

**WORKSHEET Z**  
**INTRODUCTION TO OFFICE POLITICS**

Objective for Worksheet Z: Discuss office politics, including appropriate networking, socializing, and personal behaviors.

- If mentoring in-house, discuss the type of social climate that exists in the office, including the formality of staff interactions, potential social functions that new associates are expected to attend, the types of expenses appropriate for an expense report, the personalities of partners, colleagues, and other staff, the appropriate and expected attire at the office and other firm events, etc.
- If mentoring in-house, discuss the preferences and expectations of your mentee's supervisor. Share tips that your mentee can use to impress their supervisor.
- Suggest appropriate ways for the new lawyer to socialize and get to know other attorneys and judges in the community.
- Discuss the types of social or office behaviors that could be perceived as detrimental to your mentee's career, both with colleagues inside and outside of your mentee's office.
- Explain to your mentee each non-lawyer employee's role in your office/firm, including the employee's title, job duties, and relationship to your mentee (if in an in-house mentoring relationship).
- Discuss the importance of having support staff on your team and treating them with respect.
- Share suggested "do's and don'ts" of dealing with support staff, colleagues, and those more senior than your mentee.
- If your mentee has an assistant, secretary and/or paralegal, explain the types of tasks that are appropriate (and inappropriate) to ask each of them to do.
- Discuss the importance of asking for help before taking action about which the mentee is unsure and obtaining assistance when the mentee has made a mistake. Give your mentee examples of problems you have encountered and tried to solve without help and discuss the consequences that occurred.
- If mentoring in-house, discuss the office culture with regard to decision-making and your mentee's authority to do so.
- Talk about how to develop appropriate support systems who your mentee can discuss problems with when they arise.