



## Professional Outlook

**Techno Functional Soft Skills**

# What you will learn

## At the core of the lesson

You will learn how to do the following:

- Identify professional behaviors.
- Discuss why professionalism is important.
- Describe how professionalism relates to you.
- Describe how professionalism relates to coworkers.
- Maintain a professional attitude when you work with customers.

## Key terms

- Dress code
- Empathy
- AWS Lambda
- U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance
- Customer-centricity



# What is professionalism?

## Why are the following behaviors professional or unprofessional?

For each scenario, ask the following questions:

- How does this behavior affect their fellow coworkers?
- How does this behavior affect the business?
- How does this behavior affect customers?

### Scenarios

1. Richard is consistently 15–20 minutes late for work.
2. Every day, John is grumpy and negative. He constantly complains about work, the office, the customers, or anything at all. Sometimes, he sits at his desk and complains out loud—to no one.
3. Martha is the person to ask when her team needs help, but getting her help is difficult. She isn't busy and is often seen taking personal calls while someone patiently waits at her desk for help.
4. Mateo is the person in the office who says, "I didn't do it!" When everyone else on the team makes mistakes, they quickly take ownership of the error and work to fix it. Mateo, however, will blame others when he feels threatened.
5. Jane works hard and can be relied on to do a great job. However, from time to time, Jane rants. When she rants, Jane often uses inappropriate language.

## Physical appearance

### Dressing appropriately and how it affects professionalism

- What impression might a hiring manager have about someone who's dressed in clean, unwrinkled clothing compared to someone who's dressed in dirty or wrinkled clothes?
- What if the company has no stated dress code? How would you figure out what kind of clothing is considered professional?
- Suppose that you work as a member of the cloud IT team at a fashion company in Atlanta that specializes in activewear. Compare that position to working at a high-end fashion company in New York City. Both are fashion businesses, but do you think that their everyday professional clothing will be different?



The following are other questions to consider:

- Do you need to dress up (for example, suit, business casual, or other)?
- How do you express your own personal style?

A high-end fashion company in New York City will look for the latest suits, dresses, and trends. At the activewear house in Atlanta, they will look for the latest athletic shoes and clothing, tech wearables, and the like.

A professional image, as expressed in how you dress, will affect how you work with customers. This situation also includes jobs where you don't talk to customers face to face.

## Physical appearance for the interview

### For a job interview:

- If you can, learn about the company's dress code before the interview.
- Follow the dress code.
- Consider dressing slightly better than the dress code.

**Discussion:** Should you cover up tattoos or remove excessive body jewelry at the interview?



**Now you look like a professional, but can you work with customers like a professional?**

A **dress code** defines the expected clothing standard in an organization. It can vary based on industry.

- For an interview, consider dressing slightly better than the company's dress code.
- For the discussion, consider who the prospective employer is and their public style.

# Professionalism when you work with customers

## What does it mean to be professional when you work with customers?

Here are some characteristics of professionalism. Discuss each characteristic and brainstorm some concrete examples.

- Patience and focus
- Ability to talk in a clear, concise manner (can get to the point quickly)
- Concrete knowledge about the product or service
- Ability to stay calm when the customer is angry and upset
- Ability to read customer cues through their language, attitude, and more
- Ability to write in a clear and concise manner

# Professionalism when you work with customers exercise

## Group exercise

Form groups and discuss the differences between talking to each of the following groups.

What are some of the differences when you talk to the following people?

- Family
- Friends
- Coworkers
- Boss
- Customers

# Professionalism and empathy

## Professionalism also requires being able to relate to someone else's feelings

**Empathy** is the ability to be aware of or to understand the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of other people.

When you are empathetic, it can have many positive effects in your life and work environment.

1. Your coworkers will feel comfortable discussing issues.
2. Other people feel as though they matter.
3. People feel safe discussing sensitive issues.
4. People feel safe admitting mistakes.
5. Being empathetic helps to create an open and communicative environment that can improve the quality of work.



# Professionalism and empathy, continued

## Professionalism and empathy scenario

### Scenario

Sofia rushes into your meeting. She's several minutes late. After putting her laptop on the conference room table, she immediately puts her head in her hands and shakes her head. You also notice a letter that she dropped on the table with the words "Unacceptable, Sofia!" written in red at the top. The handwriting is unmistakable: it's your boss's handwriting. The meeting has started, and no major subjects have been covered yet. What should you do?

- Should you act now or wait until after the meeting?
- What would you say to Sofia? What is the first thing that you should say?
- How can you show genuine concern but also be sensitive to Sofia's privacy?

### Follow-up

How do your actions earn trust among your peers?

## Professionalism in customer satisfaction

### Be customer-obsessed.

#### Start with the customer, and work backward.

Start with what is most important to the customer and work backward to actions that will make it happen. This process can help remove unnecessary activities and bring value to the customer.

Amazonians follow the Leadership Principle of Customer Obsession. You start with the customer and work backward. Amazonians don't start with a product and try to sell it to a customer. Instead, Amazonians obsess about the customer. Customer satisfaction is an important measure of professionalism, and it can also be used to determine the level of customer-centricity.

# Putting it all together

## Two scenarios for discussion

- The confused customer
- The angry customer

## Scenario 1: The confused customer scenario

**Read the scenario. When everyone is finished, discuss which elements of professionalism are appropriate.**

### A billing issue

A customer calls the service center because they are confused by their bill. The sales department told them that they would receive 1 million free invocations that use Lambda each month. The caller thought that there was no way that the programmers would use Lambda more than 1 million times per month. However, the bill for Lambda was more than \$70.

At one point in the call, the customer says, “I should have never started using the cloud! Now, I’m in trouble and I can’t figure it out!”

What do you do, and what elements of professionalism are needed?

## Scenario 1: Analyze the confused customer scenario

### The following are potential challenges:

- **The customer doesn't understand the bill.**
- **The customer might not trust the programmers.**
- **The customer has serious questions about using the cloud.**

### Elements of professionalism

- **Clear communication** – State back the problem to the customer clearly. Build trust by showing that you understand.
- **Product knowledge** – Be able to state, “Yes, you definitely receive 1 million invocations per month at 400,000 GB/s of compute time per month.”
- **Following customer cues** – What does the customer's comment that “I should have never started using the cloud” tell you?
- **Empathy** – Can you relate to the customer's situation of being confused by something that they think is complex?
- **Decision-making** – Which parts of professional decision-making could you use to help the customer? (Hint: Understand the problem, and gather data.)

**Resolution:** By looking into the details, you find that the customer's programmers called Lambda 32.5 million times, with memory settings between 128 MB and 1,024 MB.

## Scenario 1: The confused customer resolution

You clearly communicate that you understand the question about the bill and the customer's confusion. When the customer needs help, you are there to help them.

You look into the details, and you find the following information:

- Lambda was called 32.5 million times.
- Memory settings were between 128 MB and 1,024 MB.
- AWS did cover the first 1 million invocations at 400,000 GB/s of compute time.

You empathize that understanding the bill is a challenge at first, but AWS has tools to help. You explain that you would be happy to send a link to the Lambda calculator so that the customer's programmers can start forecasting their spending. You can also contact the sales team to have them reach out to the customer to help them better understand the bill.

## Scenario 2: The angry customer scenario

**Read the scenario. When everyone is finished, discuss which elements of professionalism are appropriate.**

### A security issue

A customer who handles IT for several medical offices calls the service center, and they are angry.

They explain and shout that their company was led to believe that AWS was compliant with the U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). However, a medical office manager was told that no HIPAA certifications exist for cloud service providers. Now, their customers are threatening to sue because they can't produce a HIPAA compliance report.

They say that they were misled about HIPAA compliance with AWS. They demand to have their data expedited back to them through AWS Snowball.

What professional skills can you use to help this customer?

## Scenario 2: Analyze the angry customer scenario

### The following are potential challenges:

- The customer might not understand AWS compliance.
- The customer is under a large amount of stress.
- The customer made an extreme request to resolve the issue, but it might actually make the situation worse.

### Again: The elements of professionalism

1. **Clear communication** – Similar to the scenario with a confused customer, show that you know and understand the problem.
2. **Patience and focus** – The customer is upset and angry. As a professional, you must remain patient and focused on the customer's needs.
3. **Product knowledge** – You know that customers who require HIPAA compliance use AWS, so there must be a misunderstanding.
4. **Empathy** – How can you relate to the customer and earn trust?
5. **Decision-making** – This situation is complicated. What can you do to start developing a solution?

**Class discussion:** Discuss this scenario as a class. What would you do?





# Thank you



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