

first year on the job

Your career development began before you arrived at the university and will continue your entire life.

Now that you've launched your career, it's time to figure out your next steps. Where you go from here is determined by how you maximize the potential of your current position. Our career advisors have identified these tips from years of experience. Use these guidelines as a template and adapt them to your specific circumstances. Use our checklist to measure your progress toward developing your own career plan.

SELF ASSESSMENT

- ___ Learn everything you can about your new company. Use any down-time during the day to read about the organization to figure out what the company does and how you fit in.
- ___ Have realistic expectations. Don't worry that you won't know everything in the first week. Take time to learn from your colleagues. Remind yourself that those who are higher up have more information than you do.
- ___ Prepare a work wardrobe. Once you see how others dress on the job, purchase the same types of clothing for your wardrobe.

CAREER DECISION MAKING

- ___ Take advantage of training and staff development programs. Continue to learn on the job and seek out training as these skills may position you for a promotion.
- ___ Establish and expand your professional network. Join professional organizations in your field and attend social functions sponsored by your company to get to know as many people as you can. They may become important in your future.

OCCUPATIONAL RESEARCH

- ___ Listen and ask questions. Consider your first year as the time to soak up information. It is also the time to speak up to clarify objectives or expectations.
- ___ Look around the organization. Who else might need your skills? Network with people in positions you aspire to in order to prepare yourself.

GAIN AND EVALUATE EXPERIENCE

- ___ Find a mentor. Some companies will assign a mentor. If not, seek out someone in the company willing to help you through that first year.
- ___ Expect to work extra hours and volunteer for projects. Create the positive impression that you are a "doer" in your first year. You'll gain more skills and experience by volunteering for projects.
- ___ Be nice to everyone. Avoid office politics and show respect to everyone in the organization. You never know when you might need the help of another staff person.
- ___ Participate in the employer's retirement program. Start building wealth at your first job and continue this practice throughout your career.
- ___ Pay it forward. Consider joining the ASU Alumni Association and serving as a mentor to students who are still in school. Participate in runs, food banks and other charitable events sponsored by your company.
- ___ Have some fun. While the transition from school to work can be bumpy at times, take time to enjoy the ride. Be sure to manage stress by doing leisure activities that you enjoy and developing a work-life balance.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGY

- ___ Your first job is not your last job. This first job sets the tone for your future; use this chance to grow and develop skills for your next job.