

# Understanding work perks in your new job

Congratulations on your new job! In the current overly competitive job market, it can be difficult to land the job you want - and even then, the job you want might not turn out to be how you had pictured when applying. Nevertheless, any new job comes with a certain period of self-adjustment, owing to the new environment, new colleagues and of course, new management. One smart way to fit right into a new job is to familiarise yourself with your work perks - including the terms and conditions you are compelled to follow. Here is a quick guide on what these perks can be, and how you should be wary of them in your new job.

## What are work perks?

Work perks, sometimes also called employee or workplace benefits, are additional incentives implemented by the employer for the employees. These incentives are outside the set salary or wage the employee is paid, and are designed to make the workplace more appealing to the employees. Usually, the goal of work perks is to ensure the employees are working to their satisfaction while retaining good quality and quantity of work. Work perks can greatly vary depending on the type of company, business or industry, but here are some common ones you should be familiar with.

## Working hours

Your working hours are the first work perk you should check in your new contract. How many hours are you expected to work in a day? If your work consists of a specific number of hours every week, be sure to read the fine print very carefully. Your remuneration may be affected if you don't put in enough hours, so, when you get that new contract, make sure to negotiate any discrepancies you may find between your agreed work hours and what has been stated in the official papers. If in-office work hours end up being too troublesome for you, you can ask your employer or the company's HR about working hybrid or shifting to work-from-home.

## Holidays/time-offs

Not only should you expect your company to give you time-offs in case of emergencies and medical leaves, but you should also have annual time-offs for national holidays. Be sure to check your



job contract for how many days you are allowed paid leave - which can include voluntary vacations and/or unexpected sick leaves. Usually, you will be asked by your employer to notify them a few days or a week beforehand and leave a signed form in case you apply for a temporary leave - which may or may not be covered under your paid time off.

## Flexibility

When receiving your new job contract, go through all the important details and try to deduce how much flexibility you're being offered. This can be flexibility in work hours - how often are you expected to show up; flexibility in work method - can you work hybrid or from home; and flexibility in your involvement outside office hours - are you expected to work during break days or after the office is over. While you're of course bound to follow your company's rules and regulations, as an employee, you can always ask if there's room for flexibility in your work, as long you don't compromise the work done in the process.

## Employee discounts

If you're working under a business selling its own line of products, you may be eligible for employee discounts when buying those products for yourself. Employee discounts are mostly common in service industries as well as hospitals and schools, where employees are granted a certain percentage of reduction when paying for admission or utility fees from the institutions they work under. Sometimes, employee discounts can extend to family members of employees as well - so if you're working in the service industry, be sure to check out any such benefits stated in your contract.

## Training programs

Some employers will provide professional development opportunities for their employees, including workshops, skill development courses or in-depth training. Depending on where you work, some training programs may be mandatory so you can be more competent in your job - but some training programs can be voluntary as well. At your new job, you should take advantage of any such opportunities to

further build yourself for the future.

## Insurance and retirement plans

Some companies offer health insurance plans to help cover medical expenses, though terms and conditions can significantly vary across workplaces and employee levels. A lot of local companies also have pension plans in place that benefit older employees when they retire. Keep a close eye out for both insurance and retirement plans in your contract, and see if you can negotiate depending on what you're offered.

## Miscellaneous perks

In your workplace, you may be allowed to have free snacks, a personal workspace that you can decorate, and/or an office lounge or cafeteria for relaxation. You may also have access to mental health services or gym memberships for your personal well-being. Look out for any and all of these perks in your new contract. These miscellaneous benefits can greatly vary depending on where you work, but more or less exist in every modern workplace, and goes a long way in keeping employees satisfied during work.

