Workplace Etiquette

Top Ten Tips for Every Employee and Intern
- Be accountable and responsible
- Be timely and truthful
- Use technology only for business during work
- Never gossip or become part of the rumor mill
- Don't violate others' personal and private space
- Know when to comment, when to listen
- Give what's needed (extra energy and effort) when needed
- Respect decisions made by the boss
- Show up – be there in the moment
- Stay positive – leave your moods at home

Professionalism Includes Being a Good Conversationalist
- Ask open-ended questions. Start with "What," "How" and "Why"
- Be a good listener
- Stay up-to-date on current events, even outside of your industry, by reading news websites or blogs, and listening to the news or radio
- Observe what is going on around you

Conversation Topics that Work	Topics to Avoid
• Weather	• Your health or others' health
• Traffic	• Controversial issues
• Common experiences	• Cost of items
• Current events	• Topics of a sexual nature
• Travel	• Personal misfortunes
• Hobbies	• Gossip
• Books	• Stories of questionable taste or dirty jokes
• Movies	• Politics
• Pets	• Religion
• Sports	• Salary or performance information
• TV Shows	

General Rules on Using Technology in the Workplace
- Learn your company's policy regarding the use of electronic devices in the workplace
- Understand that your company has the right to monitor your use of e-mail and may terminate you if you do not adhere to its policies
- Beware of a false sense of security before sending an e-mail. Ask yourself if you would mind if your message was sent to the world. Remember you have no control where your message goes after you click send
- Certain web sites can be off-limits; understand what these are. If you accidently log onto one of them immediately report it to your information security officer or IT department
- Downloading of some programs can be prohibited (RealPlayer, freeware, shareware, games, and so on); find out what these are

- It is often against company policy to use office technology for commercial or personal use. Set up a separate e-mail address for these purposes
- If policies prohibit the personal use of the Internet during work hours, limit your use to breaks, lunch hours, or from your own home
- If company guidelines permit a "reasonable use" for personal reasons, let your friends and family know of this restriction and ask them to respect this privilege

10 Tips for Office E-mail
- Carefully read e-mail and answer all questions, to avoid going back and forth
- Avoid sending confidential information via e-mail—make a phone call or ask to discuss sensitive issues in person
- Don't use text message abbreviations (such as "BTW") unless it is widely used within your organization
- Avoid "casual speak" or slang; use abbreviations and emoticons wisely
- Include a brief greeting that is appropriate for status of sender ("Hey Lori" may be fine for a friend but not for a supervisor). Also include a closing ("Thanks," or "Best Wishes, John")
- Watch the tone—remember no body language can be interpreted, only your words
- Use spell check and read message for errors before sending. Use proper spelling and grammar
- Respond promptly; if you cannot respond at the time, indicate that you will do so later
- Use proper color, fonts, layout, and formatting (those that fit with your work environment)
- If you e-mail back and forth three times, and the problem is not resolved, pick up the phone

Employers' Top E-mail Pet Peeves in the Professional Setting
- MESSAGES IN ALL CAPS
- messages in all lower case
- Incorrect punctuation
- Responding messages that don't answer the question
- Writing the Great American Novel (e-mails that are too long)
- Sending unnecessarily large attachments
- Forwarding non-work related jokes or chain e-mails
- Discussing personally sensitive issues
- Forwarding offensive or off-color jokes or attachments
- Not using the subject line—or not changing it to agree with the topic

Suggestions for using cell phones and listening to music in the workplace
- Use may be restricted to breaks-check your company policies
- Select a ringtone that is appropriate for your work environment
- When talking on a cell phone talk in a normal tone of voice
- Record a professional greeting
- Turn the phone off during meetings; even a vibrating cell phone can be distracting
- Do not text during a meeting unless it relates to the topic at hand
- Check the messaging for spelling and grammar before sending
- Keep music on a low volume, and check to make sure the volume does not reach your neighbors
- Turn off music when talking with co-workers, supervisors, or on the phone
- Think twice before taking photos with your phone camera; doing so may be against company policy

Resources
Do It Right! The New Book of Business Etiquette, by Valerie Sokolosky

Help! Was that a Career Limiting Move? by Pamela J. Holland and Marjorie Brody
NACE Journal, 2009

Culture and Manners Institute: https://cultureandmanners.com/