

# #ASDNext

## Workplace Relationships

While you may be thinking that the only important part of a job is doing the job itself, the relationships you have with coworkers are also very important. You will likely spend a lot of time with coworkers so understanding how to interact with them is a necessary skill to learn. Below are some questions and answers you may have about workplace relationships.

### CAN I BE FRIENDS WITH MY COWORKERS?

Yes, but this can come with challenges. Being friends with coworkers outside of work is ok, and often very common. However, you will need to remember that when you're at work, you need to be professional and limit personal conversations to certain times and places, like lunch breaks. Also, being friends with coworkers can be hard if that friendship ends. You will still need to be able to work together even if you're not friends anymore.

### WHAT CAN I TALK ABOUT AT WORK?

You can absolutely have "small talk" with coworkers. Good topics include the weather, weekend plans, job tasks, movies, music, sports, and other favorites. There are also inappropriate topics that should not be discussed at work, such as politics, religion, sexuality, and money. Also, using offensive language is not appropriate at work because that behavior is often thought of as unprofessional.

### CAN YOU DATE A COWORKER?

- While work can be a great place to meet people, dating coworkers can lead to challenges. You will need to remember to be respectful at work, including limiting public displays of affection, such as kissing or hugging, and talking about personal or sexual topics. You will also need to think about how you will handle working with the other person if the relationship ends.
- There are some times when dating a coworker is not appropriate. Dating your boss, or someone that you supervise is usually not allowed. Also, some companies may have rules that forbid office romances.

### WHERE AND WHEN CAN I TALK WITH COWORKERS?

While chatting with coworkers is appropriate at work, it does depend on where and when these conversations are happening. Engaging in small talk when you are supposed to be working, are at a meeting, or your boss is around are not good times. However, during breaks or lunch time is perfectly okay. It is also okay to spend time with and talk with coworkers outside of work.

### HOW DO I BECOME FRIENDS WITH COWORKERS?

Becoming friends with coworkers is the same as with anyone else. You need to introduce yourself and begin getting to know them. Ask questions and find common interests. One easy conversation starter is something you already have in common – the job! Just remember to limit personal conversations to times when it is appropriate at work, such as breaks or lunch time.

### WHAT ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA?

It's ok to connect with coworkers on social media. However, be careful what you post! Remember that anything you post about your personal life on social media could be seen by your coworkers. Connecting with your boss on social media should be limited.

*This information sheet was developed by ASERT for #ASDNext.*

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*ASERT is funded by the Bureau of Autism Services, PA Department of Human Services.*