

1 Corporate culture

- ▶ company culture
- ▶ unwritten rules in the workplace

Internet research

Search for the keywords *work fun*. Find out how companies are trying to create a fun atmosphere at work.

1.1 About business Work culture and placements

Discussion

1 With a partner, discuss what you would do in each situation and explain why.

You've just started working for a new company. Do you:

- try to look as smart and professional as possible?
- wear jeans and a T-shirt like all the other employees?

Why?

- stop work at five o'clock like everyone else?
- stay longer to finish your work?

Why?

- share your ideas and opinions at staff meetings immediately?
- say nothing like most of your colleagues?

Why?

Scan reading

2 Scan the article opposite to find:

- what the monkey experiment demonstrated.
- seven examples of unwritten rules.
- what new staff learn about work culture and how they learn it.

Discussion


3 In small groups, discuss the questions.

- What do you think organizations and companies can do to avoid negative unwritten rules?
- What unwritten rules do you imagine you might encounter in your country as an intern in:
 - a government department?
 - a small public relations firm?

Think about:


- office etiquette, e.g. dress code, punctuality, personal calls, coffee and lunch breaks
 - relationships with colleagues, management and clients/business partners
 - autonomy and initiative
- Which work culture above would you prefer to work in? Which would be the most difficult to adapt to? Why?

Listening for gist

4  1:06–1:07 Listen to Sandra, an American business student, and David, a British civil service manager, talking about problems they experienced with work placements. Answer the questions.

- What problems did Sandra and David have?
- What were the misunderstandings that caused these problems?

Listening for detail

5  1:06–1:07 Listen again. What mistakes did the students and the supervisors make in each case?

Brainstorming and presentation

6 In small groups, compare organizations where you yourself, your friends or members of your family have worked or studied. In what ways are their cultures different? Have these differences ever caused problems or misunderstandings?

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assignment
autonomy
beating
dress code
etiquette
initiative
intern
pick up