

Having worked in office settings for the majority of my career, I have seen and heard a lot of things that should be avoided like the “plague”. I thought it was time to share some the top 10 most annoying behaviors in offices. This list is compiled from several different websites and professional publications and in no way reflects this writer’s personal opinions.

The first set of office “rules” is going to address personal issues.

1. Keep your hands out of other people’s lunches or food. While working for a call center in Southern California, it was a daily occurrence for someone’s lunch to disappear.

2. Avoid strong perfumes, shampoos or soaps. With so many people with allergies, you never know when you might offend them with what you consider your favorite cologne. Even light mild perfumes can overwhelm the most sensitive of noses.

3. Keep your strong smelling food leftovers at home. There is nothing worse than having a client walk in your office where someone has just heated sauerkraut. They may not mind the smell but it does not give a great impression.

4. Remember to take your leftover food home at the end of the week. You don’t want to be the one to have the 6 month old moldy food in the refrigerator. Designate a date every month for the refrigerator to be cleaned out and rotate assignees.

Now for some general office/business guidelines:

1. Know what your office management means when they say business casual. For those with Blue Jean Fridays remember that your jeans should be in good condition and keep your other attire more business than casual. No one wants to see your stained Saturday morning housecleaning shirt at work.

2. Keep your voice level. In smaller offices or in large ones with cubicles, loud voices have a tendency to carry. This also helps when trying to soothe an irate client.

3. If you absolutely must go in to work sick, be considerate and use tissues, hand sanitizer and wash your hands frequently.

4. Don’t interrupt someone on the phone by using hand signals or waving pieces of paper in front of them.

5. Be courteous where personal phone calls are concerned. Many offices have rules where no personal calls or cell phones are allowed on the floor.

6. Keeping a neat and orderly desk shows that you are respectful of your space and others.

I sincerely hope that these 'tips' help you in your own work environment. While some work for some offices, not all will work with every office, you will need to choose which ones are most beneficial to your environment. From all the research, the overall theme seems to lean toward being respectful of and having consideration for your co-workers and your clients.

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