



AUBURN

Office of the Provost
University Career Center

FIRST YEAR ON THE JOB

Congratulations! You've earned your college degree and have successfully landed a job post-graduation! While your first year in a new position is definitely exciting, it is also a time of growth and development, especially as a new professional in the beginning stages of your career. It is important to put your best foot forward and make a positive, memorable impression with coworkers, supervisors, and other employees. Maintaining a strong work ethic, an eagerness to learn, and an overall professional attitude will serve as the keys to making your first year of employment enjoyable and successful!

Consider the following tips when approaching this new position:

KNOW YOUR WORTH

Prior to officially accepting a job offer, it is important to assess your needs and priorities as it relates to salary and/or benefits packages. Once an employer has made you an offer, you may choose to negotiate various aspects of the offer such as salary, annual bonuses, insurance benefits, relocation expenses, H-1B Visa sponsorship, and so on.

Utilize **F.A.I.R.** to be sure you are doing your due diligence when it comes to negotiating an offer.

- **F**ind out what your skills and level of experience are worth in the current job market.
- **A**ssess your realistic personal requirements. How much do you need to earn?
- **I**nvestigate the cost of living adjustments to salary based on employment location. Use cost of living calculators available at salary.com, money.cnn.com, and bankrate.com

- **R**esearch average salaries for the career field you plan to enter. Use the NACE salary calculator available at career.auburn.edu/students

IN THE BEGINNING...

Your first few weeks on the job can ultimately set the tone for the kind of interactions and relationships built with your team. Communicate your commitment to your position and the overall company through the following actions:

- Arrive early and stay late
- Being prepared, as much as possible, with resources & knowledge required for your role
- Be nice & friendly to everyone Be accountable & volunteer to complete projects, help coworkers with tasks, etc.
- Avoid gossip!
- Begin forming ideas & setting goals

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS GRADUALLY

While it is important to be genuine and confident, be wary of appearing overly friendly or presumptive about your position within the company. Try to remain relatively neutral in your behavior towards others while your team is still getting to know you.

Consider this approach:

- Make friends, but keep some distance
- Be wary of connecting on social media too soon, if at all
- Slowly bring personal items in when decorating your workspace
- Take a cue from your office mates and comply with company policy and established norms.
- Resist the urge to offer too many ideas unless asked

- Your colleagues have likely been working in the industry longer than you. Before offering solutions or strategies, first observe and see what changes, if any, need to be made and look for the appropriate time to present ideas (when you're asked specifically.)
- Ask questions, but not too many
- You may initially feel overwhelmed, but try to avoid inundating your employer with too many questions at one time.
- Similarly, be observant of office culture while you are getting to know your coworkers, supervisors, etc.

- Use complete sentences and avoid text speak
- Tone and inflection is difficult to infer, so have others read if unsure
- Emails using school or business email account are property of the entity
- Do not open unknown attachments
- Use Reply All sparingly
- BCC instead of To for large groups

VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Conflict resolution is an important skill to develop as you continue throughout your career. You will likely work with a diverse team comprised of different personalities and unique perspectives that may differ from your own.

Take note of:

- How hot button issues are handled
How things really get done
- Alliance formation amongst staff

To maintain professionalism, consider the following:

- Address disputes or perceived slights quickly and in private with that specific person
- Attempt to understand an alternate perspective or motivation impacting someone's behavior
- Be aware of your tone of voice when communicating with others and avoid talking down to others
- Be polite
- Do not raise your voice

COLLECT EXPERIENCES

Once you have begun to settle in, take advantage of opportunities for new experiences and skill development. Get plugged into the professional community around you, especially if you have relocated and need to make an extra effort to build your contacts.

Consider the following:

- Ask for responsibility from your team
- Join networking groups
- Make yourself more marketable
- Always be aware of new positions
- Look for opportunities to grow, develop, and learn new things
- Create online portfolio/ePortfolio

10 Quick Tips for First Year Success

1. Choose your attitude
2. Maintain realistic expectations
3. Master adaptation skills
4. Manage first impressions
5. Build effective relationships
6. Become a good follower
7. Understand company culture
8. Develop organizational savvy
9. Understand your new-hire status
10. Master the tasks of your job

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

- Always include a signature with name, title, email and phone number
- Avoid pictures or quotes
- Typical policy to respond to all emails is within 24-48 hours
- Always include a subject that is easily searchable and to the point