

7 Things No One Tells You About Your First Job

By Amanda Keaton | La Salle University

1. It Won't Be Your First Choice

The first position you land most likely won't be where you want to see yourself in the near future. What you need to know is that you are there to learn as much as possible. Absorb all of the information you can from your co-workers and use that information to help you in the future.

2. Experience is More Important Than The Paycheck

Working for free doesn't sound good to anyone but even if you're getting paid a little, remember that the experience you gain is more important than how much money you're receiving. You want to do as much as you can in your job so that you have the qualifications and skills when you're ready to apply again. Take on more responsibility when you can. This also shows your employer that you're a hard worker and they can be a great reference when you need them.

3. Don't Ask Too Many Questions Right Away

There is much to learn when you start a new job and although you want to be good at what you do, it's important to listen to instructions before asking any questions. If your job requires a training session, make sure you pay attention and even take notes so you won't have to reiterate similar questions when a problem arises.

4. Attitude Is Important

Everyone is watching and learning about your personality. So be alert and have a positive attitude always. There will come days where you're really tired or sluggish. But when you start a new job, you have to put those feelings behind you until the end of the day. If you need a break, go to the restroom, take a walk, or eat lunch so that you can regenerate and finish your day.

5. It's Okay to Say No

Sounds crazy for a first job, right? Not all the time. Usually when new employees start out, it's assumed that you don't have enough to do. So your boss will throw out lots of work for you to do or other employees will ask you to help out. If you have downtime, you should want to help out but don't get overwhelmed with the amount of work you take on. If you have enough that you're taking care of at the moment, say that politely.

6. Take Ownership When You Fail

There will come a time when you accidentally make a mistake. But it's okay because mistakes happen. Let someone know "I made a mistake, can you help me fix it?" It won't be a problem and you'll probably find out that the person helping made the same kinds of mistakes when they were starting out. It's nice to hear something like that, knowing that you're not the first or the last person that will make a mistake.

7. Not Everyone You Work With Wants To Be Your Friend

There are going to be many different personalities in the work place that you have to deal with every day. Not all of them will be as friendly as the person who helped you fix that mistake you made. But that's okay. The key to working around this type of situation is to focus on working the best you can to represent your boss and the company you work for. That's all you need to focus on. You spend a lot of time with your co-workers so find the best ways to work with them that helps you succeed.