



Workplace Etiquette

Introduction

Etiquette is important in any and all office environments. As the Government of Alberta represents a wide range of demographics and cultures in its workplaces and has also adopted the open office environment, it is important to outline some of that etiquette.

It is up to each and every individual to assist in maintaining a pleasant work environment. The Workplace Etiquette document is a reference tool for Government of Alberta employees and is divided into the following sections:

- Noise
- Distractions
- Confidential Conversations
- Clutter
- Odour Control

Noise

Most open office plans require a large number of people, with different sensitivities to noise, to work together in very close proximity. This can present challenges with regards to how we manage the physical environment.

Be mindful of what you can hear of others' conversations and note that they can hear yours as well. Always be aware of your volume, particularly if you have a loud or unique voice, and try to speak in a softer tone.

Avoid talking or shouting through workstation panels as this is disruptive to others. Walk to the person's workstation, use the phone, office communicator or send an email.

Distractions

Speaker phones, ringing cell phones and office equipment can be sources of noise that can cause distraction in the open environment.

Refrain from using speaker phones within your workstation, if required move to a telephone room or small meeting room.

Set your cell phone to vibrate when you are in the office. If you have a large quantity of copying or printing to be done, be mindful and notify the people in close proximity that you will be doing so. They may choose to put on headphones to help eliminate or minimize the distraction.



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Confidential Conversations

In the open environment, confidential matters should be discussed in a setting that supports the privacy required for that particular conversation.

If confidential or sensitive conversations are required, use a small meeting room or telephone room.

Clutter within Workstations and Meeting Spaces

Open environments can look cluttered when employees leave their work out. This can also result in security issues if confidential files are out and visible to passers-by.

Leave meeting and conference spaces tidy, be mindful of the people using them next.

Odour Control

Reheating food or making microwave popcorn can be a distracting smell in the open work environment for others, so be mindful. People may also have sensitivities to smells like perfume, cologne or even flowers.

References

Rules for Etiquette in the Open Office, 2010 Knoll Inc.