

Facilities Services Department

Office Etiquette

Applies to: All Employees in Facilities Services
Issued: May 10, 2016
Updated:

PROCEDURE

To set expectations and requirements for professional employee behavior and etiquette to establish an efficient and respectful work environment, and to reinforce that the behavior and etiquette of Facilities Services employees directly shapes the perception of Facilities Services and the University of Tennessee as a whole.

DEFINITIONS

1. Professionalism: the competence, skill, and behavior expected of a professional.
2. Company Equipment: all equipment owned by the University of Tennessee, used by employees to perform their duties (staplers, office supplies, vehicles, etc.).
3. Confidentiality: the discretion in keeping certain information secret. All communication in a professional environment should be considered confidential unless otherwise explicitly stated.
4. Personal Items: any item or equipment not owned by the University of Tennessee, but privately owned or possessed by a person or persons, including Facilities Services employees and university students.

PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

Section A: Volume of Conversations

1. Employees should be sensitive to the volume of their voice when engaging in conversation.
 - a. If a person within earshot comments on the volume of employee conversation, the conversation is distracting to other employees and is considered too loud.
2. The volume of telephone conversations should be kept low.
 - a. Employees should consider taking personal phone calls to a quiet, non-crowded area, and use subdued voices when speaking on the phone inside.

Section B: Privacy and Professionalism

1. Before conversing in a professional environment, consider if the content of a conversation is considered confidential, and what details are both appropriate and relevant to the conversation.
 - a. The withholding of unnecessary or extemporaneous personal information guarantees confidentiality and a professional image in the work place.
2. Employees should not eavesdrop on the personal conversations, or any other exchange of information, between others.
3. The use of Facilities Services telephones, fax, or email for personal or inappropriate ends is prohibited, as it detracts from workplace productivity and represents an information security threat for university information systems.

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Section C: Music Use

1. Employees should not listen to music that is too loud or distracting to others.
 - a. If an employee is allowed to listen to music where he/she works, he/she should be considerate toward other employees, and always ask their permission before playing music.
 - b. Employees may use earphones to listen to music as long as the employee is able to hear others while they are in use.

Section D: Confidentiality

1. Employees should be wary of openly sharing personal or confidential information with others while at work. Personal and confidential matters should only be discussed with the appropriate superior.

Section E: Shared Spaces

1. Because working together as a team is a fundamental component of success for all Facilities Services employees, being considerate toward others in a shared workspace is key to maintaining an efficient working relationship.
 - a. Some individuals have sensitivities toward fragrances such as cologne and perfume. Strong-smelling perfume and cologne should not be worn in a shared workspace, as others may be allergic to certain fragrances or find it distracting.
 - b. Strong-smelling food is likewise discouraged.
 - i. When disposing of food containers, employees should use break room trash bins, or another waste receptacle that is removed from a shared workspace, where the smell will not impact others.

Section F: Personal Workspaces

1. Personal workplace décor should be left at a minimum for a professional image and environment.
 - a. Employees are allowed to express themselves through certain, tasteful decorations and personal effects. Displaying profane and/or inappropriate images, violates the right of fellow employees to an inoffensive, shared space in which to perform their duties.
 - b. Employees should be careful not to obstruct pathways or accumulate excess clutter, as this creates a risk of personal injury to themselves and others.
 - c. Employees are asked to keep standing height shelving clean and free of all objects, as visibly cluttered areas can be disruptive.

Section G: Kitchens

1. After using break room kitchens, employees must clean up after themselves.
 - a. Wash and return all dishes, appliances, and silverware to its original storage place.
 - b. Wipe down tables and countertops as needed.
2. If supplies are lacking, such as paper towels, employees should inform the appropriate personnel or change these items themselves, as needed.

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3. Mark all personal food items stored in shared refrigerator. Note: excessively large food items and non-edibles should never be stored in shared refrigerators.
 - a. Employees should remove all of their food items and food containers from a shared refrigerator by no later than the end of each work week.
4. Because of Facilities Services' commitment to environmental sustainability, employees should dispose of waste material and recycling in their respective, properly marked receptacles.

Section H: Restrooms

1. Employees should be considerate toward others when using restroom facilities, and always clean up after themselves.
 - a. Wipe spilled water and soap from sinks and countertops, as needed.
 - b. If toilet seat is soiled contact Building Services to clean.
2. Notify the appropriate personnel of any plumbing problems or low supplies.

Section I: Maintain Shared Items

1. Shared items, equipment owned by Facilities Services, should be used with care and kept in good working order.
 - a. For instance, if a photocopier jams, employees should attempt to correct the problem, and contact the appropriate maintenance personnel if they are unable. Note: an employee should not attempt to correct an issue with any piece of Facilities Services equipment if they are unsure or unqualified.
 - b. Any item taken from its original place should be returned so that other employees will know where to locate it.

Section J: Shared Vehicles

1. Shared vehicles should be treated with care and respect, the same as any other piece of shared Facilities Services equipment.
 - a. No smoking in vehicles.
 - b. When returning a shared vehicle, make sure that all trash and belongings are removed beforehand.
2. Damage to shared vehicles happens, and employees should inspect shared vehicles before and after use, and report any damage found to appropriate personnel.
 - a. Conduct a walk-around of a shared vehicle before use, taking special care to note any dents, dings, and vandalism that may have occurred. Conduct the same inspection before returning the vehicle. Report all damage immediately.