

The Importance of Punctuality in the Workplace



The reality for many modern-day workers consists of constantly looking at their phones, checking e-mail and running from one important meeting to another trying not to be the last one in the door. In a world where technology reigns supreme and productivity is the yard stick by which success is measured, it's easy to see how information overload causes you to become self-absorbed and lose all track of time and what is going on around you. If you're looking to separate yourself from those around you however, punctuality goes a long way. Even though being fashionably late is expected for a date or social gathering, nothing could be further from the truth in the workplace as everyone's time is valuable. Below we discuss what being on-time means and why it is so [important](#).

First Impressions Matter

If you're interviewing for a new position or are brand new on the job, there are few excuses to ever be late. Being early or on-time doesn't seem terribly difficult but it's truly amazing how many people lose out on jobs or opportunities simply because they show up even just five minutes after the scheduled time.

If tardiness is something you think is too harshly considered, imagine the following scenario. You are in negotiations of business arrangement with a potential partner. You do all your homework ahead of time and show up early to prepare and make sure everything is all set. You wait and wait and the other party finally shows up 15 minutes after the scheduled time acting as if nothing is wrong. What are your immediate impressions of this individual? Are they reliable? If they can't show up in time for the first meeting can they be trusted to meet the

demands of the proposed arrangement in the future? How will this behavior be reflected on by clients or customers?

Even though being late just once seems like a forgivable offense, it leaves a lasting mark that is difficult to overcome in the early stages of any professional relationship. If you truly care about [crushing an interview](#) or making a notable impression on your boss when you're first starting out, being punctual goes a long way in letting everyone know around you know you care.

Repeat Offenses

Maybe you work in a job that requires weekly or monthly internal meetings that are mandatory for everyone to attend. You're probably not the only one that thinks these meetings are somewhat of a waste of time but continually showing up late for happenings that are on the calendar days or weeks in advance isn't a habit you want to get in to. Not only does this behavior show a lack of concern for the immediate issues at hand, it speaks volumes to your greater concern for your job and the organization and can significantly hinder your chances for promotion.

Meeting Deadlines

Being on time isn't just about showing up when you're supposed to for meetings and events. It also speaks to your ability to manage the expectations set upon you. If you continually demonstrate that you meet deadlines and finish tasks in a timely manner it won't go unnoticed. Doing so let's everyone in your organization know that you care about the quality of your work and the overall success of the company. Being reliable builds trust quickly and can be the deciding factor in determining your movement upward.

Job Security

Have you ever noticed that the first people to be let go are usually the ones that are consistently late? While this behavior may be a sign of other symptoms that lead to someone being fired, it alone likely stands out the most. Not only is being late noticeable to everyone around you, it strongly conveys a lack of concern for the job you're doing, and a lack of respect of everyone else's time. In the event that your organization is forced to lay people off, being on time and working

diligently to meet deadlines goes a long way in making sure your neck isn't on the line.

Even though some might not agree, the saying "five minutes early is on time and on time is late" still rings true. There's no disputing that the demands of the workplace today take a toll on everyone. However, if you consistently show up to meetings at or before the scheduled time and complete your work when expected, you send a strong message to those around you. It's a message that commands respect and let's everyone know you are to be taken seriously. This alone can separate you from others and can prove pivotal for career advancement and meeting your professional goals.