

101 ways to dead-end your Nanotech job

1: Never prioritize
Hey, everything you do is important.

THE REAL DEAL: If you constantly do things that you like to do before completing tasks that are either urgent or necessary to finish before others can do their work, you may not be around for long.

2: Non-verbal communication doesn't matter, it's what you say that makes an impression

People aren't aware of their bodies when they talk, so why pay attention to body language?

THE REAL DEAL: Ninety percent of communication is non-verbal. Non-verbal information either supports or contradicts the verbal. Leaders look for body language such as head nods that show interest (support) or avoidance of eye contact that indicates dishonesty (contradiction). Being savvy about body language can put you on the fast track to success.

3: Chronically show up late
Your time is valuable. Don't let others waste it – always arrive 10 minutes after start time.

THE REAL DEAL: Everyone has an occasional lunch or errand that runs long, but if you habitually arrive late, you'll be branded as undependable. Even if the amount of time is "only a few minutes," time management (or mis-management) is often a measure of whether or not you get a promotion or demotion (or a layoff). Showing up late at meetings not only throws off schedules, it indicates an attitude of disrespect toward others' time and efforts. Always let someone know if you are unavoidably detained.

4: Lie to your boss when the news is bad

But it's okay to inflate good news – everyone does it.

THE REAL DEAL: Always be scrupulously honest with your boss. Both actively (tell the truth) and passively (fix misunderstandings). Never let him or her be blindsided by having someone else reveal a message you should have shared. Part of every person's job is helping your boss look good. It doesn't hurt to extend that courtesy to coworkers and reports, as well.

5: Be political

It's a dog-eat-dog world, and everyone has a hidden agenda. Don't let them get ahead of you.

THE REAL DEAL: Backstabbing, self-centered behavior, spreading rumors—all these behaviors define office politics. None of them will help you succeed or become a better person. They hurt team performance and muddy the work environment. Earn and deserve others' respect, and they will help you succeed in many ways. Be positive, not political.

6: Misery loves company

Keeping emotions inside ends up hurting you. Whine to a wide variety of co-workers so they can lift your morale.

THE REAL DEAL: An atmosphere of constant complaint lowers morale, but more than that, it lowers your value to your boss. Cynicism and griping are only funny in the comic section of the newspaper. Try to keep your attitude upbeat and positive. Having a bad day? Try to remain neutral.

7: Keep everyone in the email loop

Don't make people mad by leaving them out when you promote sales of your kid's sports team candy.

THE REAL DEAL: Using the company email to promote candy sales for your kid's activities may seem harmless, but using company time and resources to promote your interests is a bad practice. Resist the temptation to sell by email (solicitation may be against company policy and could get you fired).

8: Be a social butterfly

Never leave anyone out when you make the round of cubicles sharing a story or two. People will get jealous if you pass them by.

THE REAL DEAL: Everyone can get sidetracked when discussing a favorite subject, but coworkers may be too polite to tell you they're bored with overlong discussions, especially about subjects other than work. Keep conversations (in person, on the phone, in email or IM) appropriate, on work, and short. Respect others' time.

9: Be the first to shine

Take all the credit for yourself. Toot your horn loud and proud. How else will anyone know what you've accomplished?

THE REAL DEAL: Only take the credit you deserve. Your boss will soon figure out if you take recognition belonging to others, but other employees will know immediately and resent or dislike you for it. Leaders give appropriate acknowledgment; effective coworkers share credit when it's due. Conversely, shoulder any blame you deserve.

In communications about others and yourself (written or verbal), always mention the other person (or people) first and yourself last (Frank Doe and I completed the task).

10: Don't bother planning

The best ideas spring up spontaneously – don't waste your valuable time with boring preparations.

THE REAL DEAL: Don't go to work without any idea of how you'll start the day. Increase your effectiveness by taking a few minutes at the end of each day, when priorities are fresh in mind, to plan your actions/tasks for the next day. Write them down. Ink is more permanent than memory.

Also, planning helps you recognize and anticipate potential roadblocks to your forward progress or the completion of a project. You'll be able to better figure out what threats and weaknesses could hinder forward momentum and forestall them.

11: Be an email hero

Respond immediately to every email.

THE REAL DEAL: If you spend your time responding quickly to emails, your productivity will fall by the wayside. People may think you're amazingly responsive, but being effective in your job is more important to your career. Remember your goals for the day and schedule time to answer emails.

12: Relax the gang with humor

Did you hear the joke about...

THE REAL DEAL: Humor is a great tension reliever and relationship builder but like any trait can be taken too far. Don't become the annoying jokester. Keep your humor appropriate: off-color, racially or sexually targeted, political or religious jokes are offensive and can lead to harassment charges or disciplinary actions.

13: Don't care about your work

Attachment to what you do is for morons. Companies don't care about you, why should you care about them or the work you do for them?

THE REAL DEAL: If your attitude toward your work is poor, your work will be perceived as poor. If you are enthusiastic and show you enjoy and take pride in what you do, your co-workers will appreciate you and your efforts. It's important that others respect the work you do.

14: Miss deadlines

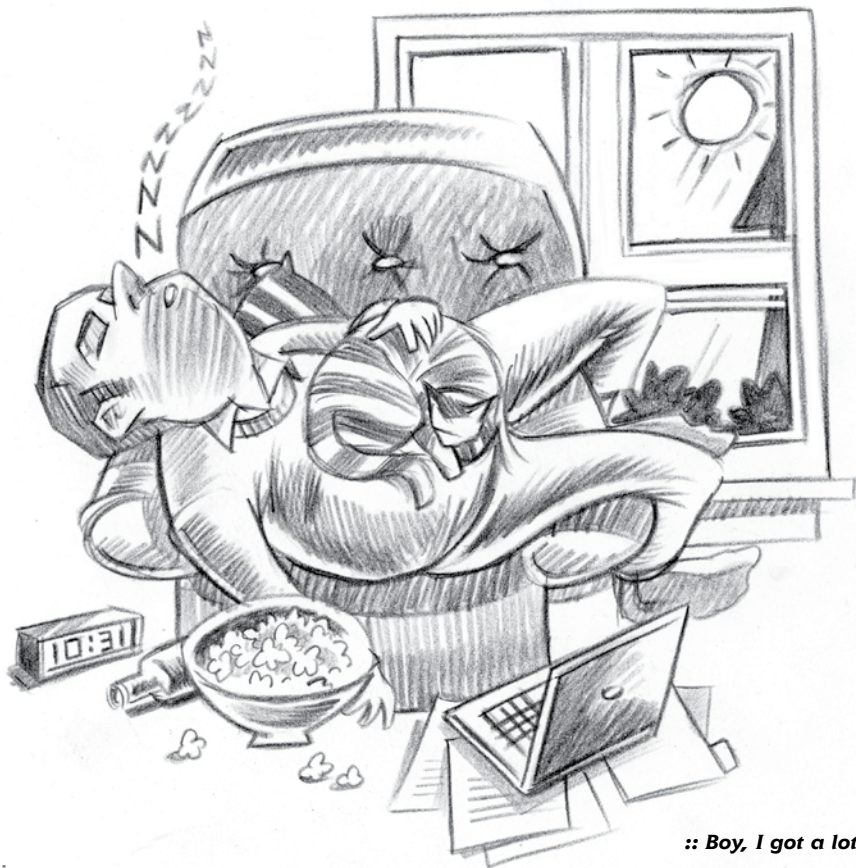
So what if people depend on you, you didn't set the unreasonable expectation. If your work is only a little bit late, smile and say, "better late, than never."

THE REAL DEAL: People need to depend on you. If you miss deadlines, your teammates will suffer anxiety and possibly need to do extra work. Even if everything turns out fine, they will remember. Be the person who finishes on time or early. Even more impressive add "under budget" to your accomplishment. Never, however, compromise quality over quantity.

15: Show how much you know by sharing "secrets"

Let everyone know you're important and in the loop.

THE REAL DEAL: Habitual gossipers do get reputations for not being able to keep things confidential. Gossip can hurt feelings, reputations, your company, and your career advancement opportunities.



:: *Boy, I got a lot done*

16: Nanotech workers can't say the word "no" too often

Don't be a push-over who everyone takes advantage of. Push back and let them know you are too busy to take on all their requests.

THE REAL DEAL: Those who spread an attitude of negativity soon become the person to avoid. And the path of avoidance rarely leads you upward. Good communication tactics include, "I'd be glad to do this after I complete X and X projects," and "I wish I could do this for you immediately, however, right now I'm in the middle of..."

17: Misuse your work-from-home privilege

Always say, "Boy, I got a lot done!" even if all you did was watch TV all day.

THE REAL DEAL: If you work from home, do a full day's worth of work. People will note your productivity levels, especially if it impacts their work or they can't reach you during the day.

18: Be everybody's best friend - share your personal life

Treat coworkers as fraternity brothers or sorority sisters - keep up-to-date on all their news. You are fascinating - let everyone know why.

THE REAL DEAL: It's great to be on good terms with co-workers, but treat them as professionals. Most people do not care about your personal life but are too polite to say so. Don't prattle on about yourself or your life unless you want to bore others or open yourself to behind-your-back ridicule. Be friendly, but listen for follow-up questions, which usually indicate genuine interest. At work, not everyone is or wants to be your best buddy. Keep your personal life at home.

19: **Burn your bridges**

Heck, if you leave, you'll never see those losers again. Besides, maybe the crummy company can improve if you let them know how bad they are.

THE REAL DEAL: Even in large cities Nanotech is a small community. You'll never know who knows who; who will change jobs, or who will be promoted. Imagine having someone you bad-mouthed suddenly become your boss.

20: **Find out how many times you can say "ya'know" in one sentence**

Show you are, like, in the know and totally current by using, like, the most, like "in" phrase. Like, a lot.

THE REAL DEAL: Verbal tics and conversational padding (e.g.: sorta, kinda) quickly become annoying and can flatten any point you are trying to make. They also lend an unprofessional aspect to the person using them. Shed "like," "man," and other fillers from your speech. Be clear and concise so everyone understands your message.

21: **Cultivate procrastination**

Wait until the last minute to begin a project, because you never know when things will change again.

THE REAL DEAL: Indulging this bad habit (which includes dragging your feet on a new task or working really hard to make everything perfect, absolutely perfect) causes you undue stress, reduces the quality of your work, and puts you on the no-road to advancement.

Discover why you procrastinate. Usual causes are: lack of clarity (or goals or standards) for the task, underestimating time or difficulty, and perfectionism. Recognize what derails you and strive to improve your effectiveness.

22: **Never volunteer**

You have enough work to do—besides—no one else is jumping in to take on the task.

THE REAL DEAL: When no one else rises to an occasion, you have the opportunity to shine and to show you care. You will be seen as willing and filled with the desire to take the extra step. Be sure your skills will help you succeed in a volunteer project and don't display cockiness or over-confidence.

23: **Be mean to people**

Why bother saying "hi" to the silly receptionist? And blowing up over a co-worker's mistake lets people know that YOU know what is right.

THE REAL DEAL: Being nice is common courtesy, easy, and reduces stress. Your own and others'. Successful people know that support staff talk with managers all the time and can share favorable (or unfavorable) comments impressions.

24: **Abuse your sick leave**

Use all your sick leave for eye trouble: "I" just can't see working today...

THE REAL DEAL: At companies without a rollover policy, managers notice sick leaves increase dramatically at the end of the year. They also figure out other sick leave abuses. If you have a legitimate reason to use your sick leave, do so. But don't cheat or you will be branded as untrustworthy. Attendance policies go a long way when it comes to performance reviews.

25: **Don't offer solutions to problems**

You aren't paid to fix problems, just equipment in the laboratory. Take your problems to the boss or a coworker to fix.

THE REAL DEAL: You will be branded as a complainer. If you'd like to get ahead, become a person who can think of potential solutions (even if they may not be the exactly correct ones), is seen as a team player and helpful. You'll be recognized for thinking things through (always a strategy for success).

26: **Believe books are only for school**

You are a professional. You read enough in school. That's over. So is reading.

THE REAL DEAL: As a professional, you have more reasons to read than when you were in school. Read trade publications and industry periodicals as well as general science magazines to stay current. Get a broad view of the world by reading topics in sociology, history, politics, and more to inform yourself and your work. Reading enriches your knowledge and gives enhancement to your career skills.

27: **Watch out for those with different opinions**

Everything you know or believe is right. Those who don't agree are trouble-makers.

THE REAL DEAL: Keep an open mind about actions and motives. Understand that not everything you know or believe is right. Question your assumptions and expectations – they may not be in alignment with the assumptions and expectations others hold.

28: **Surround yourself with losers so you look good**

A shiny penny stands out from a brunch of tarnished ones.

THE REAL DEAL: Successful people gather other successful people around them; they know the benefit of good role models, good values, and good life and work principles (which are factors in making people successful). On the other hand, there are workers whose skills need some polish. Thinking of others as losers spreads negativity. Helping them to grow helps you and the team.

29: **Don't bother to listen**

Especially in meetings. Most people can't get to the point. Someone else can give you a summary.

THE REAL DEAL: Not everyone is fun to listen to, but actively listen anyway. Indicate interest with questions, nods, and eye contact. Active listening doesn't mean you agree with what is being said, it acknowledges the speaker. In one-on-one conversations, offer feedback that helps you understand the message, paraphrase, ask questions, and summarize. Stay off personal electronic devices during meetings.

30: **Organization is for those without a real life**

A clean desk looks like you don't have anything to do or aren't doing anything. An apple core and bread crumbs let people know you are even too busy to go to lunch.

THE REAL DEAL: Effective and efficient people take the time to organize their workspace, electronic and paper folders and files. Regardless of the type of work you do, imagine having even more paper, files, and emails as you work "up the ladder." Getting organized from the start sets a good impression and gives you a solid foundation on which to build.

31: **Over-promise, under-deliver**

That way, others won't try to offload their work on you.

THE REAL DEAL: New personnel often go into a job with enviable enthusiasm. While admirable, it can lead to offering to do more than you can. This leads to disappointed coworkers or supervisors. Know your strengths and weaknesses, and don't try to impress with words. Your actions (or lack of them) determine your reputation. It's okay to ask for help.

32: **Hold meaningless meetings**

Hey, they get you away from your desk and moving around for a bit!

THE REAL DEAL: Meetings inform, clarify, or assign. When you chair a meeting, help the attendees know what is expected of them at and after it. Knowing and understanding what has to happen after a meeting (action steps) makes them and you more productive (thus more valuable).

33: **Demand to be “in the loop”**

Insist on knowing the latest gossip! If others have a discussion without you, barge right in!

THE REAL DEAL: People perceived as nosy are also considered to have a personal agenda. Folks who need to know every bit of minutia irritate others. Be a busy body, rather than a busybody.

34: **Be a yes person**

So what if people hate you—the boss won’t and you’ll get ahead quicker.

THE REAL DEAL: If you always try to gain the boss’s approval, he or she will perceive you as a weak link and you’ll lose his or her respect. Coworkers will consider you a nuisance, or worse, someone spineless and weak. Support your colleagues, team, and boss by learning to tactfully disagree when appropriate, knowing when to say no, and by standing up for them or yourself when necessary.

35: **Be or act unsure of yourself**

Even if you do know the answers sometimes pretend you don’t.

THE REAL DEAL: People want to be sure of your abilities. Showing confidence builds your self-esteem and your success with others. Coworkers want to know your work will be done well and support their efforts. Confidence should be driven by ability so don’t become a know-it-all. Simply recognize your skills and talents and let go of insecurities.

36: **There’s only one language – and it’s tech**

What’s not clear about “performing glancing angle sputtering deposition of metal nanoparticles for cross-functionalization during protein analysis.”? If someone asks if you could explain, repeat what you’ve said. Besides, nothing’s funnier than the look of confusion on non-tech faces.

THE REAL DEAL: Choose when to use tech speak or your business coworkers may believe you’re trying to be obstructive. Your ability to communicate clearly will be suspect and you’ll gain a reputation as arrogant and unhelpful. Knowing when to turn on your technology vocabulary and when to use plain language is key to growing in your job. Talk tech to a nanotech scientist; however, to a less tech savvy business manager say “by adding metal nanoparticles, other materials can bind with proteins to improve detection.”

37: **Always take the spotlight**

Successful people know it’s ridiculous to be humble or share the limelight.

THE REAL DEAL: It’s great to be proud of your accomplishments, and face it, most highly successful people are egotistical—that’s what drives them to succeed—but arrogance is not the way to impress your coworkers or supervisors. Successful people know when to be humble and when to share the limelight.

38: **Churn, don’t learn**

Refuse to take suggestions. Foster a my-way-or-nothing attitude. Interpret suggestions as personal attacks.

THE REAL DEAL: These behaviors indicate a fear of making mistakes—but know what?—everybody makes them. Failure means not learning from a mistake. A stubborn attitude can hamper your effectiveness, and thus your personal and professional growth.



:: Don't be a boring wimp

39: Get really angry when it's appropriate
Otherwise, people will think you are a boring wimp.

THE REAL DEAL: Being composed and calm is more important in stressful situations than any other time. A key aspect to remaining unperturbed is to not take things personally. When stressful situations arise, keep your voice at a normal pitch and volume, and speak to actions and facts.

40: Envy the accomplishments of others
Blame others for your lack of progress because it probably is their fault.

THE REAL DEAL: Do you grapple with jealousy if someone gets a promotion or praise? Does the world unfairly overlook you? Guess what? Life IS often unfair, but you needn't make it seem more so by comparing yourself with others. Keep your mind on achieving your own goals. If you blame other people for your lack of progress, many will see that as a sign you can't produce. If you are truly being overlooked, keep a positive attitude and develop a communication plan to change how you are seen.

41: Cultivate complacency
No one can know everything – let your boss know you're happy with who and what you are. As is.

THE REAL DEAL: If you lose momentum, the quality of your work and your level of achievement suffer. Set goals and aim high. Over-achieve your expectations. Let your boss know your ideas for improvements. Do you see a more efficient process? Share the idea. Do you have a personal area needing improvement? Show your initiative and willingness to grow. Bosses don't expect you to know everything, but they do expect development and a willingness to learn.

42: **Never set goals**

They always change anyway.

THE REAL DEAL: Goals differ from tasks. Tasks are tactical (to-do lists), goals are strategic (achievement ideas). Employers often use performance reviews to set or approve employee goals. Consider setting short term (week, month, year) and long term goals for both your personal growth and job performance.

43: **Be a sniper**

The best way to cut down a co-worker is to pretend you are giving them a compliment.

THE REAL DEAL: Snipers position themselves as “fun-loving” and believe they are clever. In reality they are more like cleavers, ready to chop the reputations of others. Snipers hide an insult in a joke or try to disguise it as a compliment. Don’t become one, and if you encounter one, don’t feed their ego by listening. Snipers erode morale and plant doubts.

44: **Show you’re a “real man” or “one of the boys”**

Whichever your gender, swearing shows your confidence.

THE REAL DEAL: Whichever your gender, swearing is unprofessional. Avoid such language in the lab. Always.

45: **Pass the buck**

Find a problem, pass it on. Made a mistake? Attach it to someone else. Avoid headaches and keep your reputation clean.

THE REAL DEAL: Actions like that are usually obvious, don’t work, and come back to cause you greater problems. Instead of gaining a reputation as a buck-passer, solve problems and be transparent.

46: **Only know what you need to know**

It’s a strategy to reduce your workload. How great is that???

THE REAL DEAL: That tactic will reduce your perceived value. Instead, take on a tedious project that everyone wants to ignore (like learning the secrets and tricks to a new phone system) and be the one to whom others can turn to for advice and help. Colleagues consider “go-to” people as bright, accomplished, and on the way up.

47: **Walk the halls with your head down**

Foster a reputation of being an unfriendly recluse. This is very helpful for avoiding talking to people you hate. Make the most of it.

THE REAL DEAL: Walk with your head up and an approachable demeanor. Keep in mind, there’s a reason respected people are called “level headed.”

48: **Be a killjoy**

When anyone shares a story, say you have a better one. If they completed a project ahead of time, remind them of how many more days earlier you completed one.

THE REAL DEAL: Don’t be the person who deflates another’s moments of happiness and success. When anyone shares a story, even if you can, don’t top it. When they mention a success, congratulate them. This also shows that you are genuinely interested and compassionate as well as appreciative of their work.

49: **Avoid decisions**

Don’t put your head on the chopping block! Make indecisiveness your best friend.

THE REAL DEAL: Great as it is to be flexible in your thinking and your approach to your job, it’s important to make decisions. If forming a conclusion causes you trouble, try this approach: identify WHY you need to make the decision (what problem will be solved?), then list all the choices you can and evaluate them against the WHY.

50: **Know that your area is the most important part of a business**

Don't worry about the goals or mission of the business because without you, the business couldn't run.

THE REAL DEAL: To be successful you need to understand the goals and mission of the business, and how your project can help the company succeed.

51: **Take sides in arguments**

Strength and wisdom is showing where and with whom you stand.

THE REAL DEAL: Conflict is a part of life, but it can adversely affect your work and that of others. If you find yourself in the middle of a clash, handle it with appropriate solutions (speak to facts and observable actions, not emotions). Choose your battles carefully and steer clear of politics.

52: **Now you've gotten your job, sit back and enjoy**

They're lucky to have you. No need to prove it over and over again.

THE REAL DEAL: Some workers lose that new job within 6 months. Don't let complacency take over. The most important aspect of a new job is KEEPING it. Continue to work on all your skills – technical, business, and interpersonal/team.

53: **Avoid the boss**

He or she will only come up with new tasks and duties.

THE REAL DEAL: The best way to know if you are meeting expectations is to check in with the boss. If she or he isn't the communicative type, ask for feedback from them. After receiving it, modify your actions and behavior if necessary.

54: **Knowledge is power so keep information to yourself**

Why help someone else get ahead or enjoy more success on a project by sharing all you know?

THE REAL DEAL: Always share the information necessary to complete a project with everyone working on it. Strive to do your best to achieve your company's, your boss's, your team's, and your goals. The best way to do that is to be open and to use your time to accomplish your work—which becomes more difficult if you spend time playing political games.

55: **When you want a task done right, always do it yourself**

Be self-sufficient. You are the only one you can depend on.

THE REAL DEAL: Self sufficiency is fine, but taken to an extreme can hamper your effectiveness and career growth. Learn how to collaborate with others and to leverage their strengths.

56: **Enjoy the high life**

It's okay to have a few drinks during lunch. No one expects you to be productive in the afternoon anyway.

THE REAL DEAL: Substance abuse of any sort is the fastest way to dead-end not only your job, but possibly your career. Never drink or use drugs at work, or show up under their influence. Don't flirt with getting comfortable with "just one" at lunch, it's a habit that can lead to more, and then the door — out of your job.

57: Show the “Duh, that’s dumb,” expression with people
People think they know things when they don’t. Never let them get away with that. Put them in their place.

THE REAL DEAL: Non-tech folks may not know all of the intricacies of Nanotech, but they do know their business and what will make it more successful. These are your clients and teammates; treat them with respect. Be the diplomat who bridges worlds rather than the elitist with an attitude. It’s important for all personnel to understand what is happening with the business and how each department can support new initiatives. That business person may be the one who helps you see the bigger picture.

58: Stay up to the minute on Twitter and that computer game
Workers need to demonstrate they know social media.

THE REAL DEAL: Some jobs require using social media. But don’t let personal online time get out of control. If you can’t indulge in an activity with the boss watching, don’t do it. Company time is just that, and hours can pass by easily. Don’t get so caught up in online socializing that work suffers and you get a reprimand—or worse.

59: Interpret the meaning of directions
You exercise your creativity by doing things the way you think they should be done.

THE REAL DEAL: If someone gives you written or verbal directions, never rewrite their plans. Go to the originator of the project when something seems confusing or wrong. While they may not make sense to you, organizations and people have many reasons for operating the way they do. When something doesn’t seem right, use a phrase such as “help me understand” to find out why a request has been made in a particular way.

60: Relive your past
Share how much better things were done at your last job or how a routine has “always” been done at your last company.

THE REAL DEAL: Talking about the past shows that you can’t move on, flex, or change. People dislike unfavorable comparisons (you slam their process, you slam them) and may wonder why, if your former employer was so great, you’re not still there.

61: Don’t learn your boss’s communication style
He or she is the manager, right? Let them manage you by learning YOUR style.

THE REAL DEAL: Think about it. You have one boss. She or he has numerous employees. Learning their way of getting messages across or how they prefer to receive their information will make your interactions with them more comfortable and effective.

62: Resist all training except technical skills enhancement
You have great technical skills. You don’t need to be nice to people. Going to training means you’re a loser.

THE REAL DEAL: Employers invest in their most promising employees. They don’t expect you to know everything or be perfect. Being offered additional training outside of your discipline isn’t a subtle way to brand you as unknowledgeable, nor is it a sneaky plot to put you down – it’s simply going to make you more valuable.

63: Don’t proof read
Let you’re computer do the work. It can fund the writing terrors.

THE REAL DEAL: If you don’t know the meaning of a word or how to spell it, look it up. Online dictionaries are easy to access. Using spellcheck leads to correctly-spelled but incorrect words. Communicating your ideas clearly and using the proper words show your abilities.



:: Sharing makes everyone smile

64: Frustration is not good for you
Complain on Facebook about the boring and stupid project you've been given and maybe your boss will see it and get a clue.

THE REAL DEAL: Employers often Google employee names or visit employee social sites. Maybe the boss will give the project to someone else...but maybe your job will go with it. Potential employers check social sites too, and none of them want to hire a complainer – especially one without discretion.

65: E-mails are the most efficient
You can save time and avoid headaches by dealing with complicated situations on email. Talking to someone in person or on the phone is too difficult.

THE REAL DEAL: A better practice when dealing with complicated situations is to talk in person or on the phone. And don't be too quick to send that email if you are upset about something. Put it in your drafts folder and revisit it the next day to make sure you've kept your communication professional.

66: Be generous: share your tunes
Beethoven, laughter, a belch from a good lunch. Hey, sharing happiness makes everyone smile.

THE REAL DEAL: Continual noise from a coworker when one is trying to think or work causes friction. Avoid being considered thoughtless (which reflects on the quality of your work) by keeping distracting noises out of the lab. Be aware of the noise you make and its impact on others.

67: **Never make a mistake! If you do... hide it!**

The only way to learn is from projects done with no problems. Mistakes point out your weaknesses. When trying something new, you should know how to do it right the first time! Once you've made a mistake, you can't go back and fix it.

THE REAL DEAL: Mistakes happen. No one expects you to know everything. Professionals accept responsibility for decisions and actions. When someone points out a mistake or a problem you've created, be thankful for the opportunity to correct it. If you've caused hurt feelings or damaged a system, apologize and fix the situation. Show insight and maturity by accepting criticism as constructive feedback and using it as a way to improve.

68: **Forego good hygiene.**

Hey, garlic smells good. Whether on the breath or in sweat.

THE REAL DEAL: Because people are polite, they rarely talk about odor problems. Whether it's your breath or other odor-areas, your boss will not want to deal with this subject. Make sure you are up to professional standards at all times.

69: **Don't delegate**

Can't get it done yourself? What's wrong with you? If you don't do it right, who will?

THE REAL DEAL: It's important to indicate trust in your coworkers and reports. No one loves a micromanager who has to have fingers in every project.

Avoid learning new technology

If you aren't using it on your job, why learn it? It just takes time away from your projects.

70:

THE REAL DEAL: Those who keep informed and constantly improve their knowledge and skills are more in demand than those stuck in what can quickly become out-dated proficiencies.

71: **Avoid feedback – it's just a way to put you down**

It's embarrassing, opens you up for criticism, and shows you were wrong.

THE REAL DEAL: Feedback is a great way to grow, both in your career and as a person. We are often blind to both our weaknesses and our strengths.

72: **Be a multi-tasking guru**

Read your e-mail while listening to phone messages. Work on 5 projects at once and spread them all over the lab. The more you can do at once, the more you'll get done.

THE REAL DEAL: Speed at the cost of quality is never a good trade-off. Always be conscientious about your work. Learn to prioritize. Use the time management principle "handle the big rocks first." This means build a schedule. Create a "to do" list and a timeline that covers daily, weekly, and long term projects and tasks.

73: **Don't take breaks**

Taking a break makes you look like a slacker. Work harder!

THE REAL DEAL: It may seem counterintuitive, but you will get more done when you take your breaks. They clear your mind and give your body a rest. Breaks are especially important if you are getting stressed, confused, or unfocused. Refresh. Go outside, walk, or grab a healthy snack.

74: **An open door policy is imperative**

Always let everyone stop in when they want to discuss whatever they want. It's rude to interrupt or tell them you don't have time to talk.

THE REAL DEAL: Interruptions are one of the biggest contributors to decreasing productivity. Interruptions can be in person, by phone, or email. Providing boundaries is a wise practice – just communicate them to others. Set standard "open door" hours and only access your email at set times during the day. If you're under a deadline crunch, let the phone go to voicemail.

75: **Let others keep you motivated**

Inner motivation is simply ego. Always rely on others to tell you what is important.

THE REAL DEAL: People with self-motivation are seen as the “movers and shakers” of the world. If you fear your goals may not line up with your boss’s expectations, share your plans with her or him and get buy-in.

76: **Don’t encourage others**

If you help others to be peak performers, they’ll outshine you.

THE REAL DEAL: Let others know when they’ve excelled or have a good idea. People who support others get supported in return. Encouragement builds rapport and trust which will help you develop a strong network. A network is important to all professionals. It can help you solve problems, find a job, and supply resources.

77: **Let money be your reward**

Take jobs or promotions only if you are going to be paid well. Nothing is as fulfilling as a BIG paycheck!

THE REAL DEAL: Find a job that aligns with your values and strengths. Being happy and taking pride in your work is more rewarding than a big paycheck.

78: **Don’t ask for help**

Seeking advice from others just makes you look incompetent. Accepting suggestions is for losers. People who seek out mentors are just lazy. They don’t want to learn it by themselves.

THE REAL DEAL: Seeking advice from others indicates your confidence in what you know and that you aren’t afraid to show interest in learning more. No one knows everything, it’s wise to get advice from another who may have a greater depth of knowledge of a particular subject.

79: **Be wordy, repeat things, and wind around to get to your point**

Make sure everyone gets every possible point of every bit of minutia.

THE REAL DEAL: When eyes shift away from you when you talk or people edge away physically, you may be boring your listeners with long-windedness. When you add unnecessary information into a message, ramble and repeat, you quickly lose others’ interest. Worse, they may think your work is as equally unfocused as your messages. Join a Toastmasters’ club or take a course in public or persuasive speaking.

80: **Details, schmeetails. Why does a stupid pen matter anyway?**

It’s not like they’re made of gold

THE REAL DEAL: People often borrow a calculator, pen, or scissors and forget to return them. It may seem like a little thing, but it annoys others (and causes them inconvenience when they have to track down and reclaim their property). If this habit describes you, label your items. When you notice something on your work area without a label, you’ll know to return it (which you should do immediately).

81: **Worry free grammar: It dsn’t mtr how its speeled, they will git the point.**

Who cares about details in e-mails? Emails are about being quick.

THE REAL DEAL: Email is about more than being speedy. Every email you send indicates your level of quality. Use salutations and closings for a professional appearance. If your company has a vision statement, use it in your signature to support your business brand.

82: **Expect the boss and company to create your career path**

Creating your own career development plan is being disloyal.

THE REAL DEAL: Listen to your boss's ideas for your career path (always a wise idea as they may see special skills in you that you aren't aware of), but keep in touch with your passions. Take ownership of your career development by knowing what you have a zest for and how to develop your interests. Don't passively let job demands drive your career.

83: **Your boss is your buddy!**

Share that hilarious limerick you learned in college and call him "pal."

THE REAL DEAL: A level of respect should be accorded to those in positions of responsibility. It is always best to err on the side of deference. Choice of words, type of humor, even the way you hold your body shows someone how you view them.

84: **Find a good solution, and use it, use it, use it – avoid the new**

If it hasn't been thought of before, that's probably because it's dumb.

THE REAL DEAL: Not all solutions fit all problems. Be open. Entertain a broad scope of possibilities in approach and alternate answers. Reframe a problem to see it from a different perspective and spark innovative ideas. Connect two unrelated ideas or integrate seemingly opposite information to create new solutions.

85: **Forget your resume on the copier**

That'll scare them into offering you a raise.

THE REAL DEAL: Conducting your search on company time with company resources is a bad idea. Do it on your own time with your own resources.

86: **Do, do, do**

It's important to always be active and task-oriented because if you aren't doing something, you are wasting time.

THE REAL DEAL: Filling your time with non-productive tasks that don't bring your project or your career forward helps no one. Take time to plan, think, strategize, learn about the business and find ways that you can help promote the company's goals.

87: **Compete with your peers**

How do you know how well you are doing unless you compare yourself with others?

THE REAL DEAL: If you focus on others, you forget both your strengths and your shortcomings. The person to compare yourself with is you. Gauge how well you do by how you improve yourself. Enhance your time management skills, take initiative and responsibility for your actions, understand where you need to grow, and then implement a plan to help develop yourself.

88: **Say "no problem" to requests**

Everyone else says it, why not you?

THE REAL DEAL: Even though the phrase seems ubiquitous, avoid it. It's a negative phrase that subtly indicates there could be an underlying concern. Replace it with "my pleasure."

89: **Expect everyone to be the same**

Just because someone comes from a different culture, they're in the U.S. now and should conform.

THE REAL DEAL: Be sensitive not only to people from other cultures, but of different ages, abilities, or any other factor that makes them dissimilar to you. Take the time to learn and understand their viewpoints and ideas. What seems appropriate (or inappropriate) to you may not be for them.

90: **Keep repeating, "It's not my job."**

Don't let those losers pile their work on you.

THE REAL DEAL: One of the jobs of any baseball player is to back-up other players as they do their jobs. Be that kind of employee. See who needs help and let others know when you are crunched. There's no 'i' in team!

91: **Learn only from your own experience**

Like you'd make the same mistake some idiot made ...

THE REAL DEAL: The wise observe and learn lessons from others, both people who succeed and those who don't. You'll discover, with less pain and time, options and actions to emulate or to avoid.

92: **Stick to the plan, no matter what**

Don't deviate – bad things could happen. You could die!

THE REAL DEAL: Unpredictable events occur all the time. If a plan is not going as discussed, look for other options and consult with your team to change the strategy. Sticking to a plan that isn't coming together doesn't help anyone. Deal with changes by flexing to new demands and situations. Exhibit your leadership by altering your actions or priorities to help others with transition.

93: **Arrive at meetings unprepared**

The other attendees can fill you in quickly.

THE REAL DEAL: When you halt a discussion to get caught up or ask questions that have already been answered, others see you as an obstacle rather than a strong team player. Avoid this fate by taking 5 to 15 minutes before a meeting to gather your thoughts and documents. Be the hero not the villain.

94: **Never take a risk**

Stick to what you know. Never speak up or you'll look stupid.

THE REAL DEAL: Take the chance to be a part of the future and the larger mission of the company. Every time you think, 'It would be so much easier if we ...' you have the opportunity to improve a process, a procedure, or the company. Share your ideas with your supervisor. Find projects that stretch your abilities and help you develop.

95: **Don't take credit for what you've done**

Tooting your own horn makes you look like a spotlight hog.

THE REAL DEAL: There is a difference between tooting your own horn and allowing your accomplishments and strengths to be recognized. Speak to the facts, and give deserved credit to those who worked with or for you. Update your boss with a written weekly or monthly progress report.

96: **Continually put your personal life before work**

Take the whole afternoon when you have a short appointment – who'll know?

THE REAL DEAL: Work and life do need to be in balance. However, if you always indulge in time-shaving during work hours, you will be seen as uncommitted to your job and company. Yes, emergencies and the unique from-home demands come up, but unlimited urgent situations don't sit well.

97: **Budget numbers? People's names?**

You're in nanotech, not accounting or the admin pool. Let others check for accuracy.

THE REAL DEAL: Never offer documentation with incorrect names, numbers, or information. If your manager presents a paper riddled with mistakes you've caused, you have embarrassed him or her. Mistakes cost money and could cost you your job. Make sure you double check your work carefully.

101 ways to dead-end your Nanotech job

98: Upload an interesting picture online

You are fun, unconventional, and enjoy travel. Show your creative side on Facebook by posting a picture of you mooning the Eiffel Tower.

THE REAL DEAL: Facebook and other social sites are not private. Jobs have been lost (or not gotten) owing to unprofessional images posted online. Party animal and professional don't co-exist.

99: Volunteer for everything

Especially if it's a fun event or cool project.

THE REAL DEAL: It's important not to overextend yourself by volunteering for every opportunity that comes along. Volunteer when the project uses abilities in your skill set or if it fits with your self-development plan.

100: Why bother dressing up?

What's wrong with a Hooter's shirt if it's clean? Don'tcha LOVE flip-flops?

THE REAL DEAL: Understand casual Friday means professionally casual. Why should you bother dressing up everyone sees you in a lab coat? Because the way you dress reflects on you and the company. Dress and groom professionally to be considered a professional who cares about his or her work. Being prepared for an unscheduled meeting, outreach activity, or being pulled into the boss's office, you want to look your best.

101: Steal pens

What's the big deal about a few boxes of staples or reams of paper?

THE REAL DEAL: Your job is worth more than \$2.95. Ethics and honesty are priceless. Never be a petty thief.