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# A Short Guide to Kicking Ass in Your First 6 Months on the Job

You're a young professional who just received their first job offer.

A business owner has agreed to pay you a certain amount of money on a regular basis for your time, skills, and experience. They expect an eventual return on their investment that 1) justifies the role existing in the first place (ie. a $1.03 return on a $1 investment is not exactly good business) and 2) justifies paying you to perform the role instead of their next best option (ie. another candidate or some automated alternative).

Additionally, you likely only have a little bit of the experience and just a dash of the skills needed to make it worth their while to take a chance on you. Hey, at least you got the time part covered.

The good news is they expect an **eventual** return on their investment, not an **immediate** one. Pretty much every company knows not to expect a new employee, especially an entry-level one, to be able to create a lot of value in their first six months.

Oh, more good news. The bar is incredibly low when it comes to entry-level talent. Growing companies are starving for it. If you just have enough of a track record of a decent work ethic, intellectual curiosity, and communication skills you can get your foot in the door.

But if you're any good, you don't want to just get your foot in the door and take up space. Here's how to kick ass in your first six months for both the benefit of your employer and, most importantly, yourself.

**Show up early. Leave late.** This saying has reached cliche status, but it still never fails. The person who follows this rule is willing to put in the extra time to make up for their lack of skills and experience as quickly as possible. They are not just a typical 9-5 employee. Literally.

**Be impeccable with the small stuff.** Accept calendar invites for meetings. Show up to meetings 5 minutes early. Follow a twenty-four-hour email response policy. Know when to BCC or CC the appropriate person on an email. Don't leave typo's in emails. Follow every single direction given on a particular task to a T. Cover all the little things that just require that little bit of extra mental energy.

**Follow the 10% rule.** In your first one to two weeks you should know exactly what your responsibilities and expectations are in your role. Whatever they are, do them plus ten percent

more. If you're in a sales role, send ten percent more emails every day. If you're managing social media, do ten percent more research on best practices for FB ads. Good thing you have all that extra time in the office since you show up early and leave late.

**Own the Communication Between You and Your Manager.** There's a good chance that whoever hired you does not have the time to give you as much attention and support as you'd like. They'd probably love to do so honestly, but there just isn't enough time in the day. So help them out by learning to manage yourself. The easiest way to do this is to send a weekly email to your supervisor briefly outlining what you accomplished the week before and what your agenda is for the upcoming week. If you have questions or action items, include them. This is an easy way to remind them that you exist, document your accomplishments, and surprisingly build some good rapport. It's exciting to see all that your employee is getting done! If you have a weekly meeting with this person, send the email in advance so you can have a productive session.

These first four points cover the "getting shit done" mentality. Following these will lead to building massive amounts of social capital and trust with your new team. They prove to the people you work most closely with that you're not just some punk kid, but a true professional. Companies want to invest resources into people who do the hard, unrewarding work well with minimal fuss. Creating value creates opportunity.

On to the last two.

**Build Quality Relationships.** Now that you have a little social capital to spend, spend some of it to earn more. Managers, Executives, and Founders want to get to know their employees and help them develop further. There's a ton of opportunity to learn from these types and build some rapport with them. Make it a point to ask a new person out for coffee or lunch every week. The best thing you can do is this environment is just be a Curious George. Get to know them as a person, what their role is at the company, how'd they end in said role, etc. Ask good questions. If you're immersed in your work and the company, you'll be able to easily identify opportunities through these types of conversations to take on work outside of your day-to-day role.

**Complete Internal Professional Development Projects.** If you're the type of person who is following points one through five, then you're definitely the type of person who is going to crave more than just the current job you have right now. You're going to want to either gain a higher-level of mastery of a similar skillset or you might feel it's time to move on to a new role. The best way to prepare yourself for either route is to show (before telling) the higher-ups that you're ready to take on more responsibility.

In practice, this could take many forms.

It's the sales rep who has started to become more interested in marketing so she writes a series of emails for a campaign to send to prospects who have dropped off in a certain part of the pipeline. She asks the Marketing Director for feedback and makes adjustments accordingly.

It's the customer success rep who has enjoyed the more technical side of her role and decides to create some new integrations between the CRM and Slack channel to improve her team's ability to respond to support tickets quicker.

It's the operations associate who leaps at the chance to take ownership over a project his manager would normally have to take on, but doesn't really have the time.

Whatever the specific project is, it requires you to take the initiative. You can't sit around waiting for someone to give you more responsibility and exposure to different kinds of work.

Go kick some ass now.