

# BAD MANNERS AT WORK

Most office workers say they are **rude** or **bad-tempered** at work. Two out of three workers regularly arrive late for meetings, most **ignore** emails and three out of four use bad language. In a **survey** of 1,000 workers, two-thirds say that **pressure** of work is the reason for their bad manners.

Other **common** examples of bad office **etiquette** include ignoring **colleagues** and answering **mobile phone** calls during meetings. Using mobile phones in meetings is impolite and **distracts** others, research by the University of Surrey shows. If you **respond to a call** when speaking to somebody, it means that the phone call is more important than the person, the survey said. If you answer a call during a meeting, it could mean that you think the meeting is not important.

Mr Jacobs, managing director of Office Angels, a recruitment firm, says it is easy for people to forget their manners **in the working environment**, which is often very **informal** and very busy. Workers can forget proper etiquette such as introducing people at meetings, and this is very bad for working relationships.

**Psychologist** Dr Colin Gill believes that people are not as polite as they were twenty years ago. He said: '**Courtesy** is no longer respected in our **society**. People think it is **old-fashioned** to be polite or formal.'

Now some organizations are investing money in **training** their **junior** managers to be **polite**. They are **encouraging** people to arrive on time for meetings, **turn off** mobile phones and avoid bad language. 'Avoiding bad manners at work is such a simple thing to do,' Mr Jacobs says, 'and it can **improve** your working environment and your **relationships** with others.'

## 1. Answer the Questions

1. What six examples of bad manners does the article describe?
2. What three examples of bad manners is the company in the article trying to stop?
3. Do most office workers admit that they are rude and bad-tempered at work?

4. What reason do office workers give for their bad manners?
5. Why is it impolite to answer a mobile phone during a meeting?
6. Why is it impolite to respond to a call when speaking to somebody?
7. Are people today more polite than they were 20 years ago?
8. What do some people think of courtesy?
9. What are some organizations doing to improve workers' manners?
10. What are the benefits of avoiding bad manners at work?

## **2 Read the statements and say whether they are true (T) or false (F). Correct the false ones.**

1. Most office workers are polite and good-mannered at work.
2. Office workers always respond to emails and never use bad language.
3. Most workers say that pressure of work is the reason for their bad manners.
4. Using mobile phones in meetings doesn't distract other people.
5. Workers shouldn't forget to introduce people at meetings.
6. People's manners are improving every year.
7. Being courteous is very fashionable nowadays.
8. Companies don't want to spend money on training their staff to be polite.
9. It is not easy to avoid bad manners at work.
10. Avoiding bad manners can be good for your working relationships.

## **3. Choose the correct word**

1. Most office workers say they are ... at work.  
a. polite b. rude c. courteous
2. Most workers .... emails.  
a. receive b. ignore c. send
3. Other common examples of bad office etiquette .... ignoring colleagues and answering mobile phone calls during meetings.  
a. forget b. distract c. include
4. Using mobile phones in meetings is ... .  
a. important b. impolite c. informal
5. It is easy for people to forget their manners in the ... .  
a. recruitment firm b. working environment c. business meeting
6. People think courtesy is ... .  
a. informal b. old-fashioned c. competitive
7. Now some organizations are ... money in training their junior managers to be

polite.

a. losing b. investing c. including

8. Office Angels is ... people to arrive on time for meetings.

a. remembering b. encouraging c. introducing

9. People should ... their mobile phones in meetings.

a. turn on b. turn off c. turn down

10. Workers should ... bad language.

a. avoid b. use c. respect

#### 4. Match the words and expressions with their definitions

1 to ignore

2 a survey

3 common

4 etiquette

5 to distract

6 old-fashioned

7 to improve

8 to train

9 working

environment

10 to encourage

**a** to teach someone to do a particular job or activity

**b** to suggest that someone does something that you believe would be good

**c** no longer modern or fashionable

**d** to make something better

**e** happening frequently

**f** to pretend that you haven't noticed someone or something

**g** a set of questions that you ask a large number of people or organizations

**h** the general conditions in a workplace

**i** to get someone's attention and prevent them from concentrating on something

**j** the formal rules for polite behavior in a group of people