

Checklist for Workplace Professionalism and Communication: Onboarding

Professional Communication Basics

- Craft professional emails (tone, clarity, and etiquette).
- Set up a professional email signature.
- Understand when and how to use “Reply All” and CC/BCC.
- Establish a voicemail greeting.

Workplace Technology

- Navigate shared drives and folders (e.g., Google Drive, OneDrive, or SharePoint).
- Use Outlook or other email/calendar systems effectively.
- Set up and use out-of-office email responses.
- Understand norms related to personal cell phone use and bringing into meetings.

Understanding Workplace Expectations

- Determine how to report changes to your schedule, calling in sick, or report an absence.
- Learn the company dress code (business professional vs. business casual).
- Understand workplace norms for greetings and introductions (in-person and virtual).
- Learn working hours—a typical work week is 40 hours, understand break times, and how to use timekeeping systems.
- Prepare for remote or hybrid work (tools, expectations, and etiquette).

Initial Supervisor Engagement

- Schedule regular check-in meetings with your supervisor (determine frequency) and create your own agenda focusing on questions, clarification, needed support or guidance, and addressing unachieved results.
- Understand project expectations and team roles.
- Ask about performance evaluation processes.

Looking for support, advice, or resources to address these topics? Reach out to the Tippie Career Services Team! You can schedule an appointment in MyUI, email us at tippie-careerservice@uiowa.edu, or find us in W160 PBB.

Checklist for Workplace Professionalism and Communication: Professionalism in Action

Communication and Collaboration

- Schedule and manage meetings using Zoom, Teams, or similar tech platforms.
- Adhere to virtual meeting best practices by ensuring your screen and video are on, use appropriate backgrounds, minimize distractions (e.g., pets), and mute when not speaking.
- Provide regular updates on tasks or projects—both in person and in writing, specifically if there are barriers to completion or success.
- Write concise and professional status reports. Use business writing principles with bullet points and specific details to clearly communicate updates.

Workplace Relationships

- Engage respectfully with coworkers in person and online.
- Navigate generational and cultural differences in communication.
- Provide and receive constructive feedback effectively.

Time and Task Management

- Manage your calendar to balance meetings, deep work, and breaks. Use to your advantage.
- Keep a to-do list and prioritize tasks and track progress and meet deadlines.
- Request resources or assistance proactively.

Technical Skills

- Familiarize yourself with common workplace tools (e.g., Excel, PowerPoint, Slack).
- Follow document formatting and sharing protocols (PDFs, version control, etc.).
- Use workplace IT systems (e.g., expense reporting, timesheets).

Navigating Work Dynamics

- Observe and approach office politics diplomatically.
- Understand how to use social media to enhance your experience vs. venting or damaging your or the employer's brand.
- Communicate with supervisors regularly ("managing up").
- Know when and how to escalate an issue appropriately.

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Transition Planning

- Document processes, workflows, and key contacts.
- Prepare for knowledge transfer to a successor or team. What can you offer that would be helpful to future interns, improvements, process, and suggestions?
- Return company equipment and materials.

Exit Communication

- Draft a professional resignation email. Clearly state your last day, outline any next steps, and confirm arrangements—even if the internship has a set end date or you plan to extend the opportunity.
- Schedule an exit interview and prepare constructive feedback.

Relationship Maintenance

- Express gratitude to supervisors and coworkers.
- Connect with key individuals on LinkedIn before departure.
- Request references or recommendations for future roles, if appropriate.

Personal Brand Preservation

- Update your resume and LinkedIn profile with accomplishments.
- Work with Career Services to determine how to best highlight and add your experiences to your resume and speak to it as part of future interviews.

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