

# PERSONAL BUSINESS AT WORK DURING LUNCH

by Rabbi Yisroel Belsky ztl

## QUESTION 50: PERSONAL BUSINESS AT WORK DURING LUNCH

*There is some personal business that I sometimes do during my lunch hour. I told my boss about it, and he said as long as I do it on my own time (e.g. during lunch) that's fine. When I use the phone for this purpose at lunch, it might be that the person in the next cubicle can overhear, and he may be wondering, why is that Orthodox Jew doing that non-work activity during work hours. Would it reduce the potential for chillul Hashem if I mention it to the person in the next cubicle, so he doesn't get the wrong impression? Is doing that in any way an obligation of mine, i.e. to reduce the potential appearances of chillul Hashem, even when one is not doing anything wrong?*

### RABBI BELSKY

Sure. A non-Jewish person who looks at an Orthodox person definitely thinks (and rightly so) that the Orthodox person has a higher standard. And here he might think that you are moonlighting on the company's time. He may begin to think that this is what all Orthodox Jews do, and that is a real basis for chillul Hashem. By the way, this issue should be on our minds constantly. Imagine what would be if all Orthodox Jews would steer clear of any shady practice in any shape or form what-so-ever. The kiddush Hashem would change the world. And look at the damage done when an exception hits the news, Hashem yerachem (may G-d have mercy).

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## NEXT WEEK'S QUESTION 51: SUIT FOR DRY CLEANER

*A few months ago I gave my dry cleaner dark blue pants and a black jacket, and he said he would charge me for \$3 for each item, rather than \$5 for a suit. Last week I brought in black pants and a black jacket that weren't from the same suit, but looked as if they were. If the dry cleaner charges me the \$5 price for a suit, should I tell him they are not from one suit, since I know that he is strict in this regard, or can I just put the items on the counter and not say anything, and let him make his own determination?*

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