



Creating opportunity, Inspiring success

WORKPLACE CULTURE GUIDE



TORONTO





Working in a new environment can be daunting, so this document will give you a few tips on the often unspoken rules and guidelines of an office in Toronto.



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Meeting and Greeting Your Team -

Say hello and greet your team when you arrive in the mornings – it makes a huge difference in building relationships and creating a good team atmosphere. Use your common sense however and choose appropriate times.



Greeting Your Boss - When you first meet your boss you should make eye contact and shake their hand firmly. Unless told otherwise, it is ok to address them by their first name.

What to Wear - On your first day you should dress smartly. For Finance and other "corporate" environments you should wear a suit (and tie for men). For other companies you should wear a smart outfit with no jeans or sneakers/trainers. Your company may allow more casual wear, but it is better to be safe initially.

Meeting Etiquette - The level of formality in meetings will vary depending on the company and industry you are working in. In general it is common to start a meeting with some small talk, but in Toronto people tend to get down to business pretty quickly, so don't overdo it.

Things Not To Say - Do not use swear words and avoid controversial topics of conversation. Every team and office are different in what is acceptable to discuss, but stay away from sex, politics, religion and moderate your language. Profanity may offend some colleagues and can look unprofessional.

Mobile Phone Best Practice - Manage your mobile devices. Have your phone/tablet on silent or vibrate and turn down your email alerts or other noises, as this can create a difficult environment for your coworkers.

Making Personal Calls - Try to avoid taking personal calls during the day. If you have to make sure you take them away from the desk – find a meeting room or somewhere public where you can talk more freely, as you don't want to disturb others.

Be Punctual – Arriving late for a meeting implies a lack of respect for someone else's time. In the same way, show respect for others' time and be observant of when people have time to talk and when they don't.





Working Hours – Typical working hours in Toronto are between 8am and 6pm, but these can vary depending of the type of role and industry you are working in. Finance and Business roles tend to start earlier and can have longer hours, whereas Media and Fashion roles can often start later.

Keep Your Desk Tidy – Even if you don't mind the mess, it doesn't inspire confidence in your organizational abilities.

Email Etiquette - Who really needs to be copied in and do you really need to "reply all"? Adding unnecessary items to inboxes isn't helpful – the less thoughtfully you communicate the less effective it will be.

Commuting – If traveling to or from work on public transport there are a few common rules to follow. Make sure you let people off the train before you try to board. Be considerate to fellow travelers and avoid taking up more than one seat, give up your seat to anyone that needs it more (pregnant, elderly or disabled people). In subway stations, you should stand on the right and walk on the left of the escalators.



Socializing With Colleagues – In general Torontonians rarely take extended lunch breaks, and often eat their lunch at their desks. In the evenings, people will go out for drinks or dinner with their colleagues, but it is frowned upon to drink excessively (or to drink at all, if under 21) and events are typically immediately after work and finish in the early evening.

Be Considerate - The main source of conflict at work is generally caused by a lack of consideration for others in what is a relatively confined space. Use your common sense to make sure that you are always courteous and considerate. Avoid doing anything that is likely to negatively impact your coworkers' ability to get things done and you will be fine.

Torontonians – In general, Torontonians are very friendly and often happy to chat with strangers, but they have a reputation for straight talking and can be very direct.