



———— THE EMPLOYEE ————

# Bill of Rights

**A Concise Guide to Employee Rights, Freedoms,  
and Responsibilities in the Modern Workplace.**

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	1
<b>What is an employee right?</b>	2
Employee Right 1 You have the right to prompt payment of the wages promised by your employer.	3
Employee Right 2 You have the right to <i>pursue</i> a better job and better wages.	4
Employee Right 3 You have the right to speakup in the workplace, especially in areas of conscience.	5
Employee Right 4 You have the right to form employee groups.	7
Employee Right 5 You have the right to decide what goes into your own body.	9
<b>Why talk about employee responsibilities?</b>	11
Employee Responsibility 1 You have a duty to use best efforts.	12
Employee Responsibility 2 You have a duty to follow instructions.	13
Employee Responsibility 3 You have a duty to be courteous to your co-workers.	15
Employee Responsibility 4 You have a duty to respect your employer's property.	16
Employee Responsibility 5 You have a duty to keep a good attitude.	17
<b>What if my company can't or won't change?</b>	19

# Introduction

America's work environment is changing faster than ever these days, and not necessarily in a good way. Woke corporations are so busy virtue signaling that they have forgotten to respect and support a significant segment of their workforce. As a result, millions of employees are stuck in frustrating jobs at leftist companies where their personal values are ridiculed, opposing values are crammed down their throats, and they no longer find joy or fulfillment in their work. I have heard, and shared, many of their stories. I have even experienced these circumstances myself.

After growing a successful tech company from 3 employees to several hundred, my board moved on from me as the CEO, because I would not go along with their woke agenda. In order to help others push back against the wokeness that is infecting America's workplaces, I started RedBalloon.work, now the nation's leading pro-freedom job board. We have sprung thousands of hard-working Americans out of their oppressive companies, into jobs where employers respect their values, protect their constitutional rights, and recognize their medical freedoms.

I receive dozens of messages each week from people all over the country, thanking me for what we are doing. But they also ask how they can help in the fight for workplace freedom. In answer to that, I present the *Employee Bill of Rights and Responsibilities* as a tool for reclaiming freedom in America. I hope more and more Americans will take a bold stand for their rights in the workplace, and by doing so, spread their courage to others. If we all push back against tyranny – whether it comes from the Executive Office of the President or the Director of HR – we will be able to get back to the freedom that made our country great in the first place.

“A tool for reclaiming America”

This booklet was written by Laura Baxter, RedBalloon's Labor Lawyer. Laura is a graduate of Harvard Law School and has practiced labor and employment law for over 20 years. She also teaches American Government to college students, encouraging young Americans to vote wisely and be virtuous citizens.

Laura and the rest of us at RedBallon trust that this resource will be helpful to you. Changing your workplace is possible! We are seeing it every day.

- **Andrew Crapuchettes**, CEO and Founder of RedBalloon.work

# What is an employee right?

Everyone likes to be reminded that they have “rights.” But what exactly does that mean? When we speak of “rights,” we are talking about our fundamental freedoms, which are not only the means by which humanity thrives, but a critical component of our human dignity.

We tend to forget that the government does not give us rights. You may be surprised to learn that the First Amendment to the Constitution does not “give” us freedom of religion, or freedom of speech, or any other freedom. As the American Founders taught, our rights pre-date the Constitution. They are a gift from our Creator God, not the government.

Good government will protect our rights. Unfortunately, corrupt governments will trample on our rights rather than protect them. Our Founding Fathers knew this tendency all too well. Thus, the First Amendment was intended to protect our rights *from the government*.

Note that true rights are “negative” in nature. By “negative,” I mean that true rights generally involve leaving people alone. True rights do not cost money to implement. They do not force anyone else to do anything for you. People often talk about the “right” to certain goods and services, for example, healthcare or housing. As mentioned earlier, that is a misuse of the term. If someone else – for example, the taxpaying public -- is forced to provide you with goods or services, or to pay for them on your behalf, that is not a true right. True rights encourage personal responsibility, rather than undermine it. True rights lead to freedom.

This *Employee Bill of Rights and Responsibilities* is intended to distill what we at RedBalloon believe to be our fundamental workplace freedoms. Some of the rights below are protected by law, some are partially protected, and some are not protected at all yet. Regardless, because our rights do not come from the government, we can claim them despite the lack of current legal protection. We hope you champion them as your birthright.

## You have the right to prompt payment of the wages promised by your employer.

It is important to understand the basis of the employee-employer relationship. Your employer needs labor, and you need money. You exchange your labor for money. You have the right to the fruits of your labor, at the rate decided between you and your employer. Otherwise, you are nothing more than a slave.

There are many places where it is appropriate to donate your labor. For example, you may work countless hours in the home, caring for your family. You may volunteer your time for your church or neighborhood. You may even wear yourself out in pursuit of a favorite hobby. These activities satisfy your need for meaning, for community, and for fun.

Your employer is not responsible for providing you with meaning, community, or fun. A good employer may provide some of these things, some of the time, but they are under no duty to do so. Nonetheless, your employer is obligated to pay you for your work. This is a moral obligation recognized by the Bible, which harshly condemns employers who withhold wages from their employees. It is also a right recognized by American law.

If your employer is not paying you promptly, as agreed, you have several legal remedies available. You can find a lawyer to file a lawsuit on your behalf. However, lawyers cost money, and the amount of unpaid wages may not be enough to justify a lawyer. In that case, you can file a complaint with the federal Department of Labor (<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/contact/local-offices>) or with your state labor board.

Sometimes, state and federal laws interfere with the right of employers and employees to negotiate wages. This happens, for example, with minimum wage laws. There are many studies indicating that minimum wage laws actually hurt employees who are trying to get work experience. Nonetheless, state and even local governments are forcing the minimum wage higher and higher, way beyond what the market can bear.

Similarly, our laws severely restrict which employees can be paid on a salary. By law, most employees must be paid by the hour. There is no moral reason why employees should be blocked from freely agreeing to be paid by salary, or from freely agreeing to be paid less than minimum wage while gaining work experience. These are examples of how employee rights do not always overlap with employee legal protections (so-called).

In contrast, there is a strong moral reason for employers to pay employees what they have promised, and for this right to be protected by law. The first time your employer misses a paycheck, speak up! And then find a new employer.

## EMPLOYEE RIGHT 2

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# You have the right to *pursue* a better job and better wages.

Since 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution has outlawed slavery in the United States. This means that no one can force you to work for them. Thus, if you are not happy with your position or wages, you have the right to look for a better deal – whether at your current company or a different one.

In America, employment is generally at-will. This means that either you or your employer can end the relationship at any time, for any reason. While employers may not terminate employees for a discriminatory reason – there are civil rights laws against that – employees have no such restrictions. If you don't like your job, you can leave. You don't have to give a reason. As an employee, this is your ultimate bargaining chip, especially if you are good at what you do.

**“As an employee, this is your ultimate bargaining chip.”**

Some employees, particularly at the executive level, may be subject to an employment agreement. These agreements generally promise severance pay at the end of employment. If the executive quits in violation of the agreement, he may lose the right to severance. But even then, no employment agreement can force someone to keep working for a particular company.

Note that employees do not have the right to a particular job or a certain rate of pay. Remember, true rights are “negative” in nature. Your employer cannot force you to stay, and you cannot force them to keep you. Nor can you force them to pay you what you think you deserve. This is what a free labor market means. You are not entitled to your dream job – but you do have the right to keep improving your skills, and to pursue increasingly better positions.

Exercising your right to pursue a better job can be intimidating. It requires brutal honesty about your current situation. What skills and experiences do you bring to the table? What openings are available in your field, and for what pay? Do you need additional training to be more competitive? The answers may surprise you. Free people do not have to sit around and complain about their jobs. Free people can work to make their dreams a reality.

**EMPLOYEE RIGHT**

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## You have the right to speak up in the workplace, especially in areas of conscience.

The First Amendment – at least on paper – protects our speech from government interference. But what about private employers? Can they restrict your speech? The answer is a little complicated.

Government authority is different from the authority of your boss at work. The government has the power to fine you, or put you in jail, or even execute you for capital crimes. The worst your boss can do is fire you. In addition, as we have seen above, you can leave your job at any time (as long as you accept the consequences). You cannot “opt out” of government oversight. For this reason, the American Founders protected our speech from the government, but not from private companies. This is why platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Amazon have been able to silence speech through shadow-banning and cancelling certain content.

When there is only one voice, the truth is easily silenced. But when there are many voices, truth has a fighting chance to be heard. None of us is perfect – no individual, no company, no government. We need the free exchange of ideas in order to see our mistakes and grow in wisdom. This is why we should stand up for free speech every chance we get, whether or not it is protected by law.

You should know that freedom of speech is not absolute. There is no right, moral or legal, to hurt people by malicious falsehoods. There is no right, moral or legal, to subject others to obscenity. These are just some of the limitations that the Supreme Court has recognized in its interpretation of the First Amendment.

In addition, the workplace itself places certain limitations on speech. Remember that your employer is paying you to work. You do not have the right to chit-chat while you should be working. You do not have the right to bother other employees while they are working. You have no right to insult customers, or to argue endlessly with your boss. Your employer is not required to lose money for the sake of employee self-expression.

What about employee speech that does not interfere with business operations? As noted above, employee free speech is not explicitly protected by law. With certain exceptions (discussed below), an employer can legally tell you to shut up or leave. However, a harsh approach to employee speech is not wise. It is disrespectful to employees and erodes morale. It also cuts off ideas that could help improve and grow the business. Freedom-loving employers will respect employee speech, even if the law does not require them to do so.

**“Freedom-loving employers will respect employee speech, even if the law does not require them to do so.”**

Employee “speech” may be non-verbal. For example, you might wear a religious symbol, or display slogans in your personal work area. Note that your employer may have legitimate reasons to restrict dress or decoration. These could include customer expectations, or safety requirements. But again, as long as the employee does not interfere with business operations, freedom-loving employers will respect employee self-expression.

Certain forms of employee expression are protected by civil rights laws. Under the federal Civil Rights Act, employers cannot discriminate against employees based on race, sex, religion, and other categories. This means your employer cannot treat you differently because you celebrate Christmas, for example. For more information on legally-protected categories, see <https://www.eeoc.gov/discrimination-type>, or the civil rights agency for your state.



If your boss selectively targets your speech or expression based on a protected category, you may have a legal claim. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, it may not be worth hiring an attorney. But you could certainly make a complaint to your company's HR department. While civil rights laws protect some forms of speech, they prohibit others. For example, it is unlawful to engage in speech that could be considered harassment based on a protected category. This means, for example, that you could get into legal trouble for racial jokes or unwanted sexual comments. Or someone could complain to HR about you! For more information on speech that is prohibited by civil rights laws, see <https://www.eeoc.gov/harassment>, or the civil rights agency for your state.

So how can you champion free speech in the workplace? Use your voice. If HR sends out a survey, say what you think. If someone asks about your weekend, tell them how much you enjoyed church. Decline to share your pronouns, and decline to celebrate Pride Week. Instead, display the symbols and slogans that represent your values. And when you have an idea or complaint to share, communicate it honestly and respectfully.

## EMPLOYEE RIGHT **4**

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# You have the right to form employee groups.

As Americans, we love our independence. We tend to forget how much we need each other. In fact, a big reason to speak up for workplace freedom, is to encourage co-workers who may be feeling alone. Two or three employees with similar values, who band together, can accomplish much more than a single voice in the dark.

The First Amendment to the Constitution protects orderly group activity, as a companion to the freedoms of speech, assembly, and petition. Again, the First Amendment is concerned with interference by the government, not private companies. Yet the ability to associate together, without interference, is a precious right that we should champion wherever possible.

As with employee speech, there are natural limits to employee association. Your employer is not paying you to socialize. Employee groups should meet after hours, or during a common lunch break. It is possible your employer will allow you to meet onsite, but they are not required to do so. Of course, we at RedBalloon encourage freedom-loving employers to support employee groups, provided business operations are not impaired.

Unlike purely social clubs, employee groups that seek to improve working conditions are protected by law. Since 1935, the National Labor Relations Act has been used to protect union activity. But you do not have to be part of a union to use it. If your employee group is seeking workplace change, and your employer tries to shut you down, you may have a legal claim. The simplest way to pursue your claim is to file a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board. For more information, see <https://www.nlrb.gov/about-nlrb/rights-we-protect/whats-law>.

**“Employee groups that seek to improve working conditions are protected by law.”**

With just one or two other like-minded employees, you can form a group to pursue pro-freedom change in the workplace. Your group can present petitions to management, either in writing or in person. Potential topics include repealing vaccine mandates and other COVID restrictions, where not required by law; allowing employees to opt out of LGBTQ / Pride displays; permitting expression related to Christmas or Christian belief; enhanced maternity / paternity leave (especially if the company pays for abortion travel); and allowing employees to skip training sessions that promote Critical Race Theory. You can even ask for old-fashioned raises while you are at it.

The fact that employee group action is protected, does not mean that your employer will agree with you. There is no law requiring your employer to change just because you and a couple friends asked. Nonetheless, the law does protect you from retaliation for engaging in this activity. Your employer cannot discipline, threaten, or fire you for acting with your co-workers to address workplace issues.

Perhaps you are intimidated by the thought of starting an employee group. In that case, just focus on getting to know your co-workers better. During breaks or other down time, ask them questions about their interests and hobbies. Organize an office party or other celebration. Suggest an activity outside of work that several co-workers might enjoy together. If your co-workers have families, invite them over for a barbecue. Such activities can promote mutual understanding and a healthier workplace, even without direct confrontation.



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# You have the right to decide what goes into your own body.

God has given each of us a body. These bodies come with the right – and responsibility – to care for them as we think best. Within the choices available to us, we decide what to eat and drink. We decide whether to pursue or decline medical treatment. And we accept the consequences of our decisions. This is what it means to be a mature adult. When someone forces us to eat, drink, or accept medical treatment against our will, it diminishes our human dignity.

There are limits, of course. We have no right to use our bodies in a way that harms other people, including the preborn. In addition, some individuals do not have the mental capacity to make their own decisions, and require a guardian to do so for them. But under normal circumstances, people have the right to bodily integrity.

The American Founders recognized this right in the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution, which protects us from the unreasonable search and seizure of our bodies. Again, the Fourth Amendment protects us from intrusion by the government, not from private companies. As discussed above, employees can change jobs, which makes employer coercion less serious than government coercion. Nonetheless, there are moral grounds to champion the freedom to make decisions about our own bodies, whether or not this freedom is legally protected.

During the recent COVID scare, an astounding number of companies required their employees to receive experimental vaccines and boosters, and to undergo invasive testing. Some employees felt they had no choice but to comply, due to their economic and family circumstances. Other employees refused and suffered the consequences. We have heard many of your stories, and they are heartbreaking.

At this time, your right to refuse an employer vaccine mandate is only partially protected. There are two legally-recognized bases for objecting to employer vaccine mandates: religion (protected by the federal Civil Rights Act); and medical condition (protected by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act). If a request for vaccine waiver is based on religious or medical grounds, the employer must reasonably accommodate it.

**“If a request for vaccine waiver is based on religious or medical grounds, the employer must reasonably accommodate it.”**

Note that your employer is not required to waive the vaccine just because you ask. There will probably be forms for you to fill out. For medical disability, you will need to find a doctor who supports your need for an exemption, and obtain a doctor's note. For sincere religious belief, you will need to clearly explain the religious basis for your objection. Your pastor may be able to help you articulate a strong religious argument.

Even then, your employer is not obligated to automatically waive the vaccine. Instead, your employer will engage in a dialogue or “interactive process” with you, to see whether you can be “reasonably accommodated without an undue hardship.” You may be asked to take additional precautions such as masks, face shields, and social distancing. It is also possible that, if your client population is deemed to be too vulnerable, your request will be denied. For the deep dive, see <https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws#K>.

This is an area where freedom-loving Americans must work for change. We must put public pressure on employers not to require any substance or medical procedure, unless absolutely critical to business operations. We must push employers to accommodate and support conscientious objectors, even where the objection is not legally-protected. And, of course, we must not vote for any politician who is eager to violate our bodily integrity.

# Why talk about employee responsibilities?

The American Founders knew that rights come with responsibilities. People who follow their own selfish emotions and desires, unrestrained by any sense of duty, are unstable. And they make society unstable. Families, churches, and other civic organizations fall apart. There is no source of strength to push back on the government and keep it in its proper place. Limited government is only possible where the people practice virtue and self-control.

Without virtue, people become more and more dependent on the government to enable their decadent lifestyles. Who needs fatherhood, when the government gives welfare to single moms? Why practice chastity, when the government subsidizes birth control and abortion? Public school may not promote your values, exactly, but at least it's free! And isn't it great that grandma has Social Security and Medicare, so she can keep living all alone. Thus the government provides ever more social services, and gains ever more power. It's hard for citizens to complain about government interference, when we allow the government to coddle us from cradle to grave.

In a similar way, if you are a poor employee, your complaints about employee "rights" have little credibility. Your employer may have no choice but to micro-manage you, just to get the job done. And your employer may be fully justified in disciplining you, or firing you.

**“If you are a poor employee, your complaints about employee “rights” have little credibility.”**

We at RedBalloon encourage freedom-loving employees to embrace a strong work ethic, which includes certain basic duties in the workplace. The more you embrace these duties, the greater your platform to argue for your rights. In addition, if you take your employee duties seriously, you are less likely to be fired, and more likely to be promoted.

So where do employee duties come from? Just as our rights come from our Creator, so do our duties. They are also supported by common sense, and my own personal experience. As a labor lawyer for 20 years, I have done damage control for hundreds of troubled workplaces. When an employee is fired, or an employer is sued, you can bet someone has neglected one of the duties below.

As with employee rights, some employee duties are enforceable by law, and some are not. By this point you should be aware that what is legal, and what is moral, do not always overlap. This is not necessarily a bad thing. We don't want the government legislating every little duty.

In a perfect workplace, the employer would respect the rights of the employees, and the employees would take their duties seriously. Of course, there is no perfect workplace in our fallen world, and no perfect employees either. My conscience pinched me several times while preparing this section of the booklet!

I hope that this list does not discourage you, but instead motivates you to model the change you want to see in your workplace.

## **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY** *I*

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# You have a duty to use best efforts.

You have a duty to use your best efforts at work. This duty applies no matter how menial the task, or how low the pay. You may not think your employer deserves your full attention. Fine, start looking for another job! But in the meantime, give this job all you've got.

What do best efforts look like? Showing up reliably and on time is a good start. Chronic tardiness tells your employer that work is not a priority. So does calling out at the last minute. Entry-level employees tend to have poor attendance, which leads to high turnover and manager headaches. By faithfully coming to work, day by day, you will outlast your co-workers and distinguish yourself for the next promotion.

Your dress will also show how seriously you take your job. Company dress codes range from formal to casual. Find out what your employer expects you to wear, and then wear it. You may not be able to afford expensive clothes, but everyone can keep their clothes clean and neat.

While at work, avoid distractions. Put your phone in your backpack or purse and forget about it. If your job involves sitting at a computer, close all programs not related to work. Some jobs may have cycles of down time. If that is the case, ask your boss for tasks that you can do while you wait. Or use that time to study and improve your skills. Only engage in personal pursuits if there are no productive options (i.e., you are being paid to be “on call”), and your boss allows it.

Be willing to take on additional work, and to make sacrifices. Show that you care about completing tasks efficiently and correctly. This does not mean you never push back. If you have family obligations or other time limitations, let your manager know so that work can be reassigned. If you don't feel competent in a particular skill, again, let your manager know. Then take advantage of any training that is offered.

When you put your heart into your work, it shows. More than that, it shines! You are making things better for your customers, your co-workers, and your boss. Such efforts tend to be rewarded with more responsibility, and higher pay. A hard day's work will also give the satisfaction of true accomplishment, which is its own reward.

## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY 2

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# You have a duty to follow instructions.

Authority is a dirty word these days. As Americans, we put a high value on free expression and – at least according to Disney – following our hearts. Yet, when you accept a position with your employer, you are also accepting their authority. Never forget that you are being paid by your employer, to perform work on your employer's property, using your employer's equipment. Your employer is responsible for making the financial and operational decisions that will determine whether you still have a job.

If you don't like this arrangement, start your own business! We at RedBalloon support entrepreneurs of all sizes. Take a candid look at the skills and equipment that you already own, or that you can realistically obtain. Start a side hustle, and test the market for what you have to offer.

It's exciting to be your own boss, to free yourself from Corporate America. Of course, there are many risks involved. It will be your responsibility to evaluate and surmount these risks, just as your employer does today.

But until you make the jump to self-employment, you have a duty to follow your employer's instructions. This means doing things the way your employer wants them, not how you want them. If your employer asks employees to park in the back lot, don't park in the front. If the company dress code requires closed-toe shoes, don't wear flip-flops. Some companies have a lot of paperwork. The paperwork may be tedious. Complete it on time anyway.

If you have ideas that you think will improve the business, let your boss know, respectfully. He may really like your ideas and implement them right away. Or, your boss may ignore your ideas and keep using the older, inefficient methods. Your responsibility to follow instructions does not change. Remember, it is always possible your boss knows things that you don't.

**“Remember, it is always possible your boss knows things that you don't.”**

There are exceptions to the general rule. While respecting your employer's authority, you should never violate your conscience. If your employer asks you to do something unethical or illegal, refuse. Period. If your boss insists, you may need to report the incident, either to higher-ups at the company or to government authorities.

Sometimes your conscience may put you in the minority. For example, you may be opposed to the COVID vaccine, or Critical Race training, or displaying Pride stickers. Take the time to explain your reasoning to your manager. If a religious or medical accommodation is available, request it from Human Resources. Ultimately, your duty to obey your conscience trumps any duty to obey your employer.

The good news is that, the more you respect your employer's authority on day-to-day matters, the more likely your employer will respect your opinions and beliefs. This respect will serve you well whether you remain on the job, or whether you launch out on your own.



## You have a duty to be courteous to your co-workers.

Your co-workers are human beings worthy of respect. You don't have to love your co-workers, or even like them. But you do need to meet minimum standards of politeness. Think of the many hours you spend together, and how much you impact each other's quality of life. This is where the Golden Rule comes in – treat your co-workers the way you want to be treated.

When it comes to harmonious workplace relations, the most dangerous enemy is the tongue. It is so easy to snap, to criticize and argue, to complain, to gossip. If you are prone to talk before thinking, start working on that problem today! Practice pausing before speaking, especially if you are feeling frustrated. No matter how bad things get, there is no excuse for yelling, name-calling, or using profanity at your co-workers.

Flippant comments, in particular, can bring legal trouble to you and your employer. Under federal and state anti-harassment laws, words which are racially or sexually offensive can create an unlawful "hostile work environment." I have seen employers pay tens of thousands of dollars – sometimes more – to resolve harassment lawsuits. Many of these lawsuits could have been avoided if the individuals involved had tamed their tongues. If a joke is off-color or demeaning, it has no place at work.

Speaking of sex harassment, I do not recommend looking for romance at work. In addition to heartache and embarrassment, workplace dating can lead to legal trouble. Consensual romantic relationships between co-workers are not unlawful per se. However, problems arise when one person wants a relationship, and the other person does not. Wires are easily crossed. Your romantic comments and grand gestures may be unappreciated – and trigger a lawsuit. For this reason, when interacting with co-workers of the opposite sex, I recommend keeping things light and professional. There are less treacherous places to find a life partner.

Every day, take time to intentionally bless your co-workers. If your load is light, pitch in and help someone else. Remember birthdays. Bake cookies! Give genuine compliments, especially if a co-worker does a good job on a shared project. And if a co-worker screws up, show grace.

The world can be a harsh place. Brighten your part of it, by showing kindness in your workplace.

## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY 4

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# You have a duty to respect your employer's property.

Obviously, you shouldn't embezzle accounts receivable, loot the warehouse, or pilfer the cash box. Your employer can (and should) call the cops if this occurs. But there are other, more subtle ways to steal from your employer.

Your employer provides equipment and resources for you to do your job. These may include power tools, vehicles, computers, cell phones, and office supplies. Unless you have permission, do not "borrow" company equipment or use it for personal activities. This is a form of stealing. And if your company provides you with a gas or credit card, use it only as directed.

Never falsify your time records, or say that you were on the job when you were not. This constitutes stealing time (i.e., wages) from your employer. Don't take excessive breaks, and don't linger over lunch if you are on the clock. Some employees work remotely or without direct supervision. If this is your situation, you must resist the temptation to pad your time, or to make personal side trips while supposedly working.

**“Resist the temptation to pad your time, or to make personal side trips while supposedly working.”**

In addition, you have a duty of loyalty to your employer. This means not stealing customers, and not running a competitive side business. If you are being paid to generate business opportunities, they belong to the company. Client contacts, proprietary formulas, and other confidential information also belong to your employer. You have a duty to keep employer confidences, and you should not use them to benefit yourself or a competitor. This is unethical and can also get you into legal trouble.

What happens if you decide to go out on your own, or accept a job with a competing company? Some employees sign employment agreements that restrict their right to compete for a period of time (usually 12 months) post-employment. If this is your situation, talk to an attorney first. But if you did not sign such an agreement, you are free to compete. Just make sure that you do not use any confidential or proprietary information belonging to your prior employer. You can try to beat your prior employer at their own game, but you will need to develop your own resources.

Your employer owes you your wages, nothing more. If you feel that your wages are insufficient, do not resort to self-help to make up the difference. It's not worth sacrificing your integrity or risking your reputation. Instead, talk to your employer -- or look for another position.

## EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY 5

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# You have a duty to keep a good attitude.

This duty – the duty of cheerfulness – is perhaps the most difficult. Yet it has great power for change. In fact, all the other duties depend upon it. How can you be kind to co-workers, while mumbling curses under your breath? How can you use best efforts, while meditating on the failures of your crappy boss? When paired with a bad attitude, superficially moral behavior is nothing more than hypocrisy. Virtue starts in your heart and mind.

Truly, there are many aspects of work that are frustrating. And your job may be worse than average. Are you supposed to ignore everything that is wrong? Do you have the duty to be a Pollyanna? Well, no. But it is possible to maintain a cheerful demeanor in the midst of chaos and confusion. Not easy – but possible. In fact, it is necessary.

The first step is to view your job realistically. We already discussed the transactional nature of employment. You provide the labor, and your employer provides the cold, hard cash. Don't expect work to fill the hunger of your heart. As long as they pay you, you have a reason to be thankful.

Somehow we forget work is supposed to be uncomfortable and frustrating, at least some of the time. Your employer knows labor is difficult, that's why they pay you. If work was like a spa day, you would be paying them for the privilege.

The second step is to view yourself realistically. I'm sure you are talented and highly skilled. You follow RedBalloon, after all! But your desires can be thwarted, and you can make mistakes. So don't take yourself too seriously. Be faithful in your assignment, but recognize that the results are out of your control. This frees you to enjoy the moment. When something unexpected happens, try laughing – a good alternative to getting upset.

What does a good attitude look like, on a practical level? The happy person is eager to work. He doesn't groan or moan or sigh or complain. He shows an interest in the company, always desiring to learn and improve. When things get tough, he looks for the silver lining. He greets his co-workers with a smile.

**“The happy person is eager to work.”**

Perversely, many of our labor laws encourage employees to complain. Your right to accuse your employer, bosses and co-workers is enshrined by law, and your employer is forbidden from taking any action against you. This is true whether or not your complaint has any basis in reality. I can tell you from personal experience, no offense is too small to be investigated by HR and/or government bureaucrats.

Our complaint-driven legal system is good for lawyers, but terrible for business. I have seen people make far more money by complaining than by working. If you have a legitimate beef, go ahead and raise it in a respectful manner. But resist the temptation to become a chronic whiner. This is one area where freedom-loving employees can really stand out. Your default expression should be happy.

# What if my company can't or won't change?

We believe it is possible for you – either by yourself or with others – to make a difference in your workplace. That is why we have prepared this booklet.

At the same time, you are a finite human being. Many things at your company are outside your control and above your pay grade. You are only responsible to do what you can, within the limits of your particular circumstances. It is possible that, despite your best efforts, your employer responds negatively. We know that happens sometimes. Some of you have even been fired, just for trying to make things better.

If your company refuses to change, there are still things that you can do to improve your own situation. Here are some ideas:

- Decide when it is time to leave. Be honest about your skills and alternate employment options.
- Have 90 days of savings in the bank. This is your safety net in case your employment ends abruptly.
- Seek counsel from people who are aligned with your values. Talk to wise friends, co-workers, and church leaders. If you are married, make sure your spouse is fully included in the decision-making process.
- If you have been fired, consult with any attorney to see if you have legal recourse.

Finally, make sure to apply for jobs on [RedBalloon.work](https://RedBalloon.work)! More and more employers are looking for freedom-loving candidates like you. And when you find your new – and better – position, make sure to encourage others by sharing your story.

We are rooting for you!



[RedBalloon.work](http://RedBalloon.work)