Cubicles provide an airy, open office space and create an opportunity for relationship building and teamwork with your colleagues. However, having many people in close proximity can result in some issues. Here’s a few tips to create a productive work environment:

**Personal Hygiene Rules**
- Personal cleanliness is important. Be aware of personal odors and minimize them at the office.
- No grooming in the cubicles. That includes nail trimming/filing, flossing, applying cologne/perfume, applying make-up, fixing hair, etc.

**Personal Problems**
- Tread lightly when it comes to discussing troubling personal events with co-workers in their cubicles.
- Don’t console your co-worker in their cube. Invite them into a private area to discuss and to possibly let out a good cry.

**Illness**
- Germs can easily spread to those working at neighboring cubes. Consider taking a sick day or working remote if an available option.
- Keep tissues and sanitizer in the office for when flu season rolls around.

**Messy Work Environment**
- Keep your space clean and organized. Tidy up paperwork and get it filed away as soon as possible.
- Find an alternate spot to hang coats or purses, not over the cubicle walls.

**Eating in Your Cubicle**
- Scents from one cube can easily waft over the short walls and becoming a nuisance to other cube dwellers. Some scents may create issues for other employees by irritating allergies or causing nausea.
- Don’t keep leftovers or open food in desk drawers in the cubes. That is just asking for an insect invasion or even mold problems.
Tip Sheet: Cubicle Etiquette 101

Phones
- Don’t disturb others while they are on a business call. Come back at a later time when the co-worker is no longer on the phone.
- Keep your cell phones on vibrate or silent when at the office. While one employee may love his or her new ringtone, it will probably drive everyone else insane.

Privacy
- Get permission before borrowing items from someone else’s desk. Just because cubes are open, doesn’t mean the office supplies on a neighboring desk are up for grabs.
- Post notices when you need private work time with no interruptions.
- Congregating in groups right next to a cube is a disruption to the cube owner. If it’s an important business-related discussion, it should move to a conference room.
- Don’t discuss personal or confidential matters with employees in cubes.

Sounds in a Cubicle
- “Library voices” are recommended when possible.
- Listen to your favorite jams from headphones, not the computer speakers.
- Don’t shout over the cubicles; get up and walk over to the person.
- Don’t use speakerphones in cubicles; it’s disruptive to others nearby and detracts privacy from the person on the other end of the line.

Although the cubicle setting promotes collaboration and teamwork, when sharing such close quarters disruptions are inevitable. If you find bothersome behaviors occurring in the cubicles, politely address the issue. Saying something simple can be an effective way to address the problem. It may feel awkward for a moment, but that will soon pass and chances are all involved will appreciate being able to focus their attention on their work instead of the disruption.