



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei: Welcome to 6 Minute English! I'm Feifei,

Neil: And I'm Neil.

Feifei: In today's programme... what's that smell, Neil? Have you been smoking?

Neil: Smoking? Me? Absolutely not, no.

Feifei: Well, I'm sure I can smell it on your clothes.

Neil: It's not me. Smoking is against the rules here: in fact, it's against the law.

Feifei: Yes that's true. It's been in the news a lot recently and with more and more employers banning smoking in the workplace, today we're talking about rules and regulations at work. Neil what do you think about rules at work – are they a necessary evil or are you a bit of a rebel?

Neil: Ah, you know me, I'm a rebel through and through! Let's hear from some other people to find out about some of the rules and regulations they have at their workplace.

Voice 1: *I'm actually wearing jeans at work today and I think it's good to be able to be comfortable when you come to work because you feel more relaxed and you can work a bit better.*

Voice 2: *In some countries and cultures, giving gifts as a business gift is very important, for example I lived in Japan for a couple of years and that at*

New Year's holidays and at various other times of the year, it was very important to give gifts.

Person 3: *At my workplace, we are not allowed to give out personal numbers because it's a privacy issue and you just don't know what might happen, so it's for our own protection as well as in the interest of the company.*

Feifei: So a few different rules there but Neil what's the best way to talk about rules and regulations at work?

Neil: Well, I can't answer that Feifei! You know the rules of this programme don't you?

Feifei: What do you mean?

Neil: We always have to ask the very lovely Business Betty to answer our question, and I think I can hear her now...

Neil / FF: It's Business Betty!

Neil: Hello Betty and may I say you're looking very very lovely today...

BB: Thank you very much and what is today's topic?

Feifei: It's rules and regulations.

BB: OK, let's look at some useful language for talking about rules and regulations at work. To start with, you can say that something is 'against company policy'. For example, smoking in the office.

Feifei: Smoking in the office is against company policy.

BB: Smoking in the office is against company policy. Or accepting gifts.

Neil: Accepting gifts is against company policy.

BB: Good Neil. Another useful phrase is 'I'm sorry, but we're not allowed.'

Feifei: So we could say, I'm sorry, but we're not allowed to accept gifts.

Neil: I'm sorry, but we're not allowed to give out personal details.

BB: 'I'm sorry, but we're not allowed'. That's quite a formal phrase, but you can use it in most situations. If you want to use a much more informal phrase Feifei, you can say 'I'm afraid that's a no-no' when someone asks you if they can do something.

Neil: Are we allowed to wear shorts at work?

Feifei: I'm afraid that's a no-no.

Neil: Can I have John's home phone number?

Feifei: I'm afraid that's a no-no too.

BB: So you can say that something's 'against company policy'. You can use the phrase 'I'm sorry, but we're not allowed' and then we've got an informal phrase 'I'm sorry, that's a no-no'. Is that enough for you?

Neil: That's absolutely wonderful, thanks Betty.

BB: Well if there's nothing else, I'll be on my way.

Feifei: Thanks for coming Betty.

Neil: Bye Betty...

BB: Bye!

Neil: She's just the best, isn't she?

Feifei: I know - I don't know what we'd do without her. So Neil, are you ready for a role-play about rules?

Neil: Only if I can be the boss!

Feifei: I'm afraid that's a no-no.

Neil: Ha ha, very funny. I like that. Is it against company policy?

Feifei: Ha ha, funny, yourself.

Neil: So what's the situation?

Feifei: OK, we work at the same place. I've been there for years, and you're new, you've been with the company for about a week and you want to know if you're allowed to do certain things. Do you think you can manage that?

Neil: I'll do my best. Right, getting ready...

Feifei: Ready?

Neil: Let's do it.

Role-play

Neil: *Hello Feifei!*

Feifei: *Hi Neil! How are you settling in?*

Neil: *Oh, quite well, everybody's very friendly and everything but there are still a few things I'm a bit confused about though.*

Feifei: *Oh, anything I can help with?*

Neil: *Well yes, the thing is, I know we're not allowed to smoke inside but what about outside? Are we allowed to smoke in the car park?*

Feifei: *No, I'm sorry but we're not allowed. Smoking's against company policy, even in the car park.*

Neil: *OK, I thought so. I just wanted to check. And I was wondering, what about wearing shorts at work? Is that allowed?*

Feifei: *No, wearing shorts, that's a big no-no.*

Neil: *Hmm but I saw Charlie wearing shorts on Monday and I thought -*

Feifei: *Noooo... Monday was his day off and he just popped in to pick something up. Wearing jeans at work is against company policy, definitely. It's not very business-like.*

Neil: *Oh, right, I see. OK and I wanted to go home early on Friday. I guess that's not allowed either, is it?*

Feifei: *No, I'm afraid it isn't.*

Feifei: So that's the end of the role play, how was it for you Neil?

Neil: Yep very good, but my word – what a lot of rules, I'm glad we don't have as many as that here at BBC Learning English!

Feifei: Yes I know. We're quite relaxed here. Join us again soon for another episode of 6 Minute English. Bye.

Neil: Bye!

Rules: Key phrases

Talking about rules and regulations	Smoking in the office is against company policy.
	Accepting gifts is against company policy.
	I'm sorry, but we're not allowed to give out personal details.
	I'm afraid that's a no-no.