

Office Etiquette

By Donna Nelson

If you have ever worked in an open office or cubicle setting, the typical environment of a hospital IT department, you know that there are challenges that come with the package. This environment can be especially difficult for someone who is easily distracted or introverted, or if you have an office mate who is clueless as to how their habits affect your work. Maybe you are that person. If this strikes a chord with you, read on for a few tips regarding good office etiquette.

- 1) Phone Calls – Be mindful of office mates when making calls. Keep the volume as low as possible and delay your call if a co-worker is already on the phone. It will reduce distractions and stress for each of you, as well as for the caller on the opposite end of the line, if you are not competing to be heard.
- 2) Personal Life – Be discreet with the details of your personal life. While your peers may be entertained by your stories, management is unlikely to be. Sharing too much information in an office setting may appear unprofessional and leave others with an unfavorable impression. There are employers who are more lenient in this area than others are. However, no one is likely to tolerate a practice that consistently wastes productive time.
- 3) Team Dynamic – Be gracious, humble and personable. Everyone has a bad day or makes a mistake every now and then. No one appreciates a know-it-all or a bully. Apply the “golden rule” in all situations: *Do unto others as you would have done to you.*
- 4) Attitude – Maintain a positive attitude at all times. Negativity will only bring chaos to your department and hamper productivity. A bad attitude can either be contagious and spoil the atmosphere for everyone, or it will isolate you from co-workers who refuse to participate in your drama.
- 5) Personal Habits – We all have annoying habits, so it pays to know what yours are, how they affect the people around you, and how you can minimize the damage. This could be anything, from distracting your peers with excessive or loud talking to bringing stinky dishes for lunch every day. You cannot always please others, but you should strive to be courteous and respectful.

Maintaining a pleasant work atmosphere is the responsibility of all team members. There are numerous challenges in the office setting, particularly in a physically open environment. Do your part to keep the area a stress-free zone!