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Chapter 2: Personal Management

Introduction

Objectives

In this chapter, you will

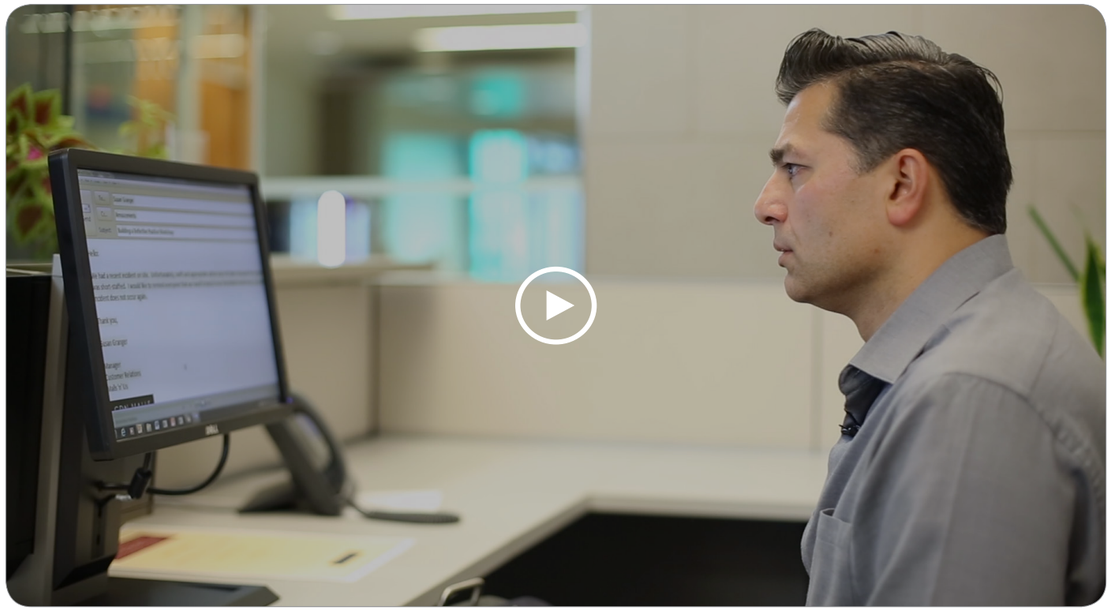
- identify important personal management habits for Canadian workplace environments
- identify implied meanings in conversations
- distinguish between fact and opinion
- write descriptions of events in an organized structure
- create oral summaries of information.

Video

Watch this chapter's video. An incident has occurred at CDN Malls. Observe how the different employees react to the situation. Listen to the language that they use, and notice how they show that they are listening to the other person.

While watching the video, think about the questions below. Write down information that you think is important.

- Who are the people in the video?
- What is the video about?



Focus questions

Sandy, your Workplace Mentor

Hi! I am Sandy, your Workplace Mentor. Throughout this book, I will give you important pointers to help you understand the general environment in many workplaces in Canada.

2.1 Point to focus on: Eye contact

Go to page 249 to learn more.

In the video, you watched Raja and Paul's reactions to an email sent out by their manager.

Discussion

Discuss the following:

1. What do you notice about the way Paul and Raja talk to each other? Are they being formal or informal with each other? How do you know?
2. Is the email that Susan sent out formal or informal? How do you know?
3. Do both Paul and Raja maintain eye contact all the time? Who makes the longer eye contact, the listener or the speaker? Why?
4. Do you think Paul is a good listener? Why?
5. How comfortable are you with making and maintaining eye contact when you are in a conversation with someone? What is appropriate eye contact to you?
6. What is Raja concerned about? Why is Paul not concerned about this?
7. According to Paul, what is quite normal in many Canadian workplaces?
8. What happened to prompt Susan's email?
9. What are the pros and cons of the way Susan handled the situation?

Before you listen

Complete the following to help you prepare for the listening:

1. In the video, we saw people's reactions to an email. Read the email that was mentioned in the video and answer the questions below.

   a) What do you think the listening will be about?

   b) What do you already know about the situation?

To: All staff

Cc:

Subject: Important reminder to all staff

From: Susan Granger

Hello:

We had a recent incident on site. Unfortunately, swift action was not taken because the area concerned was short-staffed at the time. I would like to remind everyone that we need to keep to our scheduled break times so such an incident does not occur again.

Thank you,

Susan Granger
Manager, Guest Services

CDN MALLS

2. Discuss what the following words and phrases mean. Listen carefully for these words and phrases in the listening activities and think about their meanings.

tile	to chat	to report something
kiosk	to address something	an accident waiting to happen
safety cone	all of a sudden	incident report
maintenance	to get in touch with someone	

Listening 1

Ray, your Strategy Coach

2.3 Identifying keywords

Go to page 296 to learn more.

Complete the following:

Read the questions in the *Comprehension* section so you have an idea of what the keywords are and what information to listen for. Then listen to Susan and Maria talking about what happened.

After you listen

Comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. What are Susan and Maria discussing?
   a) How to fill out incident reports
   b) An incident that happened in the mall
   c) New employees in Maintenance

2. What department does Maria work in at CDN Malls?
   a) Guest Services
   b) Security
   c) Maintenance

3. Why is Susan talking to Maria?
   a) To find out what happened and make sure it doesn't happen again
   b) To tell Maria she did something wrong and report her
   c) To find out why Alex didn't respond

4. Who was supposed to be available when Norman tried to contact Maintenance?

   a) Alex

   b) Susan

   c) Maria

5. Which personal management skills should Maria improve on?

   a) Demonstrate a positive attitude and manage time effectively.

   b) Manage time effectively and work responsibly.

   c) Be creative and flexible and work responsibly.

Sandy, your Workplace Mentor

2.3 Indirect statements

Go to page 251 to learn more.

Indirect statements

When Susan and Maria are talking about the incident that happened at the mall, Susan chooses words and phrases to approach the situation with Maria less directly. What she says is different from what she actually means. Susan uses language as a softening strategy to address the incident without sounding like she is blaming Maria.

Read the sentences from Listening 1 below. Rewrite the sentences. Replace the indirect language with more direct language.

1.

Susan said:	Norman was working there, but he couldn't get in touch with anyone in Maintenance.
Susan meant:	

2.

Susan said:	It's important that there's always someone available to respond to emergencies.
Susan meant:	

3.

Susan said:	Isn't your break from 10:00 to 10:15 and Alex's from 10:30 to 10:45? Norman tried to contact Maintenance at 10:35, but no one responded to the call.
Susan meant:	

4.

Susan said:	Since Norman couldn't get in touch with anyone from Maintenance, it took some time to find a maintenance worker to mark the tile as dangerous.
Susan meant:	

5.

Susan said:	It's really important to make sure we're ready to do our jobs when we're needed.
Susan meant:	

6.

Susan said:	It would be good if we stuck to our assigned break times so that we're available when needed, right?
Susan meant:	

7.

Susan said:	It's really important for us to avoid problem situations like this in the future.
Susan meant:	

Vocabulary

1. Listen to Listening 1 again. Identify the words and phrases you heard in this listening. Talk about what the words and phrases mean. Compare them with the meanings you discussed in the *Before you listen* section.

tile	to chat	to report something
kiosk	to address something	an accident waiting to happen
safety cone	all of a sudden	incident report
maintenance	to get in touch with someone	

2. Use a dictionary to look up the words and phrases you identified above. Write down their meanings. Some words may have more than one meaning. Be careful to select the meaning of the word as it is used in the listening.

3. Write sentences using the words you wrote meanings for. Talk about your sentences.

Listening 2

Read the questions in the *Comprehension* section so you have an idea of specific things you need to listen for.

a) Based on the questions, what do you think the listening excerpt will be about?

b) What do you already know about the situation?

Ana works at one of the stores in the mall. Listen to Ana talk about the incident and answer the questions that follow.

After you listen

Comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. When did the incident occur?

   a) Saturday the 28th at 10:00

   b) One week ago at 10:15

   c) Saturday the 28th at 10:15

2. How does Ana know what happened?

   a) One of the people who works at Cellphones Plus told her.

   b) It happened in front of where she was working.

   c) Ahmed from Tech Shop told her.

3. What does Ana think of Ahmed?

   a) He is clumsy.

   b) He is helpful.

   c) He talks too much.

4. According to Ana, what should be done to avoid this kind of incident in the future?

   a) Someone should call Maintenance.

   b) The mall should maintain the floors better.

   c) They should not carry out large boxes.

5. Did the contents of the box break?

   a) Yes

   b) No

   c) We don't know

Vocabulary

1. Listen to Listening 2 again. Identify the words and phrases you heard. Talk about what the words and phrases mean. Compare them with the meanings you discussed in the *Before you listen* section.

tile	to chat	to report something
kiosk	to address something	an accident waiting to happen
safety cone	all of a sudden	incident report
maintenance	to get in touch with someone	

2. Use a dictionary to look up the words and phrases you identified above. Write down their meanings. Some words may have more than one meaning. Be careful to select the meaning of the word or phrase as it is used in the listening.

3. Write sentences using the words and phrases you wrote the meanings for. Talk about your sentences.

Discussion

Go back to the questions in the *Before you listen* section. Think about what you heard in Listening 1 and Listening 2. Discuss the answers to these questions:

- Did you correctly predict what the listening activities were going to be about?
- How did reading the questions ahead of time and thinking about what you were going to listen for help you understand?

Listening progress check

Read the comprehension questions on the next page first so you notice what you need to listen for. Then listen to Raja speak with his friend Sam about their workplaces.

Comprehension

Answer the following questions:

1. What is Raja and Sam's relationship?
   a) Co-workers
   b) Supervisor and employee
   c) Friends

2. What are they discussing?
   a) The way things are handled at different workplaces
   b) The promotion that Sam got
   c) How Raja likes his co-workers

3. What is Sam hoping will happen soon?
   a) He will get a new job at a different company.
   b) He will get accustomed to the workplace culture.
   c) He will get a new position at his company.

4. What is Raja still getting used to?
   a) How problems are addressed
   b) How to send emails
   c) His co-workers

5. Which notice to staff do you think fits the workplace culture where Sam works?
   a) There was an issue with production last week. Please refer to your training manuals and follow the instructions closely to avoid mistakes in the future.
   b) There was a problem with production last week. We will meet on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the problem and identify possible solutions. Please bring your ideas.
   c) There was a problem with production last week. There will be a meeting for all to attend on Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. The production manager will review the rules for efficient production lines.

6. What is the best way for Raja to get accustomed to his workplace culture?
   a) Ask his boss lots of questions
   b) Observe the behaviours of his co-workers and supervisors
   c) Ask his friends

Vocabulary

Match each of the words or phrases below to its meaning on the right.

	Word/phrase		Meaning
a)	a promotion	____	an event that is usually unpleasant or unusual
b)	to be off work	____	choose to stop working permanently after you have had a career
c)	to retire	____	not work for a period of time
d)	to handle something	____	deal with something; solve an issue
e)	incident	____	a more important job in the same company

Pronunciation

Task 1

Listen to the pronunciation of the words and phrases in the audio for Task 1. Repeat the words and phrases to practise.

all of a sudden	kiosk	personal management	to address something
an accident waiting to happen	maintenance	safety cone	to get in touch with someone
can-do attitude	nominate	solution-oriented	to handle something
criteria	nomination	submitted	to report something
effective	nominator	tile	to retire
hard skills	optimistically	to chat	valued
incident report	outstanding		

Ray, your Strategy Coach

2.6 Sentence stress

Go to page 304 to learn more.

Task 2

Listen to the audio for Task 2. Content words receive more stress or emphasis in a sentence. Pay close attention to the content words in the sentences and how they are stressed. Identify the stressed words as you are listening.

Practise reading along with the audio, stressing the words that the reader stresses.

Excerpt 1:

Manage time effectively

In order for a company to run smoothly and effectively, all members of the team need to work together, follow their set work schedules, and meet deadlines. Demonstrate that you are a responsible and dependable employee by completing your tasks punctually. Arrive on time for work and after breaks. Check with your supervisor if you need to make a change in your schedule, and ensure that your co-workers are aware of any changes.

Excerpt 2:

Demonstrate a positive attitude

Show that you take pride in your job by working with a positive attitude. A positive, can-do attitude shows your employer that you enjoy what you do, and it makes the workplace a more pleasant place to be. Face challenges optimistically and be solution-oriented. Work cooperatively with your co-workers. Positive employees are the kind of employees who employers like to retain.

Speaking practice

Summarizing

Ray, your Strategy Coach

2.7 Summarizing

Go to page 305 to learn more.

Summarizing is restating information in a shorter way that is more to the point and focuses on the key points. It is not retelling the information exactly as you read it or heard it. It is a useful skill to have when you need to share information or describe something you have learned. Summaries can be done orally or in writing. We will look at oral summaries.

Here is an example of a summary of Excerpt 2 from the pronunciation activity. Compare it to Excerpt 2 on the previous page.

Summary of Exerpt 2: Demonstrate a positive attitude

It is important to show a positive attitude at work. Employers like to keep employees who are positive about their work, look for solutions to problems, and work well with others.

Complete the following:

1. Read Article Excerpt A or B. If you are working with a classmate, do not share your article. Read your article carefully.
2. Identify the main idea and key points in the article.
3. Put the article away. Summarize the article for a classmate or your instructor in three to five sentences.
4. If you are working with a classmate, your classmate should ask you three questions about what you summarized. Answer the questions.
5. Repeat the activity with the other article excerpt.

Article Excerpt A

Keeping your job

The way you approach your work will help you keep your job. Follow these suggestions:

- Do your best. Do each task well the first time.
- Focus on work when you're at work. Use breaks to check in with your social and personal life. Don't do this when you should be working.
- Be a committed part of your work team. Cooperate with others and respect their ideas.
- Help your co-workers whenever they need help. Do what needs to be done, whether or not it's "your job."
- Ask for help when you need it. This shows you are dedicated to doing things properly.
- Make every effort to add to a respectful, cooperative working environment. Avoid gossip and negativity.

In a competitive market, employers want to hire and keep workers with an optimistic outlook and a can-do approach. Whether you are researching for work or hoping to keep the job you have, your positive attitude can help you be the person who gets the job. It can also earn you the right kind of attention that will help you keep your job.

From Getting and Keeping the Work you Want. (n.d.). Government of Alberta.
https://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=408.
Adapted with permission. For more career-related information, check out alis.alberta.ca.

Article Excerpt B

Taking responsibility

- Taking responsibility for what you do and how you do it shows your employer that you're reliable and trustworthy.
- Dress appropriately for the job. Consider the type of work you're doing, how your co-workers dress, and the company image.
- Look and act confident. Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard. Look at people when they speak to you.
- Use your time appropriately. Be on time for work. Avoid taking extra-long coffee breaks, looking after private business while you're on the job, or spending too much time socializing.
- Be productive. Keep your work area neat and clean. Plan ahead and do the most important tasks first. When you've finished one task, move on to the next one without waiting to be told. Finish high-priority work first.
- Let your employer know if you're going to be late or absent, and use sick leave only when you're sick.

From Are You Job Smart? (n.d.). Government of Alberta.
http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=3292
Adapted with permission. For more career-related information, check out alis.alberta.ca.

Speaking progress check

Rubric

Read the information in the rubric. It explains what you need to focus on in this activity.

Complete the speaking task on the next page with your instructor or with a classmate, paying attention to the expectations in the rubric.

Chapter 2: Speaking Progress Check				
• Topic: Personal management • Task: Summarize an article				Name: Date:
Criteria	**Yes**	**Almost**	**No**	**What can you do better next time?**
You started the summary by introducing the article.				
Your summary covered the key points.				
Your summary was concise and to the point.				

Task

Complete the following:

1. Read the article below.
2. Select section 1, 2, or 3 to summarize.
3. Follow the steps for summarizing.
4. Pay attention to the expectations in the rubric.
5. Share your summary with your instructor.

Six Ways to Stand Out at Work

At work you want to be noticed for all the right reasons. The most effective way to do this is to show your employer every day that hiring you was a great decision!

To attract positive attention and succeed at work, try some of these practical strategies.

1. Be reliable and dependable.

- Show up for every shift you're scheduled for. Call in or send an email or text message well ahead of time if you must be late or absent. Try to be absent as little as possible.
- Be on time, whether you're arriving for work, returning from breaks, going to staff meetings, or completing tasks.
- Be prepared. Come to work willing to pay attention, follow directions, and do the job.
- Do what you say you'll do.
- Stay organized and keep your work area tidy. This shows your supervisor that you're in control of what you're doing.
- Do your best. Check the quality of your own work.

2. Be proactive.

- Take responsibility for what you do. This includes being accountable for any mistakes you make.
- Learn all you can about the organization and your role.
- Learn how to do all the tasks that are part of your role.
- Take initiative. What could you contribute without being asked? Just make sure you're not stepping on someone else's toes.
- Learn a skill that will help you stand out. For example, become the person everyone goes to when they need something proofread or when they need help with a computer program.

3. Be a team player

- Take on the task that needs to be done. Team players work effectively with others to achieve common goals, whether or not the task is part of their job description.

- Jump at the chance to help a co-worker on a project. You'll learn something new and gain a reputation as a helpful employee, too.
- Share information and resources.
- Support and encourage your co-workers.
- Respect your co-workers' diversity of opinions and experiences.

4. Be flexible and adaptable

- Be aware that you can't control everything.
- Be ready and willing to compromise.
- Be prepared for the unexpected.
- Keep learning. It will help you handle change.

5. Be appropriate

- Work safely. Know the health and safety hazards and regulations in your workplace.
- Dress appropriately for the work you've been hired to do.
- Be courteous. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
- Ask for help when you need it. Recognizing your limits is a sign of personal strength and maturity.
- Live up to your values. Be truthful and honest. Maintain your integrity.

6. Be positive

- Show respect for yourself and others.
- Be enthusiastic about your work. Believe in your ability to do the job well.
- Smile and be friendly.
- Expect positive results.

Working is about more than simply getting the job done—it's also about building and keeping a solid reputation and positive relationships in the workplace. Doing your best will help you feel satisfied and fulfilled every day.

When you shine at work, you're also investing in your future. Your employer will appreciate your efforts, opening the door to advancement or a glowing reference when it's time for you to move on.

From:
6 Ways to Stand Out at Work. (n.d.). Government of Alberta.
http://alis.alberta.ca/ep/eps/tips/tips.html?EK=242.

For more career-related information, check out alis.alberta.ca.

Wrap-up

In this chapter, you

- identified important personal management habits for Canadian workplace environments
- identified implied meanings in conversations
- distinguished between fact and opinion
- wrote descriptions of events in an organized structure
- created oral summaries of information.

Discussion

Think about what you learned in Chapter 2.

Discuss

- something in this chapter that was new to you
- two things you are more confident about now
- one thing you would like to improve.

Sandy, your Workplace Mentor

2.4 Reflection in the workplace

Go to page 252 to learn more.

Reflection

In this chapter, you learned about personal management qualities that Canadian employers value in their employees. Write a short paragraph about one personal management quality that you have, and one personal management quality that you would like to improve on. The personal management qualities that we looked at were the following:

- Managing time effectively
- Demonstrating a positive attitude
- Learning continuously
- Working responsibly
- Being creative and flexible

Extension

Ray, your Strategy Coach

2.8 Learning new vocabulary

Go to page 306 to learn more.

Chapter vocabulary list and language logs

a) Print the Language Observer Log and the Language User Log to help you extend your language learning into daily life.

b) Look at the *Chapter Vocabulary List* and choose four words from this chapter that you want to learn to use, and write them in your language logs.

Interview

Informally interview one person who works in Canada. Ask the person about what he or she thinks is the most important personal management quality for an employee working in Canada. Find out why the person thinks it is important and how it affects his or her job. Talk about this information with a classmate or instructor.

Research

Do one of the following:

- On YouTube, look for a short video giving tips on effective personal management skills. Summarize what you learned.

  https://www.youtube.com/

- On the ALIS website, do a search for tips on personal management skills. Summarize what you learned.

  http://alis.alberta.ca/index.html

Chapter vocabulary list

Word	Form	Meaning
address	verb	to deal with a matter, issue, or problem
all of a sudden	expression	without warning; unexpectedly
an accident waiting to happen	expression	something that could possibly cause a problem if it is not fixed
can-do attitude	noun	a positive way of looking at challenges and overcoming them
chat	verb	to talk informally with someone
criteria	noun	standards by which something is judged
effective	adjective	successful; giving a positive result
get in touch with	expression	to contact; to communicate with
handle	verb	to manage a situation or problem
hard skills	noun	specific, teachable abilities that can be defined and measured
incident report	noun	a written document about something that happened, usually created for legal purposes
kiosk	noun	a small booth or stand where things are sold in a shopping area
maintenance	noun	the department in a company responsible for looking after the building
nominate	verb	to officially suggest someone for a job, recognition, or award
optimistically	adverb	to do something in a positive way with hope for the future
outstanding	adjective	excellent; better than others
personal management	noun	the way you conduct yourself, set goals, and work toward them
report	verb	to tell someone in authority about a problem

Word	Form	Meaning
safety cone	noun	an orange, pointed, rubber cone put on the ground to warn people about dangerous conditions
solution-oriented	adjective	to be focused on resolutions to challenges
submitted	verb	presented something (for example, a document) for approval
tile	noun	a square, flat piece of solid material used to cover surfaces such as floors
valued	adjective	considered to be important