

Common Sense Training from Domus

Meeting Behavior

Start and end meetings on time.

Always bring something to write with, something to write on and a planner to every meeting/training. Also bring a positive attitude and a willingness to participate fully.

Show up ten minutes early to every meeting/training. Recognize that your boss may be late, but you should never be.

Watch your body language.

Turn off cell phone during meetings.

Figure out how your phone works before a meeting starts. Don't wait until it rings or vibrates to try and figure out how to turn it off.

If you are going to leave your phone on (ring or vibrate) during a meeting, announce that (and give a good reason) so that when you look at it in the middle of a conversation, we're slightly less offended.

Unless you have a family emergency going on, don't leave your phone on when meeting with agency executives ...and if you forget, don't look at it or answer it.

Speak slowly; talking too quickly makes what you say seem unimportant. Stop talking when you're done

(WAIT: Why Am I Talking?)

Don't repeat what someone else has said.

Allow the person who is best equipped to answer a question to answer it. If a question is asked about a program, and the director of the program is in the room, defer to him or her.

Always bring a pad of paper and a writing implement to a meeting. Good: a spiral notebook or binder that's always in your car.

Pay attention when others are talking. You'll no doubt miss something important if you're daydreaming or thinking about your response.

If you're running late for a meeting, try to call and let someone know.

After any meeting: clean up your own place, throw your garbage away, push in your chair and ask the host if they need any help with clean up. If you host a meeting that involves food, you are responsible for cleaning up and storing the food or making arrangements to have someone do it.

Don't start arguments with outside providers. If they are stating their opinion hear them out.

If we have asked for feedback, don't argue. If you disagree with them do so calmly, politely and respectfully.

Vehicles

If you have a motorcycle, you are NEVER to put a youth or another staff member on the back!

If you have a truck, you are NEVER to put a youth or staff member in the flat bed!

Do not listen to music at loud decibels while driving van, or in your own car on work premises

Do not talk on your cell phone while driving an agency van. If you need directions stop the car before you make the call.

Do not leave kids in unattended van especially if it is running or the key is in the van.

The driver is in charge of the radio. No loud music, music with cursing or sexually explicit lyrics should be played.

Do not give a youth the key to your car or an agency vehicle.

No youth may drive an agency vehicle or staff member's personal vehicle.

Everyone riding in our agency vehicles needs to wear a seat belt.

Obey all speed limits and traffic laws when driving agency vans, particularly when transporting youth. You are responsible for paying any tickets for moving violations that you get. If you get a parking ticket, turn it into your supervisor immediately.

If you use an agency vehicle you should gas it up and clean it before returning it.

If you have an accident in an agency vehicle you must immediately report it to your supervisor and fill out an incident report.

Keys to being a good employee

It's not about you.

Be on time for work.

Seek prior approval through the chain of command before calling the police, 911 or calling in an abuse or neglect claim.

Only the Executive Director is allowed to speak to any newspaper or public official on behalf of the agency. You must forward any questions, requests or complaints to him.

People who are not cleared in writing to work by the appropriate agency executive are not permitted to work or volunteer in our programs. (Your friends cannot come in to help out.)

Greet people.

When the Executive Director asks you to do something, complete the task on time and better than was expected. Having the person on top believe you are reliable, intelligent and efficient goes a long way.

Participate when youth are doing activities in the community. It is not a time for you to take a break or talk on your cell phone.

Don't complain when you are given a less-than-desirable task.

Don't complain about how hard you work.

If you are going to address someone using his or her last name, use the title that goes with it. ('Mr. Smith,' not just 'Hey, Smith'.)

Learn to accept feedback about your performance without getting defensive. It will help you continue to grow as an employee.

Ask what you can do to help out if you have completed a task and don't have another one to do - the kids you're helping rely on you to work, not loaf.

Because how you communicate is as important as what you communicate, learn to be cognizant of your body language (eye contact, handshake, head up, posture, and personal space), your tone of voice, and other things that affect your message.

Please ask questions if you are unclear about the task you've been given; you'll seem smarter, you'll save yourself and the organization time, and you'll make your boss look good if you get things done right the first time. Asking a question does not mean you are dumb - get over that right now.

Employees who are recognized and rewarded are those who go the extra mile.

Every young person who sees you, whether at work or on the street, views you as a role model. Period. 24 hours a day. Everything you do and say matters to them, and reputation is forever.

Ask for feedback from your supervisor. What can I do more of? What should I do less of? What skills do I need to work on?

Always start with yourself instead of pointing fingers about who didn't do what, who never does this, etc.

If you can't answer YES to the following question, change what you're doing: Do my colleagues view me as dependable?

You represent the agency ... always. You are always an ambassador and representative of the agency.

Bosses value flexibility, a positive attitude, honesty, courage, persistence, and dependability. Being a valued asset to your boss works only to your benefit. Notice what your boss values, then do more of that thing.

Turn only your work cell phone on, and choose a ring tone that is professional.

Don't bring your spouse, pet or child to your work shift.

The way the world works is that you prove yourself and then get promoted, not that you refuse to do extra work because it is not your job.

Learn to speak and write proper English. Don't use slang with colleagues or kids. You will be dismissed out of hand as not a professional.

When your boss asks you to stay late, come in early, or do something extra, make it work. It will always come back in your favor.

Write thank-you notes for days off given above and beyond what's required, for bonuses, promotions, or simply the opportunity to work here.

Follow the dress code for your building.

Do more than is expected, before you are asked.

Further your education. Get your degree.

Listen and learn. Don't assume you know everything.

Learn how to phrase things so people can hear them.

Learn your boss' expectations and idiosyncrasies, and unless they are out of line, adhere to them.

Never yell at or argue with your supervisor, especially in public. Come back to the person calmly, and ask them to explain a decision or point of view.

Know both the formal and informal chain of command in your program. The higher up the person on the organizational chart, the more you should shut up and simply listen. They have their position and title for a reason.

Learn the values of your agency. If they don't mesh with your values, find another job.

Set yourself apart in manner, dress, and language from the youth you supervise. Often community members comment that they cannot tell the youth from the staff.

Dress for your boss' job.

All incidents must be documented before you leave your shift.

Find something to do. There is never nothing to do at Domus.

Close the door behind you after entering a program.

Dump liquid down the sink; don't put it in trash cans.

Be aware of where you hold private conversations.

Youth

Arrive on time for meetings with youth.

Meetings with youth need to be held in private, not in front of other youth or extra staff members.

Do not sleep with program youth.

You cannot buy, give or lend things to youth in programs.

Do not talk about youth issues in front of other youth.

Follow all the same rules you expect program youth to follow.

Youth are not allowed to operate motorized equipment (lawn mowers, cars, boats).

Never leave a group of youth unattended.

No youth can be in a program building without at least one staff member.

When food is served, youth and guests always eat first. Staff is last.

Ethical Guidelines

Don't discuss your salary with other employees.

Always bring serious matters to the attention of your boss. Don't try to solve them on your own.

You are always role-modeling behaviors. Staff may not curse, use personal cell phones on shift or answer cell phones during meetings, especially when meeting with youth or in a community meeting.

Do not show up for work and start to eat lunch.

Do not talk on your personal phone at work.

Staff should not hang out and talk during their shift.

Don't smoke with youth or in sight of youth.

Don't yell at youth.

Do not take anything from a program (even if it seems to be extra) without permission from your supervisor.

Fill out your time sheet accurately. Adding extra hours on is stealing.

If you have personal relationships with staff members or youth from outside of work or from before you worked here, you need to let your supervisor know.

You cannot take youth to your house or allow youth to sleep over at your house.

You should let your supervisor know if youth have a crush on you or if they make any sexual references in your presence.

You should let your supervisor know if a co-worker has a crush on you or makes a sexual advance.

You can never hit a youth, family member or community agent.

As a general rule you should keep your religious and political views to yourself in the workplace. This includes t-shirts, buttons, etc.

Try to notice things about people when you approach them. Maybe they're having the worst day of their life. Always think before you speak.

Don't do personal business while working. If it's unavoidable, speak with your supervisor.