ANTHROPOLOGY CAREER READINESS NETWORK

Applying Anthropology in a New Job

You landed that new job, and you are ready to start your first day. There are a number of ways you can apply your anthropology toolkit to make your transition into this new role as smooth as possible.

1 **Review the Internal Literature**

You likely researched the organization when interviewing. Once you start, you will have access to internal documents and systems that you would not have had earlier. The Employee Handbook or other important policies can give you insight into how the organization operates and what it values. Depending on the role, your first few days or weeks may be slow, so use any free time you have to read up.

2 **Observe**

Start using your participant observation skills as soon as you walk in the door. You can get an idea of what the dress code really is by looking at how your colleagues are dressed. You can gauge what the etiquette is around using cellphones in the workplace. You can see how your team communicates with each other and management.

3 **Schedule Introduction Meetings**

Use your first month or so to schedule introductory meetings with your teammates and other people across the organization. Your manager may already have a list of people that would be good for you to meet. Depending on your role, you may want to get your supervisor's approval before reaching out to others. Treat these early meetings like interviews. Ask questions such as, "What do you wish you knew when you started here? Is there anything I should be careful about? What do you enjoy about working here?"

4 **Learn the Rituals**

Every workplace has its own unique set of rituals which may include monthly organization-wide meetings, daily team standups, celebrations, or even how people get lunch. If you are lucky, one or more of your new colleagues will take you under their wing and explain some of these rituals to you. Otherwise, you will need to use your observation skills and ask questions to understand what is going on. Make sure to discuss how your job performance will be evaluated with your supervisor, since there may be a formalized process you will need to follow.

5 **Make Friends**

Anthropologists know how to build relationships, so make time to connect with your new co-workers. Caring about each other as people will make working together much more enjoyable, and you might even make lifelong friends.