

### WHAT IS 'PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR'?

Every workplace and organisation has its own expectations about how staff or volunteers should behave 'on the job'.

Some of these expectations may be specific to your organisation - such as the way you must wear your uniform - but many of them will be the same, wherever you work or whatever organisation you belong to.

The following tips apply to almost every place you are ever likely to work.

### UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR ORGANISATION STANDS FOR

Find out the key purpose, vision and values of your workplace or organisation, and support them through your behaviour.

## EXAMPLE

Skills Active Aotearoa's **purpose** is: To build a highly qualified workforce in the recreation, sport and fitness industries leading to productive and sustainable organisations that provide quality services.

Ki te whakakaha ake i te hunga mahi i te ahumahi ā-rēhia kia puta ai he whakahaere whai hua, whakauka hoki e tuku ratonga kounga ai ki Aotearoa.

Its **values** are: **Tika** - we do what is right; **Pono** - we are true to ourselves and others; **Aroha** - we demonstrate respect and care.

Its **vision** is: Our industries seek us because what we do makes a positive difference. Nā te pai o te mahi ka aro mai ā mātau ahumahi.

Through our work with our industries we will be accepted as leaders in and role models of biculturalism, work skills development and service excellence.



Professional behaviour means demonstrating the vision and values of your organisation in everything you do.

### RESPECT OTHERS

Being respectful of your colleagues, leaders, managers and customers is the basis of all professional behaviour. This includes:

- Being courteous and having good manners
- Being on time for work and meetings
- Keeping confidential details confidential
- Being honest and fair in all dealings
- Keeping your personal opinions private
- Doing what needs to be done, not leaving it for others to do
- Accepting constructive criticism to help you improve
- Being fair when giving feedback
- Dealing with sensitive issues privately
- Make allowances for other's mistakes
- Apologising if you make mistakes
- Listening to others respectfully, without interrupting
- Speaking clearly in language that others can understand.





## KNOW YOUR PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

It is important to have a good knowledge of the services and products that your organisation offers, particularly the ones that customers use or enquire about most often.

Even when you are not 'at work' people may ask you about what your organisation does, your role in it, and what products and services you offer.

You can use the training you receive, as well as brochures, reports, your organisation's website, newsletters, memos and other staff members, to find out about your products and services. You will then be ready to answer any enquiries.

## KEEP UP TO DATE

Products, services, rules and regulations change over time. You need to keep up to date with any changes. Read staff notices, memos, newsletters and noticeboards regularly so that you can give people the correct information.

You also need to be up to date with health and safety requirements and other workplace processes.

## TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR APPEARANCE

Every day, you represent the organisation you work for. In fact, you may be the first person that someone has ever met from this organisation.

Behaving professionally also means looking professional. You can do this by:

- Having a shower every day and using a deodorant
- Wearing appropriate clothing and footwear

- Keeping your hair clean and tidy - this may also be a safety requirement in some workplaces
- If you wear a uniform, making sure it is clean and pressed, and wearing all of it - for example, a name tag may be part of your uniform, so wear it so it can be easily read
- If your organisation has rules about earrings, jewellery, body piercings or tattoos, knowing what those rules are and following them.

A high standard of personal grooming shows your customers, management and colleagues that you care about the little things, and have pride in yourself and the people you work for.

**Whatever your role, a smile is an essential part of your uniform.**

## SHOW THAT YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE

You are expected to take responsibility for yourself and your work tasks. Always do your best, and the results will reflect your great attitude.

Know what you are expected to do - if you are not sure, ask. It is not responsible to do something if you are not clear about it - you could endanger your own safety, or that of other people.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Depending on your role, you may have rules about discussing work issues outside of work, or not discussing details of other organisations or people you deal with in your role.

In many organisations, staff are not permitted to talk to the media, such as radio or local newspapers, without permission from their managers.

Make sure you know what your organisation's policies are in relation to confidentiality or speaking to others about work matters.

### REMEMBER:

*You never get a second chance to make a first impression!*



## KEY POINTS

- Support the vision, values and purpose of the organisation you work for.
- Respect others in everything you say and do.
- Be on time, all the time.
- Do every task as well as you can.
- Make sure you look the part - remember, you reflect the whole organisation.
- Be honest and fair in everything you do.
- Take responsibility - don't wait for others to do something.
- Keep up to date with policies, products and services.
- Smile every day, at everyone!

## WORDS TO REMEMBER

**Confidential** private, personal

**Constructive criticism** feedback that helps you do something better or differently next time; positive criticism

**Courteous** polite, considerate, well-mannered

**Impression** idea, feeling, sense

**Purpose** reason for existing

**Values** ideals, beliefs, principles you live by

**Vision** image, where you want to be

Imagine that you are looking after a new staff member or volunteer in your organisation. To be a good role model, what professional behaviours would you need to demonstrate or tell them about?



This fact sheet will be useful when you are being assessed for any of the following unit standards:

- **27302** *Demonstrate professional behaviour in a recreation workplace* (Level 3, 3 credits)
- **27557** *Behave according to organisational requirements* (Level 3, 4 credits)
- **11818** *Demonstrate and apply product and/or service knowledge* (Level 3, 2 credits)

or in any organisation where you are a volunteer or a paid staff member.

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