



## CPA Ireland's Guide to the First Day of Work

This is the sixth in a series of articles by CPA Ireland aimed at providing you with a comprehensive guide to improving your job prospects, with advice on your CV, cover letters, networking skills and much more. Here, we discuss how to successfully get through a first day in a new job.

### ▪ **Dress to Impress**

Never underestimate the importance of dressing professionally when beginning a new job. Regardless of whether the company has casual days or not, your appearance reveals a lot about your personality. A perfectly groomed appearance means efficient and reliable, while unkempt and sloppy can say unprofessional and disorganised.

### ▪ **Arrive Early**

Being punctual is always important, but being early always shows extra enthusiasm for the job. The early days are when your impressions are made and if you're constantly arriving late to work this will quickly become known as your 'typical' behaviour, losing their confidence in you as an employee.

### ▪ **Watch What You Say**

As you are being introduced to all the new faces, be careful of everything you say or do as things could easily come back to haunt you. Steer clear of any overly personal conversations and instead concentrate on general information about yourself, where you're from, where you went to college or worked before, etc. Needless to say, if you're concerned a statement or joke is too risky before you say it, then it probably is.

### ▪ **Remember the Names**

Learn your co-workers' names as quickly as you can as it will improve your working relationship with them. Even if you struggle with names, organise a system or a memory-aid trick that helps you to remember and if you ever forget, simply apologise and ask the name again.

### ▪ **Work Full Days**

Arrive early and leave late, it should never be the other way around. Once you are more established you can begin to be more flexible, however in the first few weeks observe everyone else's' routines. If they arrive early and leave late then follow their lead.

### ▪ **Establish a Good Attendance Record**

Similar to working full days, try avoid any unnecessary days off for the first few weeks and months unless an emergency arises or you are really too sick to leave your house.

### ▪ **Steer Clear of Gossip**

Every office has its own politics and gossip, but stay out of it for as long as possible. It is inevitable you will be drawn into it eventually, but never ever badmouth a fellow colleague or worse, a superior, to anyone else in the office.

### ▪ **Get Involved**

If some of the staff are going for lunch or after-work drinks or activities then join them. You need to build up your working relationships and rapport with everyone in the office. Keep drinks to a minimum at these events however, as too many could ruin your professional image.

- **Take Notes**

Take note of everything, from names to people's positions and jobs and any company policies or practices you come across in your first day.

- **Tone It Down**

If you are a naturally hyperactive, bubbly person, tone it down on the first few days until you establish your place in the office. Similarly, if you're the opposite, put on a smile, drink some coffee and be polite and friendly. Every task you are given should be done with enthusiasm, no matter how boring it is as you will be allowed to tackle the more interesting jobs once you have proved yourself.

- **Don't Be Afraid To Ask**

It's important to ask questions in your first few weeks, as this time is important for learning and finding your feet. Don't worry about appearing stupid, as asking these questions makes you appear attentive and eager to learn. It's important to build your office relationships so you are all on the same page and don't forget: pay attention and listen to everything.

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