

Professionalism

What is professionalism and what does it mean for you in the workplace?

Professionalism is a way of navigating the workplace with respect and responsibility. Merriam-Webster defines professionalism as “the skill, good judgement, and polite behavior that is expected from a person trained to do a job well”. A work place has both written and unwritten rules guiding professional behavior. Try to learn and follow these rules. You can get started by following the tips provided here.

- Dress professionally using the dress code for your establishment. Make sure your clothes are clean, don't have holes or tears, and fit well.
- Practice good hygiene: bathe, brush your teeth, wear deodorant, and maintain your hair.
- Be aware of your body language and carry yourself with confidence. Your demeanor should exude confidence, but not arrogance. Be polite and well-spoken whether your interacting with customers, superiors, or coworkers.
- Be a dependable employee by showing up on time and being ready to work.
- Follow through on your word and make sure to meet deadlines.
- Do your job well, appreciate those around you, and serve as a resource for others.
- Be present when you are at work. Give the job at hand your full attention and avoid distractions like your phone.
- Conduct yourself ethically and honestly. You will be faced with tough decisions and situations at some point and will need to decide how to respond.
- Have a positive attitude. Try to enjoy what you do! It makes going to work a lot easier!
- Possess a willingness to learn. Listen to advice and instruction and be willing to incorporate this feedback into your work.
- Find a good strategy to manage and organize your time.
- Show respect for others. You cannot control what others do, but you can control how you react.
- Maintain confidentiality including personal information, company processes or other proprietary information.
- Use effective communication:
 - Produce effective written and verbal communication.
 - Use professional language at all times.
 - Balance talking and listening.
- Avoid workplace drama, gossip, fighting, and people who distract from getting work done.
- Keep a tidy workspace. A cluttered workspace is distracting and gives the impression of disorganization.
- Take responsibility for mistakes, they can be a great learning opportunity.
- Be willing to ask questions!
- Find help! A mentor can help you navigate difficulties and answer questions.