

Are You a Professional?

How you look, talk, write, act and work determines whether you are a professional or an amateur. Society does not emphasize the importance of professionalism, so people tend to believe that amateur work is normal. Many businesses accept less-than-good results.

Schools graduate students who cannot read. You can miss 15% of the driving-test answers and still get a driver's license. "Just getting by" is an attitude many people accept. But it is the attitude of amateurs.

- A professional learns every aspect of the job. An amateur skips the learning process whenever possible.
- A professional carefully discovers what is needed and wanted. An amateur assumes what others need and want.
- A professional looks, speaks and dresses like a professional. An amateur is sloppy in appearance and speech.
- A professional keeps his or her work area clean and orderly. An amateur has a messy, confused or dirty work area.
- A professional is focused and clear-headed. An amateur is confused and distracted.
- A professional does not let mistakes slide by. An amateur ignores or hides mistakes.
- A professional jumps into difficult assignments. An amateur tries to get out of difficult work.
- A professional completes projects as soon as possible. An amateur is surrounded by unfinished work piled on top of unfinished work.
- A professional remains level-headed and optimistic. An amateur gets upset and assumes the worst.
- A professional handles money and accounts very carefully. An amateur is sloppy with money or accounts.
- A professional faces up to other people's upsets and problems. An amateur avoids others' problems.
- A professional uses higher emotional tones: enthusiasm, cheerfulness, interest, contentment. An amateur uses lower emotional tones: anger, hostility, resentment, fear, victim.
- A professional persists until the objective is achieved. An amateur gives up at the first opportunity.
- A professional produces more than expected. An amateur produces just enough to get by.
- A professional produces a high-quality product or service. An amateur produces a medium-to-low quality product or service.
- A professional earns high pay. An amateur earns low pay and feels it's unfair.
- A professional has a promising future. An amateur has an uncertain future.
- The first step to making yourself a professional is to decide you ARE a professional...
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