

Chapter 5 Following Dolores



Veronica hired Amelia and helped her to fill out some paperwork. Then Veronica explained that they were very shorthanded. “A housekeeper on the third floor just quit,” she said. “Can you start today?”

“Uh, okay,” said Amelia, reluctantly.

“Just follow Dolores,” said Veronica. “She can show you what to do.”

So Amelia put on the black and white uniform that Veronica gave her. And for the next eight hours, she helped Dolores. Dolores was a very pleasant woman who knew a lot about this job. She had been a housekeeper at this hotel for twenty-two years. Dolores spoke to Amelia above the noise of the vacuum, giving her specific instructions about where to put the shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, and soaps in the bathroom.

Amelia tried to imagine the number of times Dolores had gone through this process. “What a miserable job,” thought Amelia as Dolores pushed and pulled her heavy cart, opened and closed doors, stripped off dirty sheets and put on clean ones, sprayed the mirrors with one bottle and the counter tops with another, and scrubbed out bathtubs awkwardly on her hands and knees.



Amelia felt like crying but stopped herself. She thought about the words she had said in Mexico: *"I can do anything for a while."*

"Amelia," said Dolores in Spanish. "Are you listening? You need to fold the end of the toilet paper into a little triangle—like this."

Amelia nodded her head. "Yes, I'm listening," she said. But she definitely felt like crying again.

Answer the questions.

1. Who hired Amelia? What did she help Amelia to fill out?
2. What did Veronica explain? Who just quit?
3. What did Amelia put on?
4. What did she do for the next eight hours?
5. What was Dolores like? What did she know a lot about?
6. How long had she been a housekeeper at this hotel?
7. What did Dolores give specific instructions about?
8. What did Amelia try to imagine?
9. What did Dolores push and pull?
10. What did Dolores do with the dirty and clean sheets?
11. How did she scrub out bathtubs?
12. What did Amelia feel like doing?

A Conversation with Her Supervisor

Practice the dialog with a partner.



A: I need you to fill out some paperwork.

B: Okay, I can do that.

A: We're very shorthanded right now. A housekeeper on the third floor just quit.

B: Really?

A: Can you start today?

B: Uh, okay.

A: Just follow Dolores. She can show you what to do.

Check the good ideas.

You are offered a job that you don't really want. Check (✓) the things that are good to do. Write other ideas on the lines below.

accept the job reluctantly

cry a lot at work

refuse to take the job

have a positive attitude

continue to look for other jobs

think you can do anything for a while

work for a few days and then quit

remember how much you need the money

follow instructions and do a good job

hope for a promotion in the future

Listening

Listen to the sentences. Write the missing word or words.

1. Veronica hired Amelia and helped her to fill out some _____.
2. Then Veronica explained that they were very _____.
3. "A _____ on the third floor just _____," she said.
4. Amelia put on the _____ and white uniform that Veronica gave her.
5. And for the next _____, she helped Dolores.
6. Dolores was a very _____ woman who knew a lot about this job.
7. She had been a housekeeper at this hotel for twenty-two _____.
8. Dolores spoke to Amelia above the _____ of the _____.
9. She told her where to put the _____, conditioner, body lotion, and soaps.
10. Amelia _____ like crying but _____ herself.

Pronunciation

Check (✓) *d*, *t*, or *id* to show the pronunciation of the final sound in the past-tense verbs below.

	d	t	id		d	t	id
1. folded	_____	_____	_____	6. nodded	_____	_____	_____
2. stripped off	_____	_____	_____	7. tried	_____	_____	_____
3. hired	_____	_____	_____	8. stopped	_____	_____	_____
4. sprayed	_____	_____	_____	9. pulled	_____	_____	_____
5. scrubbed	_____	_____	_____	10. pushed	_____	_____	_____

What about you?

Circle **Yes** or **No**. Then write questions and ask your partner.

Yes **No** 1. I sometimes fill out paperwork.

Do you sometimes fill out paperwork?

Yes **No** 2. I sometimes work with people who know a lot about their jobs.

Yes **No** 3. I want to work in the same place for twenty-two years.

Yes **No** 4. I understand when someone gives me specific instructions.

Yes **No** 5. I go through the same process at work every day.

Yes **No** 6. I sometimes feel like crying at work.

Yes **No** 7. I think I can do anything for a while.

Topics for Discussion or Writing

1. Why is it difficult to be shorthanded at work?
2. What things do you do at work or at home every day?
3. Why do you think Amelia felt like crying at work? What do you think she needs to do?