Taking Appropriate Initiative

Taking initiative in the workplace is a great way to expand your skills and show that you are dedicated to being a successful employee, but how do you balance this with making sure you are fulfilling the basic duties of your role? This document outlines what it means to take appropriate initiative in the workplace.

What Does Taking Appropriate Initiative Mean?
Taking appropriate initiative means striving to do your best and excel in the workplace by doing more than what is asked, but not overstepping boundaries. Aim for excellence within your assigned duties first, and get approval from your supervisor before you start anything new.

Communication Is Key
Open communication is an important part of all tasks in the workplace. Before taking on any tasks that are outside the normal scope of your work, ask for feedback and get approval from your supervisor. If you want your ideas to be taken seriously, showing that you value others' opinions and that you want their support before going further is a great place to start.

Taking No For An Answer
You came up with a great idea for a new project to help your office, but when you presented your plan to your supervisor the answer was no. Instead of feeling offended or put out, consider the following:

- There is probably a good reason your supervisor did not say yes. Try to understand what their reasoning may be. For example:
  - Maybe your supervisor and the rest of the department are already working on other new projects, or it's simply a busy time of the year and they don't have the time or resources to properly support your idea right now.
  - Perhaps a similar idea was already attempted, and it didn’t end up working well.
  - A new project may get in the way of your ability to perform other required tasks that are more vital to the office.

- Getting told “no” isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Even if you won't be able to put your ideas into action now, you have practiced a creative pattern of thinking that will be helpful to you later in life.

- The work you are doing is still valued and appreciated - instead of being upset that you can't pursue a passion project, focus on performing your current duties to the best of your ability.

More Resources
9 Ways To Take More Initiative At Work
10 Tips For Adding Value By Showing Initiative
Why You Should Learn To Take No For An Answer