

Who are you at work?

Paparazzi love a candid scoop – particularly when it involves snapping politicians doing something outlandish or unconventional on the campaign trail, or celebrities like Gisele Bundchen and Cameron Diaz eating a slice of pizza, or walking down the street sans makeup.

Why? Because – while we take great delight in seeing the rich and famous looking like every day folks – for the most part, the public expects politicians, sports stars and celebs to maintain certain personas while in the public eye.

Is it the same for you at work? Are you one person in the office, and another on the weekend?

- **Why do we lead double lives?** Most employees tend to modify their behaviour between the workplace and home – usually to maintain professionalism on the job, conform to the company culture, and meet the expectations of our teammates and managers. Most of us feel we can be more ‘ourselves’ away from work, which is why we relax and slip in to comfortable behaviours away from the office.
- **When is it necessary?** Though workplace cultures and standards are significantly more relaxed now than they were decades ago, there are times and situations where it’s appropriate, and even necessary, to lead a double life. For example, someone who works in a corporate environment Monday to Friday, and unwinds by moshing at heavy metal gigs over the weekend, would probably be unwise to wear a Slayer shirt to the office or greet clients with a fist bump rather than a handshake.

Similarly, most people prefer not to carry their professional persona home with them, so they can relax, decompress, and be themselves away from work. Can you imagine having to wear a suit while you’re at home binge-watching Netflix, or minding your Ps and Qs when you’re having a few drinks with your best friends? Not so much. Which is why it can be just as important to switch out of work mode when you leave the office.

- **The benefits of being yourself.** Of course, being yourself – as much as is

appropriate – at work certainly has its benefits. It can help you to come across as more genuine, and therefore create stronger relationships with colleagues and customers. Being yourself on the job can also help to maintain workplace happiness and satisfaction, and ensure you stay in a job you love for longer.

- **Double life dos and don'ts**

Do look to the behaviour of your co-workers and boss to get an understanding of what's appropriate – especially if you're new to a workplace.

Don't use profanity, even if your manager drops the occasional F-bomb. It may seem minor, but swearing at work can really lose you professionalism points.

Do allow your personality and sense of humour to shine through – though take care not to offend anyone if your humour errs on the quirky side.

Don't forget you're there to do a job. You may be a laid-back beach bum on the weekend, but it's important to maintain focus and productivity as soon as you clock in at work.

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