

What is Your Office Policy on Doing (Other) Work at Work?



I've been very meticulous about not doing anything that has to do with this blog while I am at my real job. I do know, however, that there are others in my organization who do work that is not related to the practice while being paid by the practice.

At a previous job, a newly hired 20-something medical assistant was day trading while he was working the clinic floor. When other employees reported this to me, I was dumbfounded. Not that he was doing it, but that he thought it was okay to do it. And he was surprised that I thought it wasn't okay to do it. As far as he was concerned, if he didn't have something to do, he was free to pursue another vocation in his spare moments.

Here's a partial list of things I've seen employees do while on the clock:

- Pay bills
- Balance checking accounts
- Shop online
- Make grocery list or Christmas gift list
- Address invitations
- Answer personal e-mail
- Apply for other jobs
- Look for other jobs for friends and spouses
- Look for new apartments, homes and cars
- Write letters to the editor
- Sleep
- Study
- Read books, magazines, and newspapers

- Plan a wedding (this was a manager!)

My questions are threefold:

- 1. What do employers have a right to expect from employees during the workday?*
- 2. What do employees (of all generations) have the right to do during the workday?*
- 3. What policies should employers have in place to protect their human resource investment, yet acknowledge the changing needs of employees?*

If you have this problem in your workplace, please comment and let me know what your thoughts are.