

SMOOTH SAILING THROUGH YOUR FIRST JOB

by Kelsey Banks, Sales & Project Management Intern, AgCareers.com

Pet peeves. We all have them, even employers. Imagine you've just graduated from post-secondary education and have been hired to work at a great company. Now before you get too excited, there are some things you have to remember NOT to do and to do to ensure that you keep your employer happy with their decision to hire you.

We asked a variety of agricultural and food production industry employers anonymously what pet peeves they have with new hires. After receiving a wide range of answers we have compiled them to help keep you educated on how to be the best new hire there is.

TALKING ABOUT PAY OR FAMILY TROUBLES

Although it may seem obvious that those are topics to avoid, especially as a new hire, sometimes our outside lives creep into our work lives. By at least attempting to keep our work lives professional and separate from our outside lives, you can gain more experience from your job and build a better professional relationship with your employer.

BECOMING DEMOTIVATED

As you start in the professional work world — with a brain fresh from school with new ideas — take it slow. You have to start somewhere and work your way up in any workplace. Stay positive and stay motivated!

One of the employers said, "Many new hires push too hard, too quickly for autonomy and promotions, and become demotivated when they don't receive what they believe they are ready for. Enthusiasm is to be encouraged and applauded, but they simply don't know what it is they don't know! Tell folks to be resilient in the face of what appears to be rejection

and lack of recognition for their abilities. Chances are the kudos and attendant awards are coming, it just takes longer than the impatience of youth is willing to tolerate. Don't jump ship after two years. The learning and competency curve is a lot longer than that in most jobs. Patience young padawans!"

DISORGANIZATION & NOT COMING TO WORK ON TIME

Starting a new job can be extremely overwhelming. When you are meeting other staff members, trying to figure out your role, and learning the expectations you must adhere to it is easy to become disorganized. Try to stay on top of everything by using an agenda or write everything down.

A major employer in the agricultural industry says, "DO NOT be late! DO NOT come unprepared to take notes during a meeting or connect with your manager, and then be sure to follow up on action items."

Although these comments from employers may seem fairly understandable, it is important to keep yourself organized and constantly on the top of your game.

SUBMITTING VACATION TIME AFTER YOU'RE HIRED

During an interview typically employers will ask, "Do you have any planned vacation time you need away from work?" Your answer to this question should be honest. Most interviewees believe they will have less chance of getting the job by saying they need time off. In most cases this is not true. Your new employer may have a special project



or task that he or she has planned for you, so be fair and tell your employer upfront if you'll need to be away in the first few months of your employment.

USING YOUR CELL PHONE ALL THE TIME

If you had a part time job during high school and/or college or university you more than likely were not allowed to text at work. Many employers become frustrated by the distractions of texting while at work.

In the professional work world technology is used constantly for personal and professional purposes. Texting can be a useful tool to communicate with your co-workers if you need to, but avoid texting for your personal pleasure frequently.

Overall, employers have hired you for a reason and within those first few years with that company you need to prove to them that they did not make the wrong choice in hiring you. By ensuring you remember these employer pet peeves and what it was about that company or position that made you want it to begin with, you could quite possibly have a lifelong and satisfying career.