



Date: As Postmark

To: Anyone starting a new job

Cc: The Training Manager

From: Sharp End Training

RE: Your First Day

Congratulations on your new job. You will no doubt be looking forward to your first day.

Your new employers will no doubt have got the red carpet out for you at the formal interview process. Everyone will have got their best suits out. The interview will have been a bit of an inconvenience for them, having to take a day away from the email and the office. It may even have come as a surprise to them that the whole place didn't go to rack and ruin without their presence. Unfortunately, though, it will be downhill from here. **Read on to find out why.**

What can you expect on your first day?

You are likely to turn up slightly early which is OK because it doesn't matter what time you turn up, the receptionist is unlikely to be expecting you. You will probably have to wait a while in the public area.

Your immediate Manager will meet you and probably pass you on to a supervisor or Team Leader. The Manager has to go to a vital meeting or something else more important than successfully making a good first impression.

You will probably take your educational and other certificates along with you but don't worry, they won't be needed. If they are looked at, that is a bonus. If they are copied by a manager or team leader, you will probably see them later on the manager's desk, starting to "sink" into their paperwork.

Your immediate supervisor will have a desk which looks like a building site. There will be piles of paper and reports all around the desk and immediate area. Passers by will walk past and toss items anywhere on the desk. The phone will ring constantly, and they will receive numerous trivial interruptions.

They will be trying to deal with some catastrophe that has happened in the last few days (note, never, ever, will you find someone trying as urgently to prevent such a catastrophe).

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The main computer system will probably be offline.

A Director or Senior Manager is unlikely come around, but if they do, expect a few minutes of awkward conversation about your previous job, your journey to work and the weather.

Then they will say something like “Oh well, I can see you are busy, I'll leave you to it” and leave.

You may have some combination of a desk, chair, PC and a phone etc but probably not altogether. Any significant problems you have using a PC or sitting at a desk will be pretty much ignored because the workstation will not have been risk assessed for years. Some of the items may be broken.

If you have a desk, it may have someone else's personal belongings stored in it.

If you have a computer that works, don't worry, your password and IT access will not have been setup.

If they have, they won't work or will have expired or the responsible person you need in IT will be away from his desk, on a course or off sick and no-one else knows how to do passwords.

Of course, you assume that forgot and wrong passwords only happen to you but no – it happens to everyone.

When you do start to get email, the first few will be about lottery groups and other non essential activities.

Your colleagues may be interested in you but only to be nosey and you may feel like you are being interrogated about how many children you have, where you used to work and what it was like. Anything you say now can and will be the subject of cafeteria or lunch time gossip for at least the next week.

Expect people to say to you “you must be mad to want to work here” quite a lot. What they would do if they won the lottery will be the main topic of conversation.

Drink and snack machines will obviously snaffle your money and not give you the correct item.

If there is a notice board, it will be hopelessly out of date. A few tatty menus for local food and drink places and negative press clippings about your new employer will be the “news”



Posters on the wall will be limited to football and Cliff Richard. Calendars will be at least 2 years out of date. There will be nowhere prominently displayed frequently asked questions like opening hours or phone numbers.

Any technical manuals or essential reference books will be out of date.

Lunch time will include some complicated and seemingly cast in stone procedure for deciding who goes at what time. You will have no say in this and will have to fit in. Any requests you have will be ignored.

If leaving time is variable or if the office works flexi time, the same will apply to going home.

A new mum will come in with a baby; no-one will tell you who she is. Although everyone will stop work for half an hour (except you obviously)

In your first few days, someone will ask you for money. This will either be for lottery (in which case it will be at least £3 and some complicated system as to why this is so), race for life or some other charitable event or raffle tickets.

Don't think about going anywhere out of the public areas because you will not be issued with a security badge/passcard for at least a week and when you do it will have your name spelt wrong on it. It will expire at the end of the month because "other people haven't stayed that long"

As far as your training for the job goes, you can expect your supervisor to say something like "we haven't really had time to sort anything out". You may be left to read the publicly available literature (which you probably have read anyway).

Enjoy your new job – And don't forget it will be pay day soon – that's if payroll even know who you are...

From

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