



Information and Communications Technology Council / Conseil des technologies de l'information et des communications

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Working Effectively with your Manager and Team¹

At your new job you'll likely be spending up to 40 hours a week with your manager and coworkers, so it is important to build effective working relationships with them.

As an IEP just starting in a new workplace, learn what steps you can take to forge strong bonds with your coworkers in the Canadian ICT workplace.

Working well with your... Manager

Canadian workplaces tend to be less hierarchical than in some other countries – this means that managers expect employees to:

- Address them by their first name, not use job titles, and interact informally;
- Be proactive in asking questions, work independently and take the initiative;
- Be responsible for the direction of their career; and
- Articulate and express one's ideas/views/opinions to all levels of management.

"For the first while you should listen and observe. Get to know everyone, understand what everyone does, and learn the processes. At the same time, be sure to share your opinion in meetings and begin to demonstrate your abilities."

IEP employed in ICT

Demystifying the Corporate Culture

Each company has its own way of doing things. In your first weeks on the job, observe carefully, demonstrate interest, and collect clues about how best to build relationships. Use the following questions to help you:

- How much direction is usually provided by a manager? Are employees expected to initiate ideas and actions?

¹ Adapted from You're Hired... Now What? An Immigrant's Guide to Success in the Canadian Workplace. Oxford University Press. 2010.

- Is it common practice to go to a supervisor or manager for answers or feedback? How much “face time” with managers is expected and who initiates it?
- Are work groups common, or is the bulk of work carried out by individuals?
- Is it common for important decisions to be made in a meeting, or is it more likely that information will be gathered in a meeting and decisions will be made in a smaller group forum?
- How important is punctuality? Is it expected that people arrive early for an appointment?
- How formal are business meetings? What is the dress code? Are first names always used? Does everyone participate in discussions, and share their ideas?
- Is it more common to get to business quickly and then socialize if there is time afterwards, or does the socializing occur before getting to business?
- What is appropriate small talk with new co-workers? How often do co-workers socialize, for how long and where?

Source: Adapted from Centre for Intercultural Learning, Canadian Foreign Service Institute. Based on Jonamay Lambert, Selma Myers and George Simons, *Global Competence: 50 training activities for succeeding in international business*, (Amherst, Mass.: HRD Press, 2000).

Working well with your... Team

In the first few weeks, be proactive in meeting your coworkers and starting to build relationships with them – greet your coworkers daily, ask how their weekend was, join them for lunch or coffee, share some information about your past experience and some basic facts about yourself – where you live, how long you’ve been in Canada, if you have children or pets, for example.

Other ways to build a relationship with coworkers include:

- Listen well
- Build trust
- Be reliable
- Under-promise and over-deliver
- Be honest
- Be loyal
- Share and care
- Be flexible about time off
- Find creative solutions
- Take responsibility
- Show respect
- Participate in company events and activities
- Show appreciation
- Pay compliments
- Ask if you don’t know!

Resources

TRIEC training videos – **Cross-Cultural Teamwork**

Other tip sheets: Understanding, Managing and

Achieving Professional Objectives

Success in the Workplace Action Plan