

Tip of the Month



What's in Your Suitcase?

As we travel through life, we all bring along baggage. Filled with an assortment of attitudes, emotions and behaviors, we lug them around the workplace and impose them on our patients. So, what's in your suitcase?

Every now and then we need to examine the carry-on we are carrying around to ensure that we have what we need and aren't transporting things we ought not. And there's no better time to inspect the contents of one's professionalism suitcase than National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week. To rate as a first-class phlebotomist, use this checklist at your next checkpoint.

Identification	Yes	No
When approaching a patient, I introduce myself and state my purpose.		
My identification badge is displayed in plain view for others to see.		
During the patient identification process, I avoid using overly cute or unprofessional terms or phrases.		
Communication		
I listen compassionately and take time to calm patient fears.		
I respectfully answer questions and/or respond to patient requests, as appropriate.		
I conduct myself in a manner that inspires confidence.		
I avoid airing my personal problems or complaints in front of my patients.		
I maintain my composure when others are unpleasant or disagree with me.		
I shun gossip and crude language in the workplace.		
Personal Appearance		
My overall appearance makes a good impression and reflects favorably on my employer.		
My attire (i.e., scrubs, lab coat, shoes, etc.) is clean and neat.		
I am well-groomed, with no offensive body odor or bad breath.		
I avoid excessive jewelry, piercings, make-up, extreme hairstyles and flamboyant nails.		
I smile and make frequent eye contact.		
Customer Service		
I regularly report to work on time.		
I give my employer an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.		
I strive to minimize wait times for outpatient services and STAT requests.		

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Page 2

I turn off electronic devices and limit activities that are distractions in the workplace.		
I use proper telephone etiquette.		
I say "Please" and "Thank You".		
Confidentiality		
I protect the privacy of my patients and treat their information in a confidential manner.		
Safety		
I keep my work area(s) clean, well-stocked, and organized.		
I faithfully practice proper hand hygiene and use of PPE.		
I adhere to all applicable safety regulations and facility protocols.		
I strictly follow all blood specimen collection policies and procedures.		

If you answered "Yes" to all statements, congratulations! You've reached cruising altitude on a nonstop flight destined for World-Class Professionalism. If you answered "No" to any statement, you may have dangerous goods in your possession that require further inspection and removal. Sure, it takes effort to unpack the issues of life and bad habits that weigh us down or place us at risk. But just like adding wheels to your luggage, the way we manage our emotional baggage can make all the difference between enjoying life's journey and merely surviving the trip.