Eight Simple Rules... for getting a good start at your new job or internship

1. **Be on time!** For work, after your break and after lunch. Just because nobody says anything or even lifts an eyebrow, doesn’t mean it isn’t noticed. Being on time, all the time, is just good manners. Until you get your transit route down pat, you may have to arrive 15 minutes early but that is better than even a minute late. Can I be any clearer? Being on time counts!

2. **Dress for success.** The rule is to dress for the job you want, rather than the one you have but have some common sense too. Arriving in a three-piece suit or stockings and heels while everyone else is in jeans will just make you look weird. On day one, do a quick fashion assessment and conform to the highest standard. Make sure that whatever the dress code is at your workplace, you make the best-dressed list.

3. **Observe the office culture.** Do people curtsy in front of the boss or offer high fives? Is she called Ms. Boss, or just plain Betty? If after a morning of observation you are still aren’t sure, don’t panic. Just ask, ”do you prefer I call you Mr. Headhoncho or...?”

4. **Don’t always do as you’re told.** Yes, you heard that right. If something doesn’t feel right - like working late alongside Mr. Grabby or climbing up that tall ladder or dashing across four lanes of traffic with six cups of coffee - don’t do it. Your safety comes first and now you are in charge of keeping yourself safe. Maybe Workers’ Compensation will pay you for those fingers but do you really want to let them go?

5. **Ask questions but make them smart questions.** You need to be clear on why you are there and what you are expected to do. Of course you’ve done the research on the company and you were briefed in your interview but where do you fit in? Once you have that straight, feel free to take some initiative; don’t always wait for instruction. The first step to leadership is having the conviction of your beliefs and the confidence to carry them out. On the other side of the coin, be prepared to accept constructive criticism and don’t let criticism undermine your confidence.

6. **Make friends.** Attend workplace social gatherings. Leave your book or earphones behind when you go to the lunchroom. Beware of office politics and gossip (easier said than done) and always, always be professional!
7. **Volunteer for things.** Right off, it shows that you like to be a team player. In a majority of cases, volunteering for an event turns out to be a lot of fun.

8. **Be nice to the new kid on the block.** Show them the ropes and be a mentor. Remember: that was once you!