Transitioning to a New Job

Engineering Career Services
Our Goal:
Provide resources and opportunities to help engineering students develop professional skills and obtain full-time employment upon graduation.

We Are Here to Help YOU!

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What Will We Discuss?

- Preparing before your 1st day
- Developing a professional network
- Finding a mentor
- Building trust with management & colleagues
- Developing a broad knowledge of your company/industry
- Keeping notes
- Taking ownership for your work
- Teamwork
- Setting goals
- Being positive & professional
- Maintaining a personal/professional life balance

Feel free to ask questions at any time!
Ways to Prepare for Your 1st Day

- Know general policies (schedule, dress, etc.)
- Have realistic expectations
  - You will likely be given fairly minor tasks to begin
    - Volunteer for additional tasks
  - You will often be asked to work as part of a team
  - You will need to be alert and attentive for at least 8 hours
- Be ready to adapt
Develop a Professional Network

Keep a list of contacts and get to know new people around you

In order to be effective, you need to know who to go to for info & support
Seek Out Opportunities to Network

• Think about who can help you to achieve your goals
  – Starting a new project
  – Ask for ideas/suggestions and build upon them together
  – Initiate meetings to discuss goals, roles, expectations, etc.
  – Casual opportunities

• Maintain relationships
How Can Your Network Help You?

• Help you to collect info and make other connections
• Save you valuable time
• Avoid problems
• Have more fun while accomplishing goals!
Build a Relationship with Your Supervisor

- Establish expectations
- Be comfortable asking questions
- Get honest feedback
- Huge impact on your professional life and growth of your career
Search for a Mentor

• What to look for…
  – Experience greater than your own
  – Track record of success
  – Good experiences with past mentees
  – Caring and invested in your professional growth
  – Honest

• Try to reciprocate their support
Why is Having a Mentor Important?

• Provides:
  – guidance and advice
  – historical perspective

• Really wants to see you succeed
  – Takes personal interest in your work
Build Trust with Management and Colleagues

- Be on time
- Meet deadlines
- Volunteer when appropriate
- Don’t just do the bare minimum
- Not only hear colleagues, **listen** to them
- Be sincere
- Ask for help
Explore & Develop a Broad Knowledge of Your Company/Industry

- Look at trends, competitors, and current events influencing professional and personal lives
- Pay attention to what others are doing, in and out of your department
- Look at actual news of events, not just news from friends

The “T-Shaped” Individual

Breadth of Knowledge
(For teamwork and client engagement)

Technical Depth
Keep Good Notes

• You will receive a lot of new information
  – Don’t rely solely on your memory
  – Colleagues happy to help, but try not to ask for the same info again

• Document your work
  – Your manager will appreciate this
  – Always think about the next person that will doing the task

"This one says, order more sticky notes."
Always be Positive and Professional

- **Positivity improves the work environment**
- Disagree in a positive way
  - Use a compliment sandwich to provide constructive criticism
- First impressions are important!
  - Shake hands, be confident, smile, remember names
- Be appreciative and respectful
Professional Communication

• Professional Email Communication
  – 3 C’s: Be Consistent, Clear, and Courteous
  – Think about your audience and purpose before writing
  – Colleagues may form first-impressions
  – Consider face-to-face communication when possible
  – Beware of replying all & forwarding
• Don’t be overly critical
• Stay out of office politics
Take Ownership

• Be responsible
  – Follow through on commitments
  – Perform each job to the best of your ability

• Allow yourself to learn from mistakes
  – Take ownership of your work
  – Be open to constructive criticism
  – Come up with a solution and document what you’ve learned
  – Forgive yourself!

“Success does not consist in never making mistakes but in never making the same one a second time.”

– George Bernard Shaw
Working with a Team

• Efficiency sometimes sacrificed for consensus
  – Provides checks & balances within a company
• Keep the scope and timing of a project in mind
  – May be longer than you’re used to
  – Your grade is not the only thing affected
• Know the culture of your company
• Be sure to contribute, but don’t dominate the conversation
• Have patience
**Set Goals**

- **Importance**
  - Provides Focus
  - Increases Motivation
  - Improves Cohesion

- **Align personal goals with company’s goals**

- **Keep track of your progress**

“The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score.” – Bill Copeland
Keeping Your Personal Life in Order

• Finances: Benefits, Health Insurance, etc.
  – ISU Financial Counseling Clinic
    (www.hdfs.hs.iastate.edu/fcc/)
  – HR Department
• Don’t lose your personal life
  – Make time for the things that are important to you
• A satisfying personal life can help to increase your performance at work
Summary

• Make sure to prepare before your 1st day
• Seek out opportunities to develop your network
• Establish a relationship with your supervisor/mentor
• Document important information
• Set goals and keep a good team mentality
• Communicate professionally at all times
• Be Positive!
• Don’t forget your personal life