

3 PIECES OF ESSENTIAL CAREER ADVICE FOR COLLEGE GRADUATES



Summary: Graduation was only the beginning. Your job seeking efforts and grueling interviews finally paid off, and your new career starts next week! Follow these tips to thrive in your career.

As you know, practice makes perfect. Many of us end up being more perfect at job seeking and interviewing than we'd like to be! But how often do we get to practice making good first impressions with an employer? Ideally, we have much fewer of those opportunities. The downside to fewer opportunities for first impressions is - we don't get the practice. This makes preparing for new environments vital for success.

First impressions matter for a number of reasons and they are especially important in the workplace. Additionally, keeping in someone's good graces is an ongoing activity - there is no end date for when you can stop asking how someone's day is going, cease making eye contact with your co-workers, or not give a welcoming smile. If you want to make a great first impression and maintain that impression, adopt these three tips as part of your work style.

1. Be Grateful. When you have opportunities to interact with people, it can be very easy to get caught up in chatting about everything that's going wrong. In the world of business, there are very few days (if any!) that something doesn't go wrong. Save your discussions about things that aren't going right with the appropriate audience, and always keep those discussions professional (e.g., speaking with IT about what computer issues you are having so they can help fix those problems, etc.). In the event you decide to vent at the workplace, choose your audience wisely, do it quietly, don't make it a daily routine, and always end the conversation on a positive note. Remember, even when everything is going wrong - there is always something to vocally be grateful for.

2. Be Observant. If you were not encouraged and reminded to be aware of your surroundings during your developmental years, now is the best time to begin this practice. Is your workplace typically quiet? Is your workplace fast or slow paced? Do the people in your meetings allow the discussion to deviate when someone raises a concern, or do they follow the meeting agenda and request off-topic discussions to occur offline? Spend the first few weeks actively observing and understanding your new environment. Then, do your best to accommodate and align your actions with their practices.

3. Be Innovative. Some of you may think being innovative doesn't apply to your current position. However, being an innovative thinker can occur in any setting. If the main focus of your position does not include innovation and creativity, that does not mean you cannot be innovative and creative with your personal responsibilities and tasks. Even basic things like creating meeting agendas and taking meeting notes can be novel enough to get you noticed ("How did you get OneNote to do that?"). It doesn't matter if you're tracking numbers or meeting clients. Find ways to do what you do in a better way, then demonstrate to your leadership how it's paying off.

Everyone has a beginning phase in their career. People typically want to find reasons to like you, and if you make mistakes along the way, remind yourself that people are more eager to forgive (or forget!) than you realize. Find an easy way to remind yourself what skill you are focusing on adopting, and keep working on that skill until it becomes part of your normal routine. Professionals that are grateful, observant, and innovative are constantly recognized; and when the timing is right - they steadily advance in their career.

What career advice was most helpful for you as a college graduate? Share what you learned when transitioning to your career after college in the comments below.

Read these related articles to learn more about succeeding in your new career:

[Top 9 Tips for College Graduates Starting New Jobs](#)

[Post-Grad Anxiety Can Make the Transition to Career Life Difficult](#)

[11 Tips to Stand Out as a Recent Graduate](#)

Photo: pexels.com