



HANDOUT UWE-1

SUMMARY GUIDELINES FOR FITTING INTO A WORK ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ Know the key indicators of how casual or formal a work environment is, and when you interview and first start work, observe them very carefully:
 - The workplace itself
 - What people wear
 - How people interact
 - The gender mix.

- ▶ Take your lead from what you observe, and take your time.

- ▶ If you want to establish contact right away:
 - Take the first step by using body language
 - Look for signs of receptive body language in the person you're interested in
 - Use open-ended questions in your conversation.

- ▶ Be positive in your comments.

HANDOUT UWE-2

DETAILED WORK ENVIRONMENT GUIDELINES

- ▶ **Know the key indicators of how casual or formal a work environment is, and when you interview and first start your job, observe them very carefully.**
 - **The workplace itself**
 - Outdoor workplaces are generally more informal than indoors ones
 - Expensive-looking decors (in offices, stores and restaurants for example) are generally more formal than others.
 - **What people wear:** The more casual the clothing, the more likely it is that social exchanges will also tend to be relaxed and informal.
 - **How people interact**
 - Do they use only first names? Any place where last names are used for most people is a fairly formal environment.
 - How loud are conversations? Hushed tones indicate formal environments.
 - **The gender mix:** Single-gender workplaces are often more informal than mixed gender workplaces.

- ▶ **Take your lead from what you observe, and take your time.**
 - You don't have to start a conversation right away. Trust that the longer you are there, the more people you will meet and the more easily conversations will occur.

- ▶ **If you want to establish contact right away:**
 - Take the first step by making eye contact, smiling or using other facial expressions.
 - Look for signs of receptivity like willingness to make eye contact, or smiling and nodding when you make eye contact, and then decide whether or not to engage based on that willingness.



Handout UWE-2 (*continued*)

- Use open-ended questions (questions that can't be answered by "Yes" or "No") in your conversation, and remember that most people like to talk about themselves.
- It is usually appropriate to ask others in what area they work and what kind of work they do, but it is generally NOT appropriate to talk about other people except in very general and positive terms:

OK: "I work for Mr. Harkness and he's been very helpful."

NOT OK: "Mr. Harkness sure is one hell of a fat guy, isn't he?"

▶ **Be positive in your comments.**

- When others ask how you're feeling about your new job, talk about things you like. Don't make negative comments about the workplace, or about your ability to do the job or to fit in.
- It's all right to admit to being nervous, or that there's a lot to learn. Just make sure you show confidence in your ability to deal with your nervousness and do your job well.

HANDOUT **UWE-3**

GROUP ONE INSTRUCTIONS

You are to develop two role-plays. In both role-plays, it's the New Guy's first morning on the job, and it's coffee time. Choose one group member to play the New Guy. Everyone else plays co-workers who are also having coffee.

ROLE-PLAY ONE:

The New Guy is part of an all-male survey crew. He does a good job applying the Work Environment Guidelines.

ROLE-PLAY TWO:

The New Guy is a clerical trainee for a car insurance firm.
Other office workers, male and female, are present.
The New Guy fails to use the Work Environment Guidelines.

Before you present each role-play, you should read only the bolded portion of the role-play descriptions above to the other group. You should also brief them on:

- Where the role-play takes place (coffee shop, outdoors, etc.)
- What the various characters are wearing.

HANDOUT UWE-4

GROUP TWO INSTRUCTIONS

You are to develop two role-plays. In both role-plays, it's the New Guy's first morning on the job, and it's coffee time. Choose one group member to play the New Guy. Everyone else plays co-workers who are also having coffee.

ROLE-PLAY ONE:

The New Guy is part of an all-male survey crew. He fails to use the Work Environment Guidelines.

ROLE-PLAY TWO:

The New Guy is a clerical trainee for a car insurance firm. Other office workers, male and female, are present.
The New Guy successfully uses the Work Environment Guidelines.

Before you present each role-play, you should read only the bolded portion of the role-play descriptions above to the other group. You should also brief them on:

- Where the role-play takes place (coffee shop, outdoors, etc.)
- What the various characters are wearing.