

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Office romance etiquettes to abide by

A nine-to-five workday spent dangerously close with the opposite sex in a sequestered office cubicle makes it painstakingly difficult for things not to get steamy once in a while. While it's best to keep those teenage kicks to yourself now that you're a responsible twenty-something working man or woman, a fortuitous side-glance from the other party may be that green light you've been waiting for since the first day at work. Good vibes followed by some good old-fashioned courtship have all the makings of a happy ending, but keep in mind some common-sense yet oft-violated rules.

HANDS (AND EYES) OFF UNTIL YOU'RE OFF THE CLOCK

Tempting as it might be to flash an apparently private smile to your significant other now and then, how long before you're staring off in the wrong direction in the middle of a board meeting? Inattentive to your fellow co-workers and outright disrespectful to your higher-ups, public displays of affection are undeniably unprofessional. While raising eyebrows is one thing, don't give superiors and peers extra reason to put you under scrutiny by being clumsy with your workplace romance (they probably have enough reasons as it is.)

It may seem impossible at first to resist rushing over to your SO's desk every time you find a cute cat GIF, being within close quarters of each other at work is an invitation for trouble. Department changes may not be as feasible an option in this country as it's played out to be in the movies, so make sure to keep your time together at the workplace reasonable. Savour the half-hour lunch and tea breaks and avoid making the rest ninety-nine percent of the office feel uncomfortable and unwelcome every single time the two of you are within breathing distance of one another. For all you know, you might just be doing your career a disservice each time you decide to discuss lovey-dovey mumbo-jumbo with your beau instead of the latest EPL match with your boss.

DON'T BREAK THE RULES BECAUSE OF LOVE

As preposterous and insensitive it may seem to you for the company to have an anti-progressive conservative take on office romances, your job does come first. Keep those budding feelings on a leash, especially if there is a zero



tolerance policy when it comes to fraternisation. This of course might not be the case, but if it's smooth sailing for you and your lover all the way, you may finally have to fill out a form for that department change. No matter how discreet and sensible a pair might be, too close a working relationship will invite problems for everyone.

Other than rules pertaining to general professionalism, there's always the HR side of matters. Put off making that

grand first move until you actually know the person – you can never be too sure as to what he or she might find harassing. Best to steer clear of a super awkward conversation with the HR coordinator. And chances are you won't even get away with a relatively harmless section transfer.

The other big no-no when it comes to workplace romance is dating your boss or subordinate. This one

probably need not even be mentioned – any normal person would and should find the idea of it wholly unethical (and a little gross.) Yet this is hardly uncommon. You probably don't want your lover to have control over your pay as well as your career path (isn't the thought of it suffocating enough?) And if you two have a falling out, best case scenario is you're going to have to see the face of the man or woman who ruined your life for the rest of eternity, or at least a very very long time.

Equally inexcusable and despicable is doing your sweetheart's cumbersome expense reports and project proposals for them. Unless you're doing everybody else's work for them as well, don't do your girlfriend's or boyfriend's. Most colleagues would react badly to such displays of favouritism (and can you blame them?) Also, there's got to be something somewhere in that big book of company code of conduct against it.

SKIP THE LOVE NOTES

There's probably nothing standing in the way of you and your lover having an intense half day-long Facebook conversation. However, when it comes to one-on-one time with your SO, it's best to keep the intimate stuff offline. As risqué and appealing a quick flirtatious message might be, remember that firstly, you are on company time and shouldn't be spending your hours this way; secondly, there's a high chance of a nosey co-worker breathing down your back or peeking at your computer screen from the table on the side, just waiting to spill all your seedy secrets to the rest of the office (and possibly your boss); thirdly, your office may have an external monitoring system and everything you thought was intended for your lover's eyes alone really isn't.

Although being found out eventually is inevitable, overly obvious gestures and making every other person in the office your confidante is not a good decision. Gossip of the wrong kind spreads fast. Also, not everyone wants to know the grisly details and woeful troubles of your love life. So before you open your big mouth, imagine the petrified look on your partner's face when he or she hears from the grapevine you've been yakking off about last Friday night, and think twice.

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Team from BRAC one step closer to winning Hult prize

The annual Hult Prize challenge is the world's largest student competition and start-up platform for social good. In partnership with President Bill Clinton and the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), the innovative crowd-sourcing platform identifies and launches disruptive and catalytic social ventures that aim to solve the planet's most pressing challenges. The 2015 Hult Prize will focus on building start-ups that provide sustainable, high quality early education solutions to ten million children under the age of six in urban slums and beyond by the year 2020.

Team Smallfoot from BRAC University has advanced to the regional finals of the sixth annual Hult Prize in Dubai. The team is comprised of Mohammad Mustahsin Islam, Mohammad Fayaz Zian, Isbat Ibn Hasnat, Gulshan Jubaed Prince and Zawad Hasan Adib.

Ahmad Ashkar, CEO and Founder of the Hult Prize Foundation, attributes the rapid growth of the socially responsible investing (SRI) sector to new demand being created by the international market place. "Servicing the world's poorest through profitable and sustainable enterprise is not just good for the world, its great business. Our pioneering platform builds ecosystems by leveraging crowd and we couldn't be happier that BRAC University will be joining our mission with their participation in the 6th annual Hult Prize."

Selected teams were chosen from over 20,000 applications received from over 500 colleges and universities in over 150 countries. The Hult Prize regional final competitions will take place on March 13 and 14, 2015 in Boston, San Francisco,



London, Dubai and Shanghai.

Following the regional finals, one winning team from each host city will move into a summer business incubator, where participants will receive mentorship, advisory and strategic planning as they create prototypes and set-up to launch and scale their new ventures. A final round of competition will be hosted by President Bill

Clinton and the CGI at its annual meeting in September 2015, where CGI delegates will select the winning team, which will receive USD 1 million in start-up funding to launch their sustainable social venture.

To sponsor team Smallfoot in the Hult Prize challenge, reach them at: mustahsinislam@gmail.com.

PRESS RELEASE

BSHRM 4th International HR Conference 2015

Bangladesh Society for Human Resources Management (BSHRM) will arrange its daylong 4th BSHRM International HR Conference 2015 on February 28, 2015 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Marking the event a press conference was held at the National Press Club on last Saturday.

Musahorrof Hossain, The President of

BSHRM, Mashequr Rahman Khan, Chairman of the Conference, Quazi M. Ahmed, Secretary of the Conference, General Secretary of BSHRM Nazrul were present along with the EC members and all other members of BSHRM were present in the Press Conference. Riyadh Hossain, Chair, Press & Media Subcommittee moderated the press conference.

It was informed from the press

conference that Peter Wilson, Chairman of the Australian Human Resource Institute, Dr. T.V. Rao, renowned HRD Professional & Chairman, TVRLS, President of BSHRM & APFHRM Md. Musharrof Hossain, and many reputed business management experts and corporate persons from home and abroad will be present in the 4th BSHRM International HR Conference 2015 on February 28 2015.

WATER COOLER CHRONICLES

Office romance for creeps

There are certain rumours about me floating around the cubicles of the office. These rumours tend to involve my liking for a certain type of hair – pshaw to all those people boiling down affairs of the heart to something as silly. But more often than not, rumours originate from some degree of truth, don't they? Maybe a certain someone walked past once and I happened to have a smile on my face. Statistics seem to show that office romances are not all too uncommon, and given that the same bunch of people will be working in a closed environment for days on end, certain feelings of the gut-churning variety can arise. If you are one of these people, who found love behind cubicles, here's what not to do.

So your office hired the perfect woman you had always dreamt of, and as fate would have it, you have been assigned to the same team as her. You think it's a good idea to send her a friend request even before she joins the office, send her a text asking to be friends with a wink smiley and then like all her Facebook photos? Unless you are trying cultivate an image of yourself as the office creep, not a good idea.

There's a fine line between the loving gaze that poet's speak of and downright workplace harassment. It is in human nature to admire beauty in the opposite sex. Taking

out your smartphones and taking a picture is not. Another tactic that has been known to be quite popular is to stare with the intent of a serial killer – despite the hopeless romantic intentions that you think you are portraying, this simply does not work. And if your office actually has a proper HR department, might even get you hunting for new jobs.

It should not be hard to imagine that rumours travel fast. If you like a girl, keep the publicity to a minimum. Word spreads, and even your totally harmless intentions might get twisted to portray you as a pervert on the loose. Nothing makes you look more like a creep to a girl than overhearing your macho friends talk of how you have "the hots for her."

Romantic gestures will earn the card shops a whole lot of money this Valentine's. And a simple token of love cannot go amiss – or so you would think. Meeting her socially outside work and giving her a card is ok, while having an a capella quartet delivering a hundred roses and a card with that picture of her sleeping where she looks "so cute" is not. Nothing can do more harm for your potential future love life than a tag labelling you as the office creep.

MOYUKH MAHTAB

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Course overview

Walking into a meeting, going to conferences, attending work events, or starting a new job can be daunting, especially if you don't know anybody who will be there. Do you wonder why people seem to be drawn to certain individuals in the room than others? The difference may be that they appear to be more approachable than you do. Approachability involves conveying your willingness to reach out and invite others in by initiating contact, making yourself available and building rapport. In this course, you'll learn about the techniques you can use to enhance your ability to reach out and invite others in.