

The Career Doctors
10 Ways to Avoid Ending Up in Court Due to Work Related Matters

1. Remember your computer is not your personal property
 - Don't surf inappropriate web sites
 - Don't send personal e-mails
 - Don't look for a job while you are on the job

2. Act like a professional – you are at work, not at a fraternity party
 - Observe common interpersonal courtesy
 - Watch what you say and who you say it to

3. Be mindful of corporate culture
 - Find out what behavior is and is not acceptable in your company
 - Don't be a renegade – try to fit in

4. Know what you are signing before you sign it
 - Read documents given to you upon starting a new job carefully before signing them
 - Consult an attorney if you don't understand them

5. Remember the money is won or lost before you walk in the door
 - Get agreements up front before you accept a new position
 - Shoot for an employment agreement (with a term) – be prepared to back down to a severance agreement

6. Don't quit or announce you are leaving until you have new job terms/offer letter in writing
 - Retain your poker face at your present job
 - Avoid discussing terms or conditions of your potential new job with anyone except family
 - Do not cut your ties with present employer until you have satisfactory terms in writing from new company

7. Be mindful of EEOC laws that affect your company (and you as hiring manager)
 - Take time to understand your responsibilities as a hiring manager

8. Watch what you say and ask a prospective candidate when interviewing him/her
 - Avoid questions that do not relate to job requirements (marital status, interest in getting pregnant, sexual preference, age of candidate)

9. Get professional advice
 - Hire an attorney if you find yourself in a situation where you need expert advice
 - Don't be penny wise and career foolish – it will cost you a lot more if you are not protected

10. Remember you have rights even if you are terminated
 - Attempt to appeal to charitable side of former employer when negotiating severance terms
 - Take time to read any termination or severance agreements before you sign them
 - Get as much transitional assistance as you can (cont. pay, outplacement, benefits, etc)

