

## Worker Ethics

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We all expect our employers to act fairly and just in their relations with us, but why is it the expectations of employees are seldom examined? Shouldn't employees be fair and operate ethically within the organization?

What are work ethics? Simply put, it is a set of values based on hard work and diligence. This definition shows that it is not solely about working hard, but there is also an implied system of virtues, which guide the employee's actions within the workplace. It separates a valued employee from a dispensable one.

Employees with a good or strong work ethic, come to work with the intention of working. It does not mean that these persons are robotic in their tasks or that they stick to their job descriptions to the letter, but their output is that of professionalism, attention to detail and relevance to the tasks assigned. Persons with a good work ethic tend to need minimal supervision, and tend to be more productive than their counterparts. It is therefore clear to see why employers prefer employees with a good work ethic. In these days when we are all so busy, we don't want to have to micromanage our staff, we want people on our team who we know can get the job done on their own. So how do we as employees cultivate a strong work ethic? Pierre du Pleissis in his article "Work Attitude Ethics for Progress" highlights eleven steps for achieving this feat.

1. Become the "go to" person within your organization. Be that one person who everyone turns to for information (not gossip) and advice, as well as being the person that brings a work team together.
2. Ensure that you possess the expert knowledge in your field; therefore if you are the IT professional in your company, ensure that you know as much as you can about the IT field or in a specialized area within the field.

3. Produce accurate work – i.e. ensure that carrying out your work with minimal mistakes becomes a habit. Workers with a strong ethic are neither sloppy nor tardy.
4. Execute your duties and tasks speedily - there is no room for procrastination, and you must always show your superiority and efficiency.
5. Be always aware of productivity - a simple way to ensure one's productivity is to ask oneself the question "Am I giving back more value to my organization than I am being paid? And I know the most automatic response is an emphatic yes, but stop and really evaluate your contribution to your organization.
6. Get rid of time wasters - this step is twofold, you must ensure that you are not a time waster and also depending on your position in the company, also seek to ensure that none of your subordinates are time wasters.
7. Be open-minded and ready for organizational changes - be able to "roll with the punches" and be willing and able to assist other employees in the acceptance of the proposed changes.
8. Arrange and organize your paperwork - we all know how it gets, you are so busy that filing becomes secondary and then a pile as high as Mount Hillaby sits on your desk. One of the keys to having a strong work ethic is to ensure you maintain control of the paper work at all times and that you are able to reference any items as need be.
9. Continuous self improvement and development, whether this be by formal training, or ensuring that you are well read on several key areas, including supervision and management.
10. Another key to exuding a strong work ethic is by showing initiative - don't fall into the pattern of only doing exactly what is found in your job description, go beyond that, if you know that training is being offered that will help with your job, request that you attend at the company or your own expense. These small gestures show that you are invested in doing a good job and the benefits will be recognized later.
11. Finally in all your interactions be honest, open and direct.

The foregoing steps are by no means an exhaustive list of ways for us to become a stronger, more ethical work force, but these steps will allow you to become more

aligned to that cherished, as opposed to dispensable employee. By improving their work ethic, employees will become more marketable and then be in a better position to demand more equitable treatment from their employers.