



Ten Tips:

## Be an All-Star Nanny (& Keep Your Job!)

### 1. Be on time

Your employer is counting on you.

### 2. No Fibbing

Call as soon as you know that you are running late or will not be able to work due to illness. Plan your personal days - don't call in sick at the last minute the day after a concert - ask for that day off with ample notice. Your employer plans his/her professional schedule around your work; s/he needs time to shuffle commitments too. Be honest and up front - dishonesty is the single biggest reason a nanny loses her job.

### 3. Give 100% effort

Families look at both effort and results. Always finish your duties. It is NOT ok to leave the snack dishes in the sink!

### 4. Anticipate and communicate

Running low on diapers? Used up the last of the milk? Let your boss know. Need to schedule a routine doctor's appointment? Ask your employer BEFORE you schedule if there are times that might work better for her. Don't walk into work on Monday and announce you need to leave at 3PM the next day for a scheduled appointment. This impacts your employer's work and career too!

### 5. Be positive

"I will" is a much more positive message than "I'll try." A sunny smile and cheery attitude is contagious.

Every job will have challenges at times. Before bringing a problem to your boss, consider possible solutions. Propose the solution that you feel works best - and be open to your employer's point of view. If you have a problem and just want to complain about it, moan and groan to a friend instead.

### 6. Don't gossip

Respect your employer's confidentiality. Never post anything on Facebook or any social media site that you would be embarrassed if your employer knew. Don't post photos of your charges, or identify them by name, without the parents' explicit permission.

### 7. Recognize opportunities to help

...and volunteer when you can. That milk that is running low? Offer to pick up a gallon at the market when you are out for a walk. Just opened the last container of baby wipes? Leave your employer a note or add to the family grocery list. Know your employer won't be home until 6 PM and has a 6:30 soccer practice on the schedule? Offer to prepare a simple meal or pack a sandwich for your charge and the parent.

## 8. Respect Boundaries

You work in a private home, may genuinely love your charges and be quite fond of your employer. That is all well and good. It is important to remember, however, that you are NOT a member of the family, that this is your job. Behaviors, attitudes and issues appropriate for discussion in YOUR private home with YOUR family need to stay there. Don't bring your fight with your significant other to the workplace, and don't interfere or in any way comment on the relationship between your boss and his/her significant other.

Boundary issues are a two-way street. Sometimes it is the employer who is crossing the line. When your mom boss asks, "So when are you and X going to start your family?" it is perfectly fine to respond with a non-committal "I'll be sure to let you know if and when that happens" and then change the subject.

## 9. Be flexible, even if it's "Not my job"

In every job we occasionally need to do something that is "not my job." If it truly is a once-in-a-while kind of thing, do the task without complaint. When your employer asks you to do something a little out of the ordinary, don't take offense and never say to your employer that ABC is not in your job description. And whatever you do, don't sigh! (Deep audible exhale) We all know that a sigh communicates "I am so annoyed! Really?" – use your words!

## 10. Maintain a positive attitude

A flexible, "can do" attitude is valued in an employee. Life is not predictable all the time. An employee who is adaptable and capable of adjusting to a last-minute change of plans is a treasure.

**FINAL TIP:** I have heard many times from nannies that they will "never do such and such even once because then it becomes a permanent part of my job." Stop and think for a moment. Is taking out the trash worth creating friction with your boss over? Yes, I realize sometimes an employer will keep adding duties until you cry uncle. This is not the norm though. Remember, nannying is a service profession, and your charges are not your only constituency. Going the extra mile on occasion and being a team player is valued and creates much good will.