YOUR FIRST DAY AT THE WORKPLACE

How to make a confident, professional first impression

A practical guide for students entering the world of work

BE PREPARED • BE RESPECTFUL • BE READY TO LEARN

Why your first day matters

Your first day helps shape how colleagues and supervisors experience working with you.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

People notice your attitude, punctuality, communication and appearance.

LEARNING MINDSET

You are not expected to know everything. You are expected to be willing to learn.

BUILDING TRUST

Reliability, respect and follow-through help others feel confident in you.

Your goal: show professionalism, confidence, humility and a positive attitude.

Before you arrive

Plan your route and aim to arrive 15–30 minutes early.

Choose clean, neat clothing that suits the workplace.

Carry a notebook, pen and any documents you were asked to bring.

Keep your phone charged and on silent during work activities.

Get enough rest and arrive ready to listen, learn and participate.

QUICK CHECK

- ✓ Time and transport
- ✓ Appropriate outfit
- ✓ Notebook and pen
- ✓ Positive attitude

Make a positive first introduction

When you arrive:

Greet people politely and confidently.

Smile and use a friendly, respectful tone.

Introduce yourself and learn colleagues' names.

Be courteous to everyone, regardless of their job title.

A SIMPLE INTRODUCTION

"Good morning. My name is [Your Name]. I'm happy to be here, and I look forward to learning from everyone and contributing to the team."

Tip: speak clearly, make natural eye contact and keep it brief.

How to conduct yourself during the day

LISTEN ACTIVELY

Pay attention to instructions, processes and expectations.

TAKE NOTES

Record key tasks, names, deadlines and procedures.

ASK QUESTIONS

Ask for clarification when something is not clear.

SHOW INITIATIVE

When you finish a task, ask how else you can help.

WORK AS A TEAM

Be approachable, cooperative and respectful.

BE ACCOUNTABLE

Do your best, meet deadlines and communicate early if stuck.

Common first-day mistakes to avoid

Do not pretend to know something you have not learned.

Do not spend work time scrolling on your phone.

Avoid gossip, negative comments and unnecessary complaints.

Do not interrupt or dismiss other people’s ideas.

Do not share confidential workplace information.

Do not leave your work area or make commitments without checking expectations.

Ask, clarify and close the day well

USEFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What are my main responsibilities?
- Which tasks should I prioritise?
- Who should I report to?
- What tools or systems will I use?
- How will my performance be evaluated?

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- Review what you have been asked to do.
- Check whether anything needs follow-up.
- Ask what to prepare for tomorrow.
- Organise your workstation.
- Thank your supervisor and colleagues.

“Thank you for the welcome and guidance today. I look forward to contributing more as I settle into the role.”

REMEMBER THESE FIVE QUALITIES

01	**PROFESSIONALISM**	Dress and communicate appropriately
02	**CONFIDENCE**	Speak clearly and introduce yourself
03	**HUMILITY**	Be open to feedback and learning
04	**RESPONSIBILITY**	Take ownership of assigned tasks
05	**TEAMWORK**	Cooperate and respect others

You do not need to know everything on day one.
Show that you are someone worth investing in.