may be talented, enthusiastic about the new job, friendly and willing to work, but still end up being fired, or at best ignored due to their poor behavior when they first began work. One bad mistake early in your job can result in fewer promotions, less salary, and less opportunities to achieve your career goal and mission.

Fortunately, over the years, social scientists and career development experts have compiled a list of things to do and not to do when starting a new job that can lead to a more successful experience.

Objective

The objective of this guide is to direct you in starting your job on the right foot to ensure a successful outcome, both from your perspective and from the perspective of your new employer and colleagues.

To complete this Checklist, complete the steps below:

1. Complete as many of the following items as possible (i.e. those that apply to your situation) when you first begin your new job.
2. Note that the following activities have been arranged in a sequence recommended by the authors. However, your circumstances may dictate that you complete them in a different order. If necessary, renumber the items below if you believe you should complete them in a different order. Feel free to add activities that are not listed, and/or remove activities that are not appropriate for you.

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[x] Print a copy of this list and mark each activity as it is completed.

1. **Thank everyone.** If you haven't done so already, thank everyone who helped you with your job search. A “Thank you” card is ideal, but email may be used if you can't get the person's mailing address. ***Protect these contacts as you may need them again in the future.***
2. **Record what worked.** Take a moment to write down which strategies, resources, and people were most helpful in securing employment. Save this information for future use.
3. **Meet with your supervisor and colleagues.** Spend time to get to know your supervisor or boss. Tour the facility together. Also, take time to meet those colleagues that you will most frequently work with in your new position.
4. **Understand the company hierarchy.** Learn who is responsible for each department, and who reports to whom.
5. **Meet with your staff.** Meet as a group. Get to know everyone. Explain your background and goals. Ask each person to share with you their role and responsibilities. Give them all a brief understanding of how you work with a team, and your expectations of them. ***Ask for their advice and support.***
6. **Set up your office.** Such items as:
 - Desk and chair
 - Desk supplies
 - Filing cabinet
 - Computer and printer
 - Internet and company network
 - Phone/fax
 - Scanner/photocopier
 - Security key/card
 - Parking
 - Log-in for phone and computer systems
7. **Learn emergency procedures.** Learn what you should do in the event of a fire, security lockdown, or other emergency event. If appropriate, add your name and phone number to the “emergency call list.”
8. **Take care of your benefits (medical, retirement, vacation, sick leave, etc.).** Meet with Human Resources to complete all necessary paperwork. ***Keep a record of everything!***
9. **Pay attention to dress code.** Adopt the same dress style as required or recommended by your employer.

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10. [] **Study and adapt to the culture.** Observe and learn how things are done, who does what, and how the company operates. Participate in social events and company-sponsored activities. Be an active team player!
11. [] **With your supervisor, develop a plan of action for moving forward.** Together, define your goals, objectives, strategies, obstacles, resources, timeline, and outcomes. Establish calendar dates for review of your work performance.
12. [] **Seek advice from colleagues.** Gain their support by asking for their advice about what issues you should consider to be high priority. Find someone who is especially successful in your department and ask that person to be your mentor!
13. [] **Keep a journal. Yes, yes, yes!** Record everything in a journal. In the future, you may need to refer back to your recorded notes when making decisions or to settle disputes.
14. [] **Avoid politics and other sensitive or controversial topics.** Don't alienate others or isolate yourself with your political and/or religious beliefs. Be respectful of all opinions and beliefs – especially those that you do not support.
15. [] **Don't join a clique.** Employees often join cliques based on department affiliation, interests, values of other shared factors. Try to avoid these as they can sometimes become disruptive. Stay neutral!
16. [] **Don't exaggerate your talent and past accomplishments.** You may set up expectations in the minds of others that you can't fulfill. ***Honesty is the very best policy!***
17. [] **Be supportive.** Work as a team. Help others succeed. Become one of the “go to guys!” Helping others is how you become a valuable member of the company.
18. [] **Update your career portfolio.** Let viewers to your career portfolio know where you're working and what your responsibilities are – keep them up-to-date as you accomplish goals and objectives. This shows success and keeps your visitors aware of your career activities.
19. [] **Update your family, friends, and acquaintances.** Keep them informed as to your career progress. You never know what new opportunities your contacts may bring to you in the future. ***Stay connected!***
20. [] **Revisit your career goal and mission objective.** On a regular basis (every six months) evaluate your career goal and mission. Are you on the right track? If not, determine what changes you need to make to get back on track.

What's your next step?

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Six months after completing this guide, reevaluate your current career activities to determine if changes need to be made to your career goal and/or mission, or to your strategy for achieving your career goal and mission.

In theory, you can follow this career updating strategy for the remainder of your career. If changes are needed or desired to your career goal and/or mission, again use the appropriate guides in the *CareerSMARTZ* program to make those changes.

We wish you well in your career!

Need more help? Visit the [Contact US](#) page at www.CareerSMARTZ.com.