

NEW

• WORK AVENUE •

Creating Employment • Growing Business

YOUR GUIDE TO STARTING A NEW JOB



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INTRODUCTION



Starting a new job is a really exciting stage, full of opportunities to develop your experience, upskill/train in new areas and meet lots of different people. At the same time, any new start is an adjustment and inevitably you may feel a little overwhelmed or have some questions about the work you are doing or wonder how best to blend in with the office culture.

Effective use of soft skills is a huge factor in developing a meaningful and successful career. Self-awareness, adding value for your employer, working well with others and showing empathy are just some the characteristics you will observe in people who enjoy success in their professional lives.

We have put this guide together to help you navigate the initial stage of your new role through harnessing your soft skills and giving you the best chance to create a positive experience for yourself and for your employer!

Read on for strategies on how to approach opportunities and normal challenges that you might face whilst setting into a new role, including: building relationships with new colleagues and feeling comfortable in a new working environment. Of course, each situation is unique so we would advise carefully considering your chosen course of action when bringing any workplace issues to the attention of your employer. Please feel free to contact Work Avenue for advice on the best approach for real-time workplace issues.

WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE

1 WHAT IS ETIQUETTE?

Etiquette is about managing socially acceptable behaviour. In a professional sense, this includes behaviour towards clients and colleagues, in all contexts including calls, emails and meetings.

2 SOCIAL GRACES

Working in an office can create a social situation that needs to be handled correctly in order to make it work. With a selection of people thrown together in the same place for most of their waking hours in the week, it can cause tension if people don't follow the correct office etiquette and social graces.

3 BE MINDFUL

There are no office etiquette rules set in stone, but there are several potential areas of frustration which could cause tension in the office. This can include things like borrowing office supplies from colleagues without asking, speaking loudly on the phone and expressing controversial opinions unnecessarily.



WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE

WEAR
PROPER
OFFICE
ATTIRE

BE
PUNCTUAL

ACTIVELY
LISTEN

BE
RESPECTFUL

MIND YOUR
DIGITAL
PRESENCE

BE
PREPARED

RESPECT
PERSONAL
BOUNDARIES

KEEP
WORKSPACE
TIDY

AVOID BAD
LANGUAGE

ASK BEFORE
YOU BORROW

PRACTISE
GOOD PHONE
ETIQUETTE

AVOID
SMELLY
FOOD

KEEP THE
NOISE
DOWN

BE MINDFUL
OF CULTURAL
SENSITIVITIES

KEEP OFF
OTHER
PEOPLE'S
FOOD

BE
HELPFUL

MANAGING DEADLINES

- ✓ Evaluate what is required
- ✓ Create a checklist
- ✓ Understand exactly what each task involves
- ✓ Sort the tasks based on urgency, importance and difficulty
- ✓ Mix tasks based on size and difficulty
- ✓ Complete jobs with same priority, one at a time
- ✓ Group similar tasks
- ✓ Break down bigger tasks into smaller chunks
- ✓ Make sure that you have what you need to get the job done promptly
- ✓ Allow time for problems that will inevitably arise
- ✓ Limit the damage of a missed deadline.
- ✓ Take breaks
- ✓ Ask for help!

PRODUCTIVITY

10 HABITS OF OUTSTANDING PEOPLE



ALWAYS CREATE A TIDY SCHEDULE



SET CLEAR AND ACHIEVABLE GOALS



GET UP EARLY



GROW AND ENGAGE YOUR NETWORK



EXERCISE REGULARLY



THEY DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM PHONES



OPEN TO NEW IDEAS

READ OFTEN



FIND A MENTOR AND LEARN FROM OTHERS

THEIR MOTIVATION COMES FROM WITHIN



PRACTISE SELF-CARE

HANDLING STRESS AT WORK



BALANCE YOUR WORK AND HOME LIFE

Take care of yourself and find positivity.



CREATE A WORK-DAY RITUAL

Walk at lunch time, listen to music on the drive home, make time to exercise, take time to recharge.



GET CLEAR ON YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR THE DAY

Plan ahead to stay organised, create earlier deadlines, learn organisational skills.



RECOGNISE THE SIGNS OF STRESS

Observe physical symptoms, emotional and behavioural changes.



RE-EVALUATE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS & LET GO OF PERFECTIONISM

Write down your stressors, consider breathing techniques or meditation. Embrace the fact you are only human!



SPEAK TO SOMEONE

Reach out to someone in your workplace who can support you, this may be a colleague or HR rep.



CREATE A COMFORTABLE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Avoid or reduce conflict with colleagues, stay away from office gossip.



CREATE SMALLER GOALS

Break down tasks into smaller, achievable goals for a more manageable journey.



DO YOUR BEST AND REWARD YOURSELF

Don't forget to celebrate your achievements!

PRODUCTIVITY

SETTING GOALS

CAN BE SHORT TERM OR LONG TERM

IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

SET POWERFUL DEVELOPMENT GOALS WHICH ARE PERSONAL, CPD RELEVANT AND RELATED TO A SPECIFIC SKILL/BEHAVIOUR

USE SMART STRATEGIES TO HELP ENSURE YOUR GOALS ARE CLEAR AND ACTIONABLE (SEE NEXT PAGE)

REMEMBER: FOCUS ON MEASURABLE AND TIME-BOUND GOALS

SMART GOALS

INSTRUCTIONS: FOR EACH GOAL, FILL IN THE DETAILS ACCORDING TO THE SMART CRITERIA. THIS WILL HELP ENSURE THAT YOUR GOALS ARE CLEAR, FOCUSED, AND ACTIONABLE.

S	SPECIFIC	<p>A. What exactly do you want to achieve?</p> <p>B. Who is involved or responsible?</p> <p>C. Where will it take place (if applicable)?</p> <p>D. Why is this goal important?</p>
M	MEASURABLE	<p>A. How will you track progress?</p> <p>B. What are the key performance indicators (KPIs)?</p> <p>C. How will you know when the goal is accomplished?</p>
A	ACHIEVABLE	<p>A. Is the goal realistic given your resources and constraints?</p> <p>B. What steps or actions will you take to reach the goal?</p> <p>C. Do you have the necessary skills and support?</p>
R	RELEVANT	<p>A. Does the goal align with your objectives?</p> <p>B. Will it contribute to your long-term success and growth?</p> <p>C. Is now the right time to pursue this goal?</p>
T	TIME-BOUND	<p>A. When will you start working on the goal?</p> <p>B. What is the target completion date?</p> <p>C. Are there any milestones or checkpoints along the way?</p>

Example: “I will meet with each member of my team at least twice in the next six months to provide helpful feedback and identify relevant training or development opportunities.”

SMART GOALS

GOAL: _____

S	
M	
A	
R	
T	

WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Workplace communication and managing expectations hold a key role in professional success. This toolkit section delves into the intricacies of effective communication, embracing mistakes as learning opportunities, and skilfully managing workplace expectations.

By honing these essential skills, you not only contribute to a positive work culture but also lay the foundation for lasting success in your career



WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

1

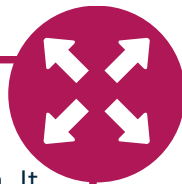
“I’ve been in my role for a month and my manager came up to me yesterday and said he really likes my enthusiasm and ideas but that I should perhaps be a little less vocal in team meetings. He was very nice but the conversation left me feeling a bit confused and upset. What message should I be taking from this?”

Nothing happens without enthusiasm and ideas, so your general approach is really positive, as the Manager has recognised in this scenario. You should not let this conversation deter you from bringing ideas to the table in the future, but be mindful of the following:

BIGGER PICTURE

You have only been in your role for a month and there is still a lot to learn. It is often a good idea to listen and observe more experienced colleagues at the start of a new job so you can pick up key information about the business, its products, customers/clients.

An idea may be great but it might not work for that particular organisation. You will only be able to understand the bigger picture after a period of time.



ANXIETY VS CONFIDENCE

Taking on a new member of staff is also an adjustment for the organisation and the team you are joining. You may feel anxious to make a positive impression and therefore display an external demeanour of confidence which might not reflect how you are feeling inside.

This can sometimes come across to your team as being a little too vocal and intense at this early stage which can make others feel a little uncomfortable or even threatened. Remember that you have been hired to do a specific job, and this should be your focus during the initial period of employment.



STAY CALM AND BE YOURSELF

No-one expects you to have all the answers or ideas at the beginning. You can demonstrate enthusiasm and work ethic in other ways such as staying a few minutes late to finish a piece of work, asking a colleague if you can help them with something, asking intelligent questions and making small talk during more informal times such as your lunchbreak.



WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

2

“My manager came up to me and said I was late in sending a document to an important client and this can’t happen again. I feel like I’m being monitored now and I’m nervous about making any more mistakes. What is the best way to handle negative feedback?”

“The most valuable thing you can make is a mistake. You can’t learn anything from being perfect” (Adam Osborne) Mistakes are uncomfortable but they are an inevitable part of work - and life - a healthy approach focuses on learning from the mistake and moving forward with a positive mindset...

TIME MANAGEMENT

The mistake seems to have stemmed from challenges related to time management so you might want to consider how you could manage your workload more effectively or set deadline reminders to make sure you complete all tasks in the relevant timeframe. (See the ‘Managing Work and Time’ section of this guide for some more tips).



DON'T WORRY

No-one is immune from feeling uncomfortable about negative feedback. Remember that the feedback is related to the task rather than a personal attack on you; it is sometimes very hard to differentiate between these in the moment. Try not to react emotionally or defensively.



LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES

Many successful professionals have made numerous mistakes so the best way to view this is as an isolated incident which doesn’t reflect your general capabilities and workplace skills; the most important thing is to learn from the mistake BUT do not allow it to affect your overall confidence at work.

Going forward, try to keep open and friendly communication with your manager. No need to mention the feedback or mistake again; the best way to demonstrate that you have taken the feedback on board is through your performance at work.

WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

3

“My colleagues keep using acronyms and terminology related to the company which I don’t understand. I feel like I should know the answers and the longer time goes on the more embarrassed I am to ask.”

In many organisations, people use terminology or acronyms which have become part of the workplace culture. This is usually done in a subconscious way and your colleagues probably don’t even realise that they are saying something which an outsider may not understand.

For example, your colleague sends you a message saying:
“I’m OTP, can you give me a short job spec for a Sales Administrator by COP. If you don’t know, then JGI and find a few options”.

The colleague is telling you that they are:

1. On the phone 2. Need the job spec by the close of play 3. Suggesting you ‘just google it’ if necessary.

Some of the terminology/acronyms used are generic across all organisations, so a quick google search should help you work out what is being said.

On another day, you are looking for a colleague and are told they are in the ‘WGG’ and you have no idea what this means... It turns out the ‘WGG’ stands for ‘Weird Green Garage,’ a term coined by the team a number of years ago!

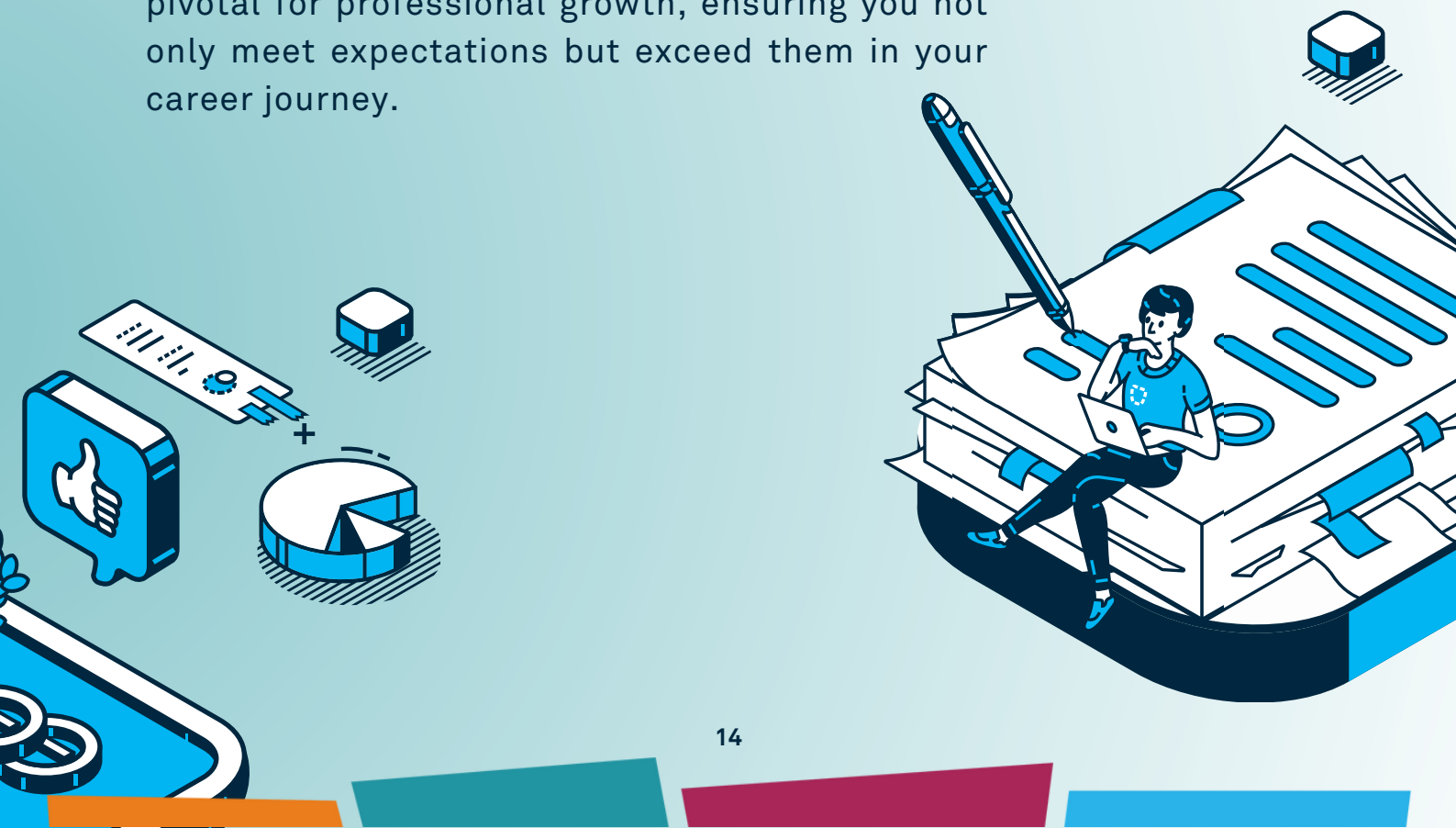


Terminology used specifically in your place of work is more challenging to decipher by yourself, so don’t be afraid to ask. Your colleagues will probably laugh and explain the back story, thereby providing another opportunity to build rapport with the team.

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS & PROBATIONARY PERIODS

Navigate the critical junctures of your career with insights into Performance Reviews & Probationary Periods. This toolkit section delves into the significance of performance reviews, providing guidance on preparation, constructive feedback, and goal-setting during probationary periods.

Understanding and excelling in these aspects is pivotal for professional growth, ensuring you not only meet expectations but exceed them in your career journey.



PERFORMANCE REVIEWS & PROBATIONARY PERIODS

1

“I have a six-month probationary period. What does this mean and what should I be focussing on during this time?”

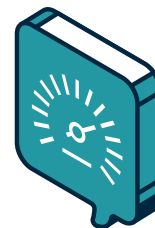
Most employment contracts will include a probationary period, typically ranging from 3-6 months (but can be longer depending on the role). A probationary period is essentially a trial period of employment for both the employer and employee at the start of the employment relationship. In many ways, a probationary period is a psychological (rather than legal) construct to help both sides assess whether there is longevity in the employment relationship.

A

Your employer will probably be observing your performance, motivation and overall suitability during probation. Your manager should check in with you fairly regularly to discuss how things are going, but if that doesn't happen you can ask for feedback yourself (not too often but here and there to make sure you're on the right track). It is also a good time for training and development so take the time to ask questions, understand your work and get to know your colleagues.

B

Avoid arriving at the office late/leaving early, taking off too much time (unless unavoidable) or declining work offered to you.



C

All of your statutory employment rights take effect from the first day of employment, but there may be some additional employee benefits which only kick in following successful completion of the probationary period e.g. health insurance. Your notice period may also be shorter during the probationary period.



D

The probationary period is for you as much as for your employer so take some time to think about how things are going, whether the role is as you expected and if you are feeling happy about going to work. If you are unsure about whether the job is for you, it may be helpful to discuss this with an external mentor or friend. You might just need a bit more time to settle in or perhaps you really can't see yourself enjoying this job at all.



PERFORMANCE REVIEWS & PROBATIONARY PERIODS

2

“I’ve just been told that my probationary period being extended so that ‘we can make sure this is the right role for us and you’ – what does this mean?”

FINDING THE FIT

Your probationary period is most likely to be extended if your employer is unsure about your fit with the role and feels it would be beneficial to continue the trial period.

COMMUNICATION AND CLARITY

Whilst this may be disappointing news, the good news is that the employer is giving you an opportunity to really prove yourself so the best thing you can do is to focus on your role and demonstrate an eagerness to learn. Make sure you are clear on why the probationary period is being extended i.e. what are the specific areas where your manager would like to see improvement? This could be related to your work, your fit with the team/organisation or workplace etiquette such as punctuality.



REMEMBER!

Most employers do want a new hire to be successful; they have invested time, effort and expense into recruitment and training, so the last thing they want to do is start again.

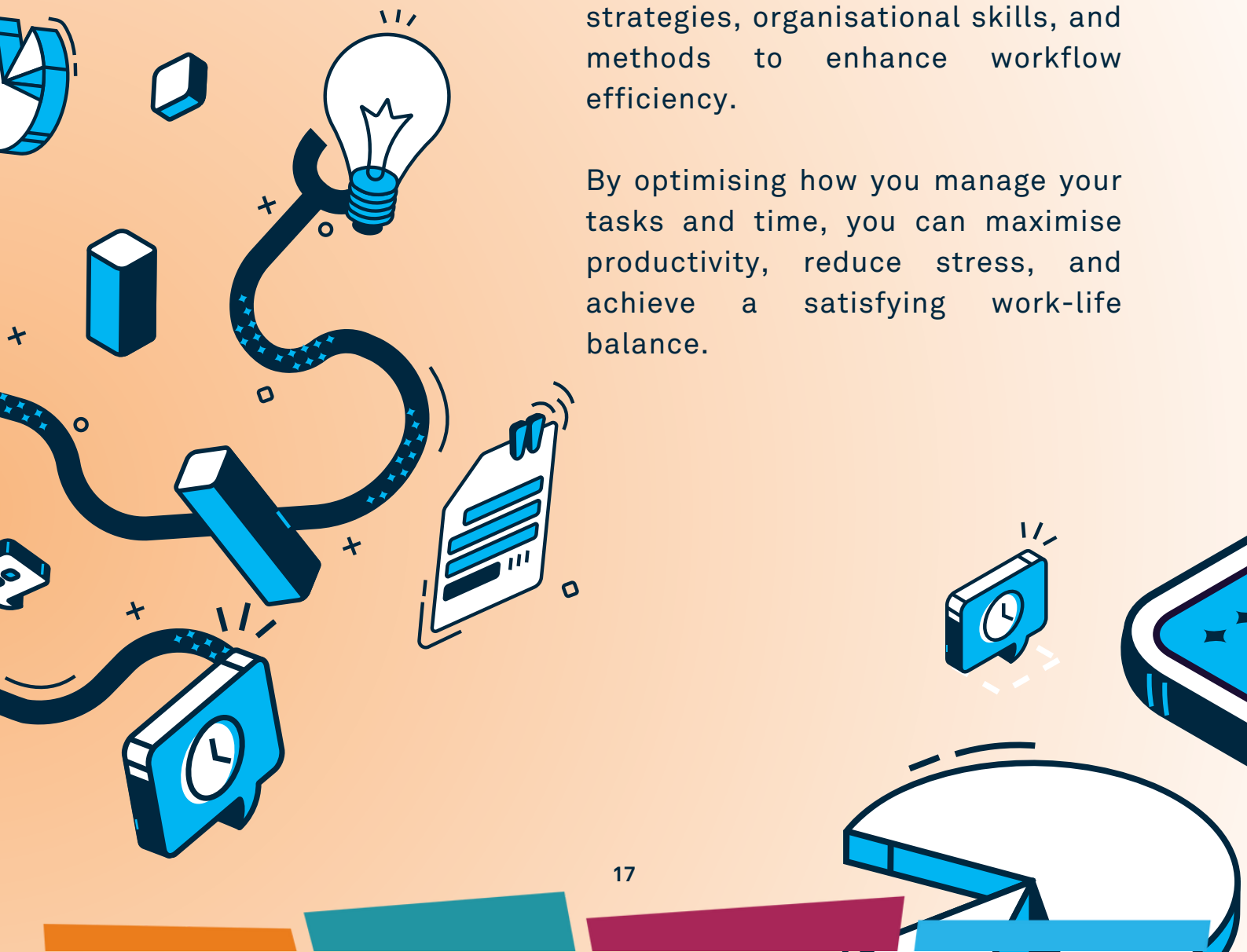
QUE SERA SERA...

Inevitably, some employment relationships do terminate at the end of the probationary period because either one or both sides don't feel that the role will work out long term (for a variety of reasons). This can happen to anyone and does not necessarily reflect badly on the employer or the candidate.

MANAGING YOUR WORK AND TIME

Master the art of productivity with insights into Managing Your Work and Time. This toolkit section explores effective time management strategies, organisational skills, and methods to enhance workflow efficiency.

By optimising how you manage your tasks and time, you can maximise productivity, reduce stress, and achieve a satisfying work-life balance.



MANAGING YOUR WORK AND TIME

1

“My job doesn’t match the job description of the role I applied for, or what was discussed in the interview. I mentioned this to my manager and was told that “this is the work we need you to do now” and we can discuss changing things in a few months’ time. I’m not happy about this. What should I do?”

Many individuals face the challenge of finding their current job responsibilities deviating from what was initially discussed during the recruitment process. It is understandable to feel frustrated in this situation but remember that a job description is often non-exhaustive and can also change depending on the needs of the business. Flexibility is an important workplace skill and the approach that a job description is set in stone, is not a helpful mindset; however, if you are asked to do a completely different role that is also problematic. Like many things, it is a question of balance and compromise.

It is a good idea to speak to your manager and discuss your concerns. Remain professional and constructive during the conversation, focusing on finding a resolution rather than placing blame. Be prepared to communicate clearly what you are doing in your role vs your expectations based on the job description. Try and find some positive aspects of the job which you are enjoying as well as seeking clarification on why things seem to be so different. Understand your manager’s perspective and that business priorities/activities shift which often has an impact on someone’s role. It is unlikely to be a personal situation only affecting you.

If your manager is receptive to your concerns, offer some potential solutions or ideas as to how your role could be more aligned to the initial job description. This could include you taking on a new project or redistribution of tasks to colleagues (better that this particular suggestion comes from your Manager than from you) or perhaps you can take on some training if the role can’t be changed at present.

If your manager is dismissive of your concerns or unsupportive, you will need to decide on the best course of action. Your options could include trying to see if you can settle into the position (albeit different to what you expected), approaching your manager again if nothing has changed in the next three months, or speaking to HR about the discrepancy in your role.

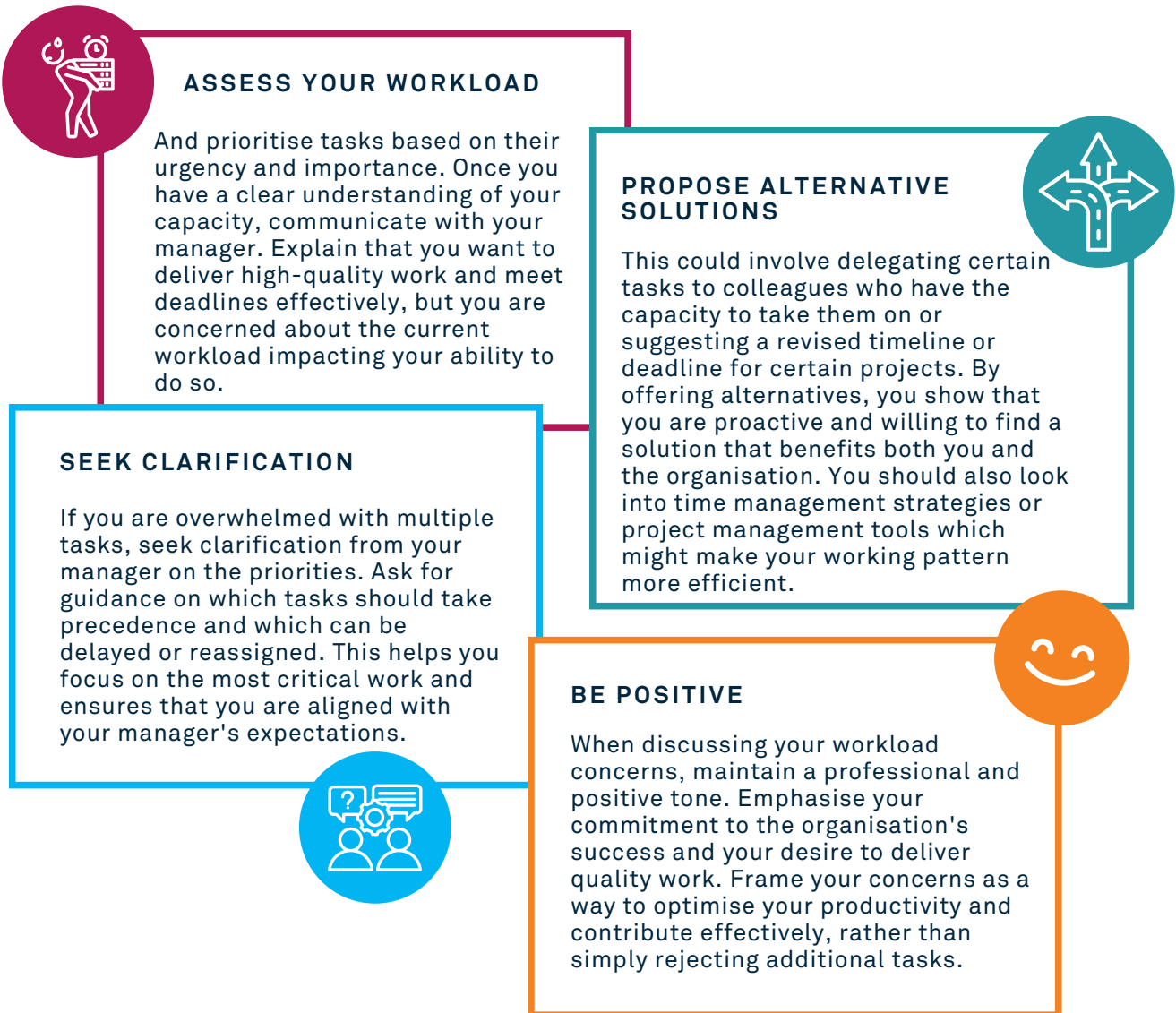
If you feel really unhappy at work and there no sign of things changing, it is a good idea to speak to your Work Avenue adviser about alternative solutions or other job opportunities. Unless you cannot avoid it, it is generally not advisable to leave a job before finding a new role.

MANAGING YOUR WORK AND TIME

2

“I want to look motivated and willing but I’m being given too much work. How do I say no without appearing negative?”

Balancing your workload and setting boundaries is crucial for maintaining a positive and productive work environment. Here's how you can communicate effectively without appearing negative...



MANAGING YOUR WORK AND TIME

3

“I find the office very noisy and I can’t concentrate on my work. I feel like I can focus much better when wearing headphones but no-one else does that and I get the feeling people might think it’s strange. How do I approach this with my Manager?”

When discussing the noisy office environment with your manager and your preference for wearing headphones, be concise, clear and collaborative. Approach the situation with a solution-focused mindset for both you and your employer. Here are some steps you can take...

1

REVIEW YOUR COMPANY'S POLICIES...

...regarding headphone usage. Some offices may have specific rules or restrictions on wearing headphones, especially if it affects communication or safety.

HAVE A CONVERSATION

If there are no specific policies against wearing headphones, speak with your supervisor or manager. Explain how the noise is affecting your productivity and make sure to describe specific instances where the noise has been a hindrance to your work and how wearing headphones can help improve your focus.

2

3

REMEMBER BENEFITS & CONCERNS

Address these concerns proactively by offering to keep the volume at a reasonable level, being available for any necessary communication, and ensuring that your use of headphones does not interfere with team collaboration or communication.



SEEK COMPROMISE

Be open to finding a middle ground that works for both you and the team. Consider discussing a trial period during which you can demonstrate the effectiveness of using headphones while maintaining your productivity and teamwork. Reiterate your commitment to being a valuable team member and contributing to the overall success of the organisation.

4

IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL...

Make sure to use low-volume or non-distracting music. Loud or distracting music can hinder your focus and may not be well-received by colleagues. While wearing headphones, be mindful of your colleagues' need to communicate with you. Keep one earphone off or use headphones with transparency features, allowing you to hear important conversations or requests.

5

STILL OVERWHELMED?

If the noise becomes overwhelming, consider taking short breaks in quieter areas of the office. Find a conference room, empty office, or you could also check if some flexible working would be possible, if distraction free.

6

MANAGING YOUR WORK AND TIME

4 “I don’t have enough work to do and I’m bored. I’ve been asking around the office for additional work but no-one seems interested in giving me anything to do. I think I might quit because this job is completely unstimulating and I need more of a challenge.”

It sounds like you're experiencing a lack of engagement and stimulation at work. It's important to give it time before considering quitting. Here's what you can do:

1

Take some time to reflect on why you feel there is not enough work. Is it a temporary situation, or is it related to being very new within the company and still learning the ropes? Consider if there are any external factors affecting the workload, such as seasonal fluctuations or changes in company priorities.

2

Speak to your manager and express how the situation is affecting your productivity and job satisfaction. Proactively suggest some potential solutions which would help both you and your employer. This could involve taking on additional responsibilities, assisting colleagues with their tasks, or suggesting new projects or initiatives that align with your skills and the company's goals.

3

Consider seeking professional development opportunities within the company. This could involve attending training sessions, workshops, or conferences to enhance your skills and make yourself more valuable to the organisation. Before going down this road, consider what kind of CPD is likely to be offered within the company culture and budget. You don't want to request something which is outside the range of possibilities of what your employer could offer.

4

If the lack of work persists and your manager is unable to provide a solution, explore other opportunities within the company. Speak with HR or colleagues to see if there are any open positions or projects where you can contribute your skills and expertise. If you are generally happy within the company, be careful not to create the impression that you are looking to leave.

5

If all attempts to address the lack of work within the company are unsuccessful, you may need to consider external options. Start exploring job opportunities in other organisations that align with your skills and career goals.



Before deciding to quit, carefully weigh the pros and cons. Consider factors such as job security, financial stability, career growth potential, and overall job satisfaction. Leaving a job should be a well-thought-out decision based on your individual circumstances.

REMOTE WORKING

Remote work brings unique challenges and opportunities. This section of your toolkit focuses on the main challenges you may face whilst working remotely and provides top tips on how to handle them effectively.

By effectively managing communication, establishing boundaries, fostering relationships, practicing self-discipline, and seeking support and collaboration, you can navigate the challenges of remote work successfully.



REMOTE WORK

1

“I’ve joined a team which works mainly remotely and I only go into the office once each week. How should I build rapport with my colleagues?”

INITIATE COMMUNICATION

Proactively reach out to your colleagues through various channels (e.g., email, instant messaging, video calls) to introduce yourself and express your enthusiasm for working together.



ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Engage actively in team discussions, virtual meetings, and collaborative platforms. Contribute your ideas, offer support to colleagues, and show interest in their work.



FOSTER PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Take time to learn about your colleagues' interests, hobbies, and professional backgrounds.

Use informal conversations to build rapport and create a sense of camaraderie.



BE RESPONSIVE AND RELIABLE

Respond promptly to messages and requests from your colleagues. Demonstrate reliability and professionalism by delivering work on time and keeping your commitments.



UTILISE YOUR OFFICE VISIT

Make the most of your weekly office visit to connect with colleagues face-to-face. Use this time to have informal conversations, build rapport, and strengthen relationships through in-person interactions.



BE FLEXIBLE

Be open to different communication styles, time zones, and ways of collaborating. Show willingness to accommodate others' preferences and adapt to changing circumstances to foster effective teamwork and collaboration.



REMOTE WORK

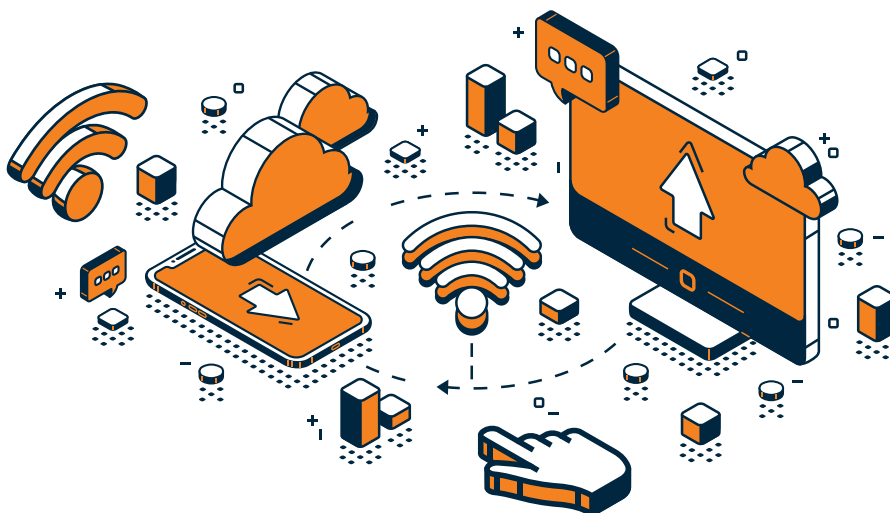
2

“My personal circumstances have changed and I now want to request hybrid working, rather than full time in the office. How should I go about this?”

While you may be tempted by the idea of working from home, the first thing to do is realistically assess how much of your job you can do remotely in the long term and ensure that the new work location can support your productivity.

Remember, you will learn more by going into your workplace, so you may wish to postpone any requests at least until you’ve completed your probation period.

Once you have reflected on the above, you can approach the conversation professionally with your employer by taking the following steps...



"BE CLEAR ABOUT HOW TO BENEFIT THE BUSINESS, NOT JUST YOU..."

RESEARCH

Research your organisations' policies and any specific requirements for making such a request.

SCHEDULE A MEETING

Request a meeting with your supervisor or HR representative to discuss your request. Clearly communicate your desire for a flexible work arrangement.



BE FLEXIBLE

During the meeting, clearly articulate the advantages in your role of hybrid working (such as increased productivity) and potential benefits to the organisation, such as increased employee satisfaction and retention. Remember to define how you will engage in helping build an effective team going forward (i.e. demonstrating how you will keep building your network, taking part in training or suggesting extra tasks you could take on to stretch yourself). all of which show you're committed to the company and to growing in your role.



TIP!

By presenting a well-structured proposal and addressing any concerns, you increase the chances of a positive response to your request for hybrid working.

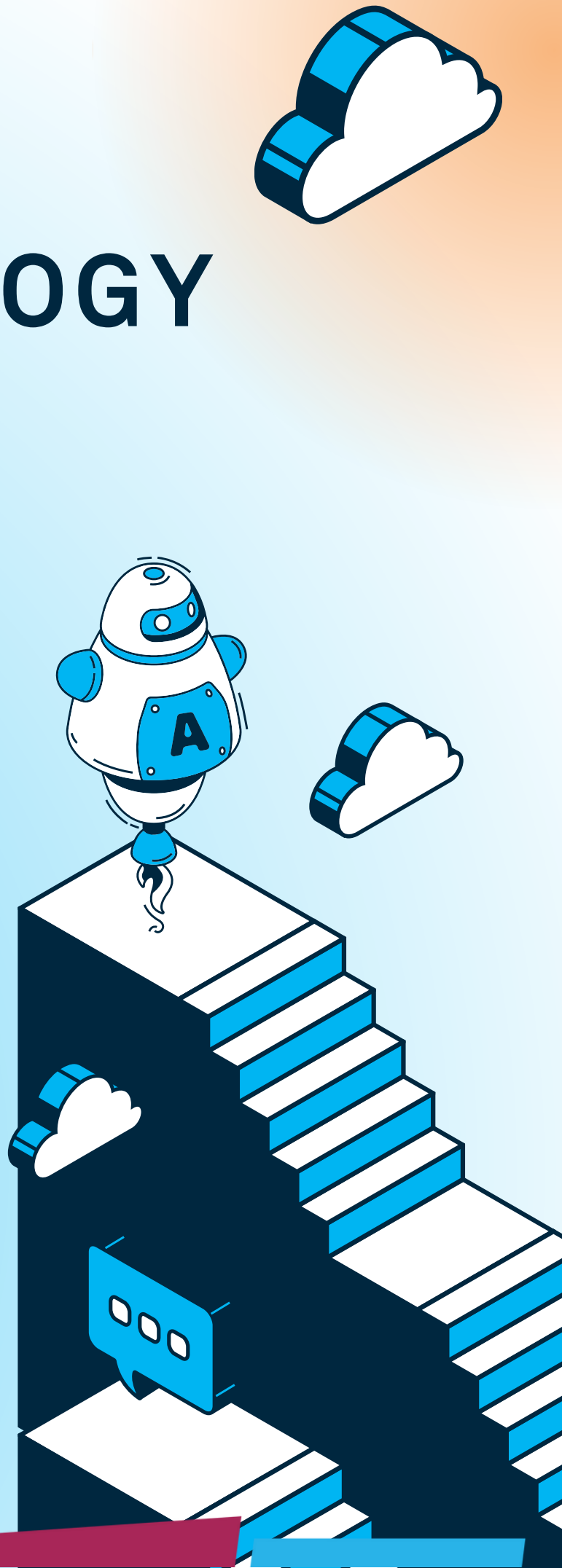
PROPOSE A TRIAL PERIOD

It's not a good idea to present your request as an indefinite arrangement. Instead ask for a trial period & get a meeting fixed in your boss's calendar for an honest discussion of how it's gone and how you can move forward (this also provides an opportunity to make adjustments if needed). Offer to provide regular updates during this trial period.

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL SKILLS

This section aims to equip you with insights into the main challenges you may face with tech and digital skills at work and provides top tips on how to handle them effectively.

Tech and digital skills are valuable assets in today's workplace. By being proactive, adaptable, and collaborative, you can navigate the challenges and leverage technology to enhance your productivity and contribute effectively to your new role.



TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL SKILLS

1

"I've been given half a day of training on the company's software and now I'm expected to use it independently in my role day to day. I don't feel confident enough and would really like some more training, but I'm scared to ask for this because I don't want to look like I'm not capable of doing a good job."

Managing expectations and seeking additional training at work can be challenging, especially when you feel unsure about your abilities. However, it's important to recognise that asking for additional training does not imply incompetence. Instead, it reflects a proactive mindset and a commitment to continuous improvement. Here are four tips to help you manage this situation effectively:



ASSESS YOUR CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL GAPS:

Identify specific areas where you feel less confident or require additional training. This self-assessment will help you communicate your needs more effectively and provide clarity on what you require.

It's also important to take the initiative to research the topic before approaching your manager.

GATHER SUPPORTING EVIDENCE:

This evidence will demonstrate that your request for more training is grounded in the pursuit of professional excellence, to increase productivity and/or improved efficiency.



SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH YOUR LINE MANAGER:

Frame the meeting by emphasising your dedication to doing a good job and desire to improve your skills for the benefit of the company.

Clearly communicate the areas where you feel you need additional training and provide examples of how it could enhance your performance.



PROPOSE A SOLUTION:

Be prepared with potential solutions. For example, suggest options such as attending advanced training sessions, participating in webinars or workshops, or shadowing a colleague who is proficient in using the software.

By presenting proactive solutions and highlighting your enthusiasm, you demonstrate your commitment to finding a mutually beneficial resolution, you can counterbalance any perception of inadequacy.



TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL SKILLS

2

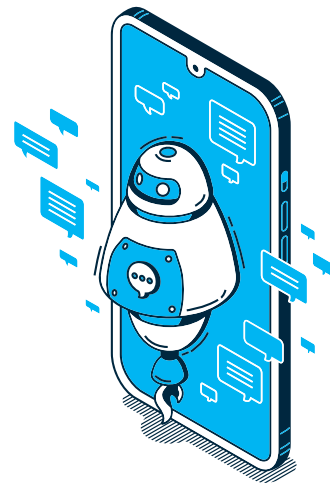
“Is it wrong to use Chat GPT to help me in my job?”

Using Chat GPT or any AI-powered tools/applications to assist you in your job is not inherently wrong. In fact, leveraging technology to improve productivity, streamline tasks, and gain insights has become increasingly common in the workplace. However, it's important to consider a few factors when incorporating AI tools into your job...



KEY FACTORS:

- Familiarise yourself with your company's policies and guidelines
- Transparency and disclosure
- Verify the accuracy and reliability of the information provided
- Use AI tools as a support mechanism to enhance your work rather than relying on them exclusively.



WATCH OUR AI WEBINAR

According to Forbes Advisor, a staggering 97% of business owners believe that ChatGPT will benefit their businesses.

BE MINDFUL

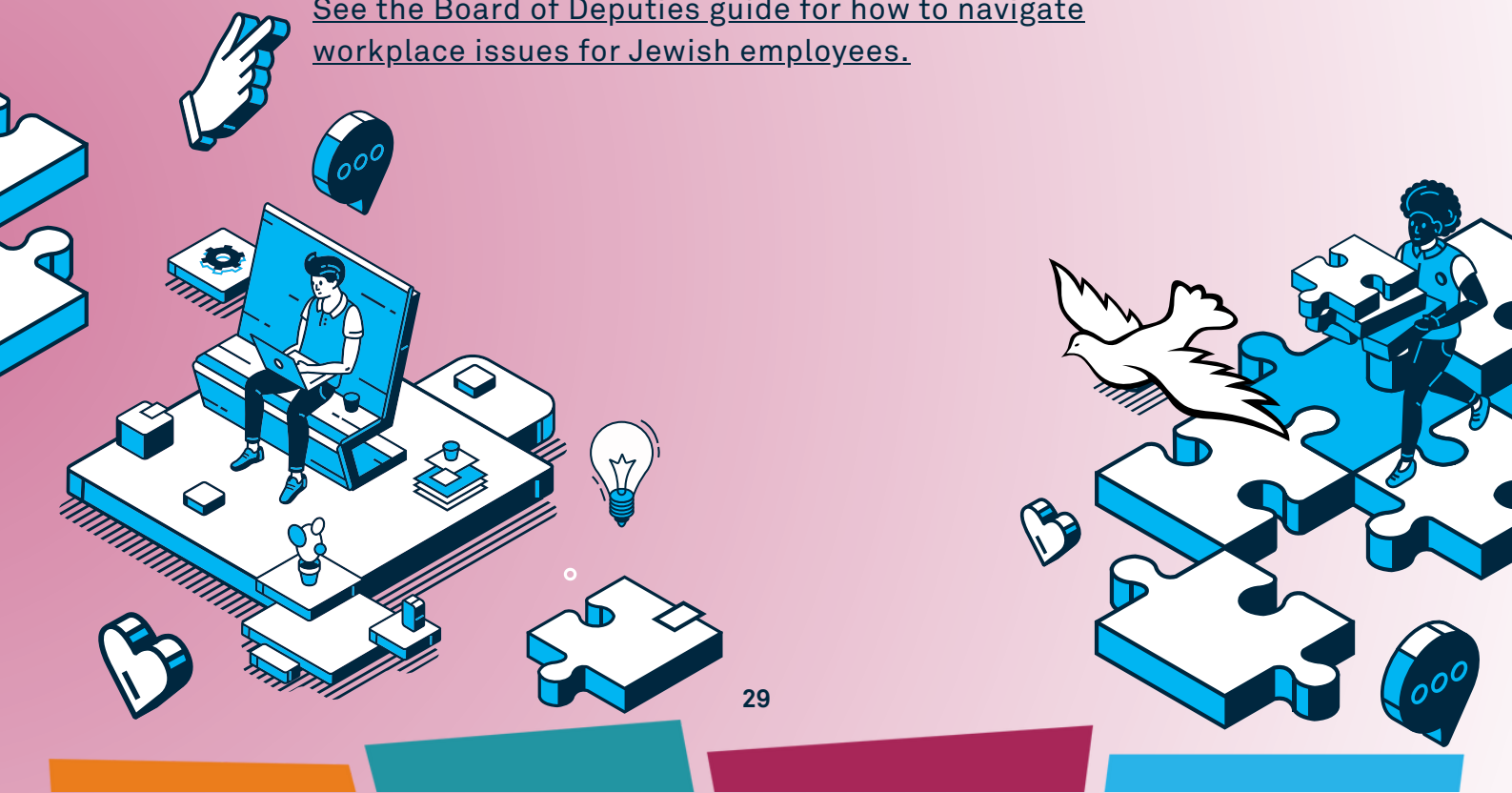
As long as you adhere to the guidelines, remain transparent, verify information, and leverage AI as a complement to your expertise, using AI tools can be a valuable asset to improve your job performance.



FAITH, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Foster a culture of respect and understanding with insights into Faith, Diversity, and Inclusion. This toolkit section delves into the importance of recognising and embracing diverse perspectives, understanding faith in the workplace, and promoting an inclusive environment. By valuing diversity, you contribute to a workplace that thrives on inclusivity, creativity, and mutual respect.

[See the Board of Deputies guide for how to navigate workplace issues for Jewish employees.](#)



FAITH, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

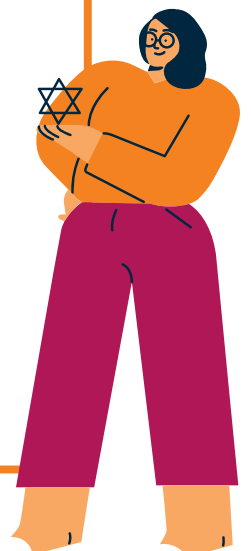
1

“I am starting a new job on 1st September and I need to speak to my Manager about taking annual leave for Jewish Holidays (Chagim) and early Fridays. How should I navigate this conversation?”

- Annual leave should be requested for Jewish holidays. You may not even need to say what the leave is for; it is a standard annual leave request.
- If starting on 1st September, you may have a problem of not having accrued enough annual leave to cover all of the Jewish holidays. In a case like this you will need to speak to your manager to find a solution; either taking unpaid leave or requesting to use some of your holiday allowance in advance. (Make sure you know how many days you will need to take off before arriving at the meeting).
- In general, you want to book off Jewish holidays as far in advance as possible to avoid clashes with other people’s leave requests.



- Be very clear before you have the meeting on exactly the number of Fridays you need to leave early.
- Approach your manager with a solution focused mindset and proactive suggestions as to how to manage/ make up the time and how this will benefit the team as a whole- offer early mornings, working later on other days, working during the Xmas period. Try not to use negative words like “concern”, “problem”, “issue”.
- Emphasise that it is only a few working weeks but that as you are coming into the winter season you want to make your manager aware. It is not a good idea to approach your manager with an issue such as this (or any other big issue) at the last minute.



FAITH, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

2

“Having recently joined a new job, I've noticed that most of my new colleagues work past 5pm. However, I'm a Mum of 3 and have to leave promptly at 5 pm to pick up my kids. I can't help but feel a sense of guilt about not putting in the extra hours like my co-workers. What can I do?”

It can be a big shift to start navigating the cultural expectation of working beyond regular hours, especially when starting a new job where extra hours may be needed. Here are a few steps you can take to help manage this situation...

INITIATE A PRIVATE MEETING

Request a meeting with your manager to discuss your working hours and the need to leave promptly at 5pm. Express your commitment to your role and discuss how you can ensure your responsibilities are met within the designated time.

HIGHLIGHT PRODUCTIVITY

Emphasise your commitment to maintaining high productivity during regular working hours. Share examples of your efficiency and reassure your manager that you can meet deadlines and contribute effectively, even with the early departure.

PROPOSE FLEXIBLE SOLUTIONS

Offer flexible solutions to ensure work continuity especially during busy periods. This could include working from home after your children are settled or being available for a brief period in the evening to catch up on any urgent matters. It could be that you find some time in your day that could add up to extra time.

Explain to your colleagues that whilst you must leave at 5 you work together as a team and are happy to continue working in the evening to catch up during busy periods.

CONTRACT VS CULTURE

Your contracted hours are until 5pm (which may be the same for other employees), although the workplace culture means that people work a bit later, which can cause an uncomfortable feeling in a case like this.

You have a legal right to request flexible working ([see ACAS](#)), so it may be beneficial to formally request flexible hours to fit around pick up times.

FAITH, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

3

“I’m the only Jewish person in my team and one of my colleagues has been making subtle comments about me leaving early on Fridays and eating kosher food at team lunches. I don’t know if I can call this overt anti-Semitism, but I do feel uncomfortable around this colleague. What should I do?”

This is a tricky situation which affects people differently and is very dependent on context. In any scenario try to remain calm and stay positive in all responses and conversations with colleagues. Some points and strategies to consider:

Are you the first Jewish person in the company? If yes, then often there is a lack of understanding or confusion about some of the cultural issues related to Judaism. You should determine whether your colleague is making comments out of curiosity, or whether it is purely with a negative or discriminatory intention. If the former, then you may want to explain what ‘kosher’ means and why it affects what you can and can’t eat. If your colleagues often go out for lunch and you are missing these important team building opportunities, perhaps you can eat quickly at your desk and then join them for a drink.

Often once people understand a situation, they will become more accepting of it. Try bringing in cultural food for everyone to try at certain points of the year, e.g. doughnuts on Chanukah! This will generally go down well and potentially develop into meaningful conversations around religion in a non-hostile way.

On the subject of leaving early on Fridays, this is usually something agreed on between the specific employee and their manager; so contractually it is not within the remit of any other colleagues. Understandably, others may feel resentful without a proper understanding of the situation, especially if they are having to pick up your work on Friday afternoons. It is best if your early Fridays can be viewed as a flexible working pattern i.e. you work longer hours on other days and leave earlier on Fridays. All employees have a legal right to request flexible working, so this does not appear as special preferential treatment for you. If you are offered remote working once each week, then it would be sensible to request this on a Friday because a. you will be able to work later if no commute and b. it is less visible to others that you finish early on a Friday.

Should this develop in a religious conversation, you can explain the reason for early leaving on winter Fridays, but also offer to work at times when others like to take holidays e.g. Xmas or Easter.

If you are sure that the comments being made are purely discriminatory then you should speak to your Manager about this who should be concerned and take immediate action. If nothing is done you should be able to raise a grievance within your company policy. This is a serious situation and no-one should be made to suffer from anti-semitism or any form of discrimination in the workplace. However, do not call it anti-semitism unless it actually is. Establishing the facts will depend on the context of each individual situation.

FAITH, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

4

“I've recently had a diagnosis of ASD (Autism spectrum disorder), and I recognise that this information is crucial for my workplace to understand how I work best and to ensure that the focus is on my strengths. I'm unsure about how to approach the subject with my colleagues and manager while also ensuring I get the support I need to continue to do my job to the best of my ability.”

Many individuals navigate their professional lives successfully with neurodivergent conditions. Embracing your unique strengths and seeking support when needed, are empowering steps.


Remember, you are not alone in your journey. By approaching this conversation with openness, education and a focus on collaboration, you help foster an environment that supports your unique needs and an understanding within the workplace that can celebrate the richness of neurodiversity. And ultimately, create an inclusive and supportive work environment where everyone can thrive.

See the next page on how to navigate this scenario...



“IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT SIXTY-SIX PERCENT OF PEOPLE DO IN ANY PARTICULAR SITUATION. ALL THAT MATTERS IS WHAT YOU DO.”

JOHN ELDER ROBINSON



Familiarise yourself with how your diagnosis may impact your work. That way, you can approach a conversation with your manager in a solutions-focused way and request reasonable adjustments to help you to perform in the same way as everyone else eg breaks, time to prepare for meetings and anything else you may need. Consider the cost of your request and check whether any government grants are available.

Choose an appropriate time and setting to have a conversation with your manager. This could be as soon as you've been offered a new job (see our Resources section of the toolkit for available support), or during a scheduled performance review or in a private meeting with your manager.

During the conversation with your manager, be clear and direct about your diagnosis. Share specific examples of how ASD may influence your work processes, strengths and areas where you might benefit from support. You will need to gauge the right style of conversation and how far to extend your requests, based on both the verbal and non-verbal responses you are getting from your manager during the meeting.

You want your manager to leave the meeting with a feeling that you are going to be an asset to the team and have presented solutions, rather than problems. Remember that your employer still has an overall commercial agenda and you need to show how you fit into achieving that vision.

Emphasise that your request for support is aimed at optimising your performance and contributing more effectively to the organisation in the same role and you are not asking to give up work or change the responsibilities of your job.



Speak to your Work Avenue employment adviser, who can provide guidance on workplace accommodations and ensure that your rights are protected under disability laws. If needed, you can also involve the Human Resources department from your organisation in the discussion.



FAITH, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

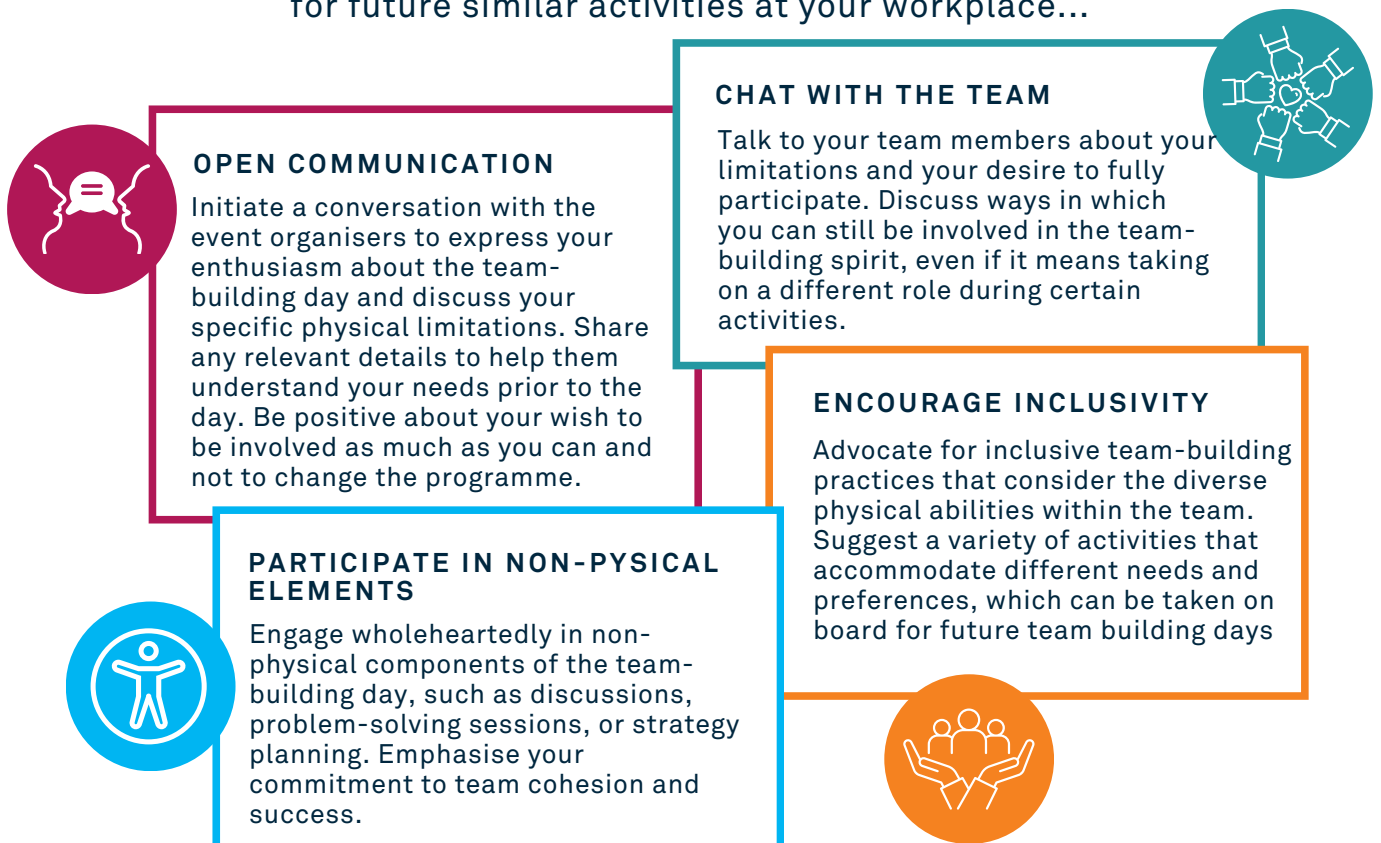
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“I'm excited about my upcoming team building day, but I'm faced with a challenge – some of the activities involve really physical and strenuous tasks, that I'm simply unable to participate in. I am one of the older members of the team and struggle with physical exertion. I try not to let my age get in the way and do my best to keep up on everything else.”

Finding the balance between the desire to be an active part of the team building day with the physical limitations that prevent full participation in certain activities is key.

By proactively addressing your limitations and collaborating with the event organisers and your team, you can contribute to fostering an inclusive workplace culture that values the diverse abilities and strengths of every team member.

Here are some proactive tips you can take prior to your team building day and for future similar activities at your workplace...



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES & CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Elevate your career with a focus on Career Advancement and Professional Development Opportunities. This toolkit section explores avenues for growth, from setting career goals and seeking mentorship to identifying learning opportunities. By investing in your professional development, you pave the way for career advancement, staying adaptable and competitive in today's dynamic work landscape.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1

“I’ve been in my job for a year and things have generally gone well. My annual appraisal is coming up and as part of the conversation, I want to speak to my Manager about a salary increase and training opportunities. How should I prepare for this meeting?”

Preparing for your annual appraisal and discussing a potential salary increase and training opportunities with your manager requires careful planning. Here's how you can prepare effectively for this meeting:

Research Salary Benchmarks:

Investigate industry and role-specific salary benchmarks. Use data to support your salary increase request.

Highlight Achievements and Contributions:

Reflect on specific accomplishments and contributions. Showcase positive impacts to illustrate your value.

Identify Relevant Training Opportunities:

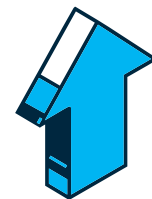
Explore training aligned with professional goals. Specify courses enhancing skills for current role or future growth.

Evaluate Evolving Responsibilities:

Review your job description and identify additional responsibilities. Illustrate role evolution to justify a salary increase.

Build a Compelling Case:

Develop a clear case for salary increase and training. Articulate achievements, responsibilities, and impact



Don't forget to anticipate any concerns. Put yourself in the manager's shoes and prepare responses to potential concerns, demonstrating readiness. Remember, not everyone gets the salary increase or training opportunities they desire, so it's always important to remain professional.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

2

“I've been in my current role for a while now, and I'm eager to take my career to the next level. I've noticed that some of my colleagues have mentors or advisors within the organisation who provide valuable guidance. I'd like to explore the possibility of finding a mentor or seeking guidance from a senior colleague. How should I go about initiating this conversation with my manager or potential mentor?”

1 Reflect on your Career Goals:

Consider your career goals and what you seek from a mentor. Use this reflection to articulate clear needs and expectations.

2 Research Potential Mentors:

Identify colleagues aligning with your goals and values. Look for individuals with the skills and experience you seek.

3 Schedule a Career Development Meeting:

Request a meeting with your manager to discuss career development. Clearly express your intention to find a mentor for guidance.

4 Prepare and Present Your Case:

Articulate how a mentor would benefit your career growth. Highlight specific areas for guidance and emphasise mutual benefits.

5 Seek Manager's Recommendations:

If supportive, ask your manager for mentorship recommendations. Gain insights into potential mentors who fit your needs.

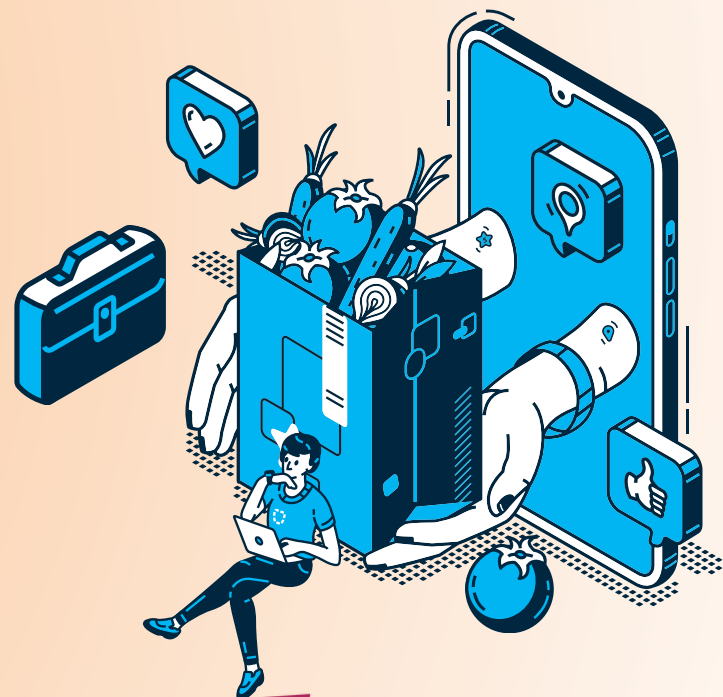
6 Reach Out to Potential Mentors:

Contact recommended mentors, expressing interest in their expertise. Inquire about the possibility of mentorship, respecting their time and emphasising the value of their insights.



WELLBEING & WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Nurture your well-being and achieve a harmonious Work-Life Balance with insights from this toolkit section. Explore strategies to prioritise self-care, manage stress, and strike a healthy balance between professional and personal life. By investing in your well-being, you lay the foundation for sustained success and fulfillment in both your career and personal journey.



WHAT IS WELLBEING?

The idea of maintaining a state of 'wellness' has been around for centuries in various forms. Wellbeing refers to a state of being healthy, happy, and comfortable, both physically and mentally. It is influenced by a range of factors, including physical health, social relationships, work-life balance, and personal values and beliefs. Maintaining and improving your 'state of wellness' is important for overall health and happiness.

NOT ONLY DOES THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF EMPLOYEES DIRECTLY CORRELATE TO HIGHER LEVELS OF PRODUCTIVITY AND ENGAGEMENT, BUT IT ALSO HELPS TO REDUCE ABSENTEEISM AND STAFF TURNOVER.

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

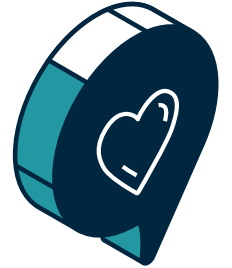
Mental health is a state of well-being that encompasses the emotional, psychological, and social aspects of our lives.

If you have positive mental health, you're able to realise your own potential, work productively, manage the normal stresses of life, have healthy relationships, and make a contribution to your community.

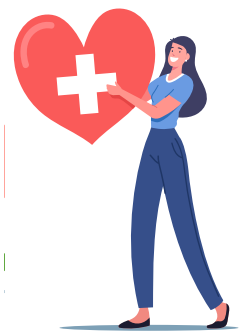
IF YOU EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, IT COULD IMPACT HOW YOU THINK, FEEL, AND ACT, AND THIS COULD ADVERSELY IMPACT OTHER AREAS OF YOUR LIFE.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Practical tips for everyday well-being



Mental health is just as important as physical health. It affects how we think, feel, and act. Taking care of our mental health is essential for overall well-being. Here are some practical tips to help you maintain good mental health.



Practice self-care. Take time to do things that you enjoy, such as reading a book, taking a walk, or having a relaxing bath. Prioritising self-care can help reduce stress and improve mood.



Connect with others. Having a support system is crucial for good mental health. Reach out to friends, family, or a mental health professional if you need to talk or receive guidance.



WELLBEING AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

1

“I started a new job two weeks ago and I feel quite overwhelmed and exhausted every evening. I was really excited about the job but now I feel like I’ve taken on too much of a challenge and I don’t know if I can handle it. I feel really stressed and don’t know how much longer I can stay in the role. Am I the only person who feels like this at the start of a job?”

Almost everyone feels overwhelmed when starting a new role, here are some things to consider now that you have started a new role...

GIVE YOURSELF TIME

There are new policies, processes, tasks, and technology to learn about, so it's important that you give yourself time to adapt to your new environment. You may just need a few extra weeks to settle into the job before you start finding it easier.

This can be especially true if it is a first job or completely different from anything you have ever done before.



YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Even if you have effective training and an induction, you might not be sure what to say, who to talk to, or how to figure out what you need to know. Know you are not alone even if it feels like you are.

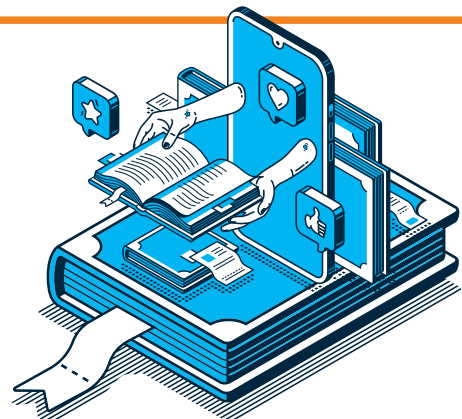
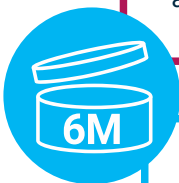
Most people struggle with discomfort in the first few days, weeks, or even months at a new place. You will need to decide for yourself if the role is not a good fit or if you will get there given some time, patience from your colleagues and help in navigating a steep learning curve.



3-6 MONTHS

Some people love challenges, some find them very daunting. The key is to give it your very best shot and then see how you are feeling.

Evidence shows that it can take 3-6 months to settle into a new role. If you are not feeling more comfortable and confident after six months, perhaps it is worth assessing whether this is the correct role for you, if you need a little more time or if there is something else going on in your life which is affecting your enjoyment and performance at work.



WELLBEING AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

2

“In the 6 weeks since I started my new job, I’ve been asked to work extra hours a few times each week. I don’t mind working overtime when necessary but this seems to have become an expected working pattern without overtime pay. I’m worried about being taken advantage of, but I also don’t want to look unmotivated as I’ve just started in the job. What should I do?”

There is a delicate balance between showing motivation, positivity and enthusiasm in your new role vs being overworked, becoming exhausted and potentially a little resentful of your extra workload. It’s important to note, when starting a new job, it may take longer at the beginning; especially if you are learning new things.

Look around the office and observe whether others are also working late, or if it is just you who seems to be working overtime regularly. If it seems to be a workplace pattern, then perhaps ask colleagues if this is normal or if it just a very busy period of the year e.g. pre-Xmas or end of the financial year. If you are told that the organisation is in a busy period or temporarily understaffed, this may explain the scenario and it would be a good idea to monitor how things go over the coming weeks.

Either way, if you have regular reviews during your probationary period or a meeting at the end of probation with your manager, it’s worth mentioning the amount of overtime you have been doing. Stress that you are happy to take on extra responsibilities and enjoy a challenge, but that this has become a little overwhelming and perhaps you can review your workload with your manager.

If no meeting is scheduled with your manager, then request to put one in the diary.

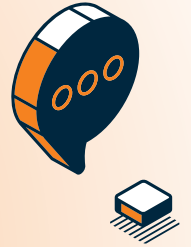
It is also a good idea to check your contract to see if working overtime is mentioned and whether there is any contractual right to overtime pay or time off in lieu. If not, it is probably not the best idea to suggest extra pay or holiday in the first six weeks of a new role. You could instead ask your manager for their advice on managing your workload and identifying priorities. If the company is going through a busy period, they may just not have had sufficient time to train you which is why some of the tasks may be taking longer.

If this pattern continues and an expectation develops that you will be available during the evenings/weekends for work, then have another conversation with your manager. Make sure to remain positive whilst also establishing boundaries. In most companies, overtime work is required on an ad-hoc basis, but it may be company culture that employees are always expected to be available out of hours in which case it will be hard to change.

You may decide that you’re enjoying your job and gaining good experience; so you are going to stick it out for long term benefits of career progression. On the other hand, you may feel it’s time to look for another role. It is a good idea to talk through your options with a mentor, trusted friend or Work Avenue adviser.

YOUR NEW JOB MADE SIMPLE

GET IN TOUCH



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RESOURCES AND LINKS



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WWW.GOV.UK/ACCESS-TO-WORK

WE CAN ADVISE ON SCHEMES FOR WORKPLACE SUPPORT FOR THOSE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS, SUCH AS ACCESS TO WORK. THIS IS A PROGRAMME PROVIDED BY THE UK GOVERNMENT THAT AIMS TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES OR HEALTH CONDITIONS IN THEIR WORKPLACE.



WWW.PAPERWEIGHT.ORG.UK

WE CAN REFER YOU TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS, WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF THE COMMUNITY, SUCH AS PAPERWEIGHT, A CHARITY THAT PROVIDES PRACTICAL SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE TO INDIVIDUALS DEALING WITH ADMINISTRATIVE, FINANCIAL, AND LEGAL CHALLENGES.



IN-WORK SUPPORT AI TOOLS

CHATGPT | 15FIVE | REFLEKTIVE | GLOAT | EIGHTFOLD |
MAILBREW | NOTION AI



YOUR NEW JOB MADE SIMPLE



CONCLUSION

WHETHER YOU'RE GRAPPLING WITH CHALLENGES OR SEEKING ADVICE ON MAKING A STELLAR FIRST IMPRESSION, WORK AVENUE IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.

IN THIS TOOLKIT, WE'VE PRESENTED VARIOUS SCENARIOS AND RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION. IT'S ESSENTIAL TO APPROACH WORKPLACE CONCERNS WITH THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE IN THE EARLY STAGES OF A NEW ROLE. BEFORE BRINGING ISSUES TO YOUR EMPLOYER, CAREFULLY WEIGH THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND WHEN NEEDED, OUR TEAM IS READY TO PROVIDE PERSONALISED ADVICE AND GUIDANCE TAILORED TO YOUR UNIQUE SITUATION.



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