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для студентов специальностей

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Business etiquette

Business etiquette is about building relationships with other people. Etiquette is not about rules & regulations but is about providing basic social comfort and creating an environment where others feel comfortable and secure, this is possible through better communication.

Business etiquette differs from region to region and from country to country. This creates a complex situation for people as it is hard to balance the focus on both international business etiquette and other business activities at the same time. Therefore, a wise step is to focus on some key pillars of business etiquette.

Etiquette is a set of unwritten rules that apply to social situations, professional workplaces and relationships. In the business world, good business etiquette means that you act professionally and exercise proper manners when engaging with others in your profession. Good business etiquette is a valuable skill-set that will make you stand out from others, enhance your chances at success and help you land that dream job.

In business, the relationships you build are critical. Establishing good rapport is significant if you want to progress your professional future, take on new clients, impress your boss or close that final sale. The way to build positive relationships in the business world is by exercising good etiquette, specifically by exhibiting top-notch communication skills. If others are speaking, give them your full attention and make eye contact to let them know you are engaged in the conversation. This is known as active listening. When it is your turn to speak, be clear and concise, and avoid jargon that your audience would not understand. Add a smile and a handshake so others find you pleasant to work with.

Good business etiquette is the recipe for advancing your career. In the business world, people with good etiquette are rewarded for their professional and polite skills. For example, an employee who arrives at a meeting on time (or early) and is ready to take notes has a better chance of impressing his supervisor than the employee who shows up to the meeting late, and forgets to bring a pen. Those who exemplify good business etiquette are proving that they respect their position, job, coworkers and take their performance seriously. As such, these individuals win promotions and get ahead in their careers.

Business etiquette is an integral part of different countries' and regions' business culture. Etiquette encompasses the prescriptive elements of culture—the things people are expected to do and say, or to avoid doing and saying. As the globalization of industries and marketplaces bring managers ever closer to unique cultures around the world, it is more important than ever for managers and small business owners to understand why business etiquette is important.

Dress and appearance is another important facet of etiquette. Business people are expected to dress professionally, or at least to take cues from those around them as to what is acceptable. Time sensitivity is another element; some cultures place emphasis on punctuality, and others see punctuality as a sign of eagerness or even

hastiness. And, of course, the way in which you act or conduct yourself, especially towards others.

Learning the rules of business etiquette is not hard to do, it is not costly, and it is the best professional development tool any business person can use to increase their chances of success. People truly desire to do business with those that make them comfortable and know how to best handle themselves in a variety of situations. Practicing good business etiquette is well worth the investment and pays back in spades.

Good business etiquette allows your business to put its best foot forward and can protect business owners and employees from internal and external conflicts by setting a high standard for behavior by all. Business etiquette is a set of standards for behavior in which individuals treat everyone respectfully and display good manners in all interactions. Proper etiquette sets a tone for clients and customers that the business has a productive and successful environment, and the impression created when everyone displays professional manners helps the company's profitability.

Greeting, introducing and saying *Good bye*

It's best to begin by using formal greetings in most business situations, and then listen to how your co-workers or business partners greet you. It's a good idea to wait until someone speaks casually with you before you speak casually with them. You may find that people will begin to use casual greetings with you over time, as you get to know each other better. Formal greetings are also used when you meet older people.

These are formal ways of saying "hello", they are *Good morning*, *Good afternoon*, or *Good evening* which change depending on the time of day. Keep in mind that *Good night* is only used to say *Good bye*, so if you meet someone late in the day, remember to greet them with *Good evening*, rather than *Good night*. *Good morning* can be made more casual by simply saying *Morning*. You can also use *Afternoon* or *Evening* as informal greetings. You can greet people using *How are you?* and *How do you do?*

Greetings *It's nice to meet you* or *Pleased to meet you* are formal and polite. If you say this to someone when you meet him or her for the first time, it will make you seem courteous. Remember to only use these greetings the **first** time you meet someone. Next time you see the person you can show that you remember him or her by saying *It's nice to see you again*.

If you need to introduce yourself

Introducing yourself for the first time in a business meetings or formal situations is important. Many times the introduction is the first contact that you have with clients, bosses, partners or coworkers. Doing it correctly gives a strong first impression.

Intro Sentences:

- *I don't believe we have met before, I'm* (or: *my name is.....*)
- *I don't think we have formally met yet, I'm.....* (or: *my name is.....*)
- *I just wanted to introduce myself, I'm*(or: *my name is.....*).

Letting them know your position:

- *I am responsible for* (Example: *sales and marketing at Virgin Records, accounts and services for the Brazilian offices*)
- *I am in charge of* (Example: *research and development, environmental control*)
- *I am* (position) (A doctor at the Mainland Hospital).

Together these create sentences such as:

- *Hello, I don't believe we have met before, I'm Jake Manning. I'm responsible for quality control at Timmins Bakery.*

- *Good afternoon. I just wanted to introduce myself, I'm Lorena Tibbs. I'm in charge of overseeing the new developments on the Westside Site.*
- *Hello, I don't think we have formally met yet, my name is Karen Armstrong. I'm a research student here in the Bio Lab.*

We are name-tumblers when we introduce ourselves or other people; this is a major problem especially on the telephone. We need to slow down and pronounce our names slowly, clearly and distinctly. At first it may feel as if you are exaggerating your name, but you are really helping the other person and improving overall communication.

If you are introduced

The purpose of introducing people is to give them an opportunity to know each other. Beyond just stating names of the two parties, the person making the introduction is often obligated to establish an acquaintance and help the two parties initiate a conversation.

Business etiquette for greetings dictates that people stand up when being introduced. If there is some reason that you can't stand up to greet a business associate, apologize and explain why. Smile, make eye contact and introduce yourself. Don't assume that someone else will take charge of the introductions. Most business greetings include a simple, firm handshake. Pay attention to names, and always introduce the "less important" person to the "more important person." Business etiquette dictates that clients should be considered the "more important person," even more so than the boss. Run this by your boss beforehand, however. Avoid using people's first names unless you're invited to do so.

If you want to introduce people to each other, then it's important to get the timing right. You don't want to end up having blundered before the introductions have even begun by introducing the wrong people to each other or by interrupting a fantastic conversation just to get the details out of the way. Here's what you need to know:

- If you find yourself in conversation with two people who don't know each other, try to introduce them as soon as possible. This can get a little tricky. Let's say you're with your college roommate, Amanda, when you run into your friend from high school, Jake, who launches into a story about a mutual friend. Poor Amanda will be standing there feeling awkward and bored while Jake rambles on. It's important to find an opening so that you can include Amanda into the conversation.

- You should avoid introducing someone to people who are in the middle of a serious conversation. Maybe you're at a work event with a client, and you've been eager to introduce him to your boss. While this is an important introduction that should be made, you should avoid doing so if your boss seems to be entangled in a deep conversation with another person. You should wait for an opening, when your boss doesn't seem extremely absorbed; making introductions at the wrong time can lead people to not hit it off as well as they could.

The art of making introductions includes four steps:

- **FIRST**, state the name of the person being introduced to. This is the ‘higher-ranking’ person. Figure out which person of the two has a higher rank or authority in a social setting. This is important to know because the person of lesser rank or authority should always be presented to the person of higher rank or authority.

In general, in a social setting, gender is the "trump card" and determines the higher rank; women are always ranked over men, unless the man is significantly older than the woman.

After that, age is the next determining factor; an older person ranks over a younger person, which can be a helpful distinction if both people are of the same gender.

Introduce a local guest to a guest from out-of-town. *“Charlie, this is Debbie. Debbie is my colleague from work. Debbie, Charlie is visiting me from New York. We shared an apartment when we were at Columbia together.”*

All other things being equal, the person you've known the longest should be named first: introduce your junior friend to your senior friend.

“Debra, meet Ann.”

For social introductions, men are usually introduced to women, as a sign of respect. BUT Gender is not a factor in business settings, where rank is more important.

Customarily, a number of people introduce a man to a woman out of respect, regardless of the guidelines presented above.

When introducing a man and a woman at work, consider their positions and seniorities alone. Outside of work, it may be more appropriate to introduce a man to a woman, in contradiction to the above guidelines. Be judicious and sensitive.

Here's what you need to know:

- ✓ Your boss will be of greater rank or authority than your colleague, partner, or best friend.

- ✓ Introduce a relatively junior professional to a senior professional. *“Ms. Director, I would like to introduce Mr. Nakamura, the Chief Product Architect for our software division.”*

- ✓ Your senior colleague takes precedence over your junior colleague.

- ✓ Introduce a peer from your company to a peer from another organization. *“Melissa, I would like you to meet Steve, our Systems Engineer. Steve, Melissa Hoffmann is from Marketing. She is our Account Manager for Wal-Mart.”*

- ✓ Your customer or client should be introduced to your employees.

- ✓ Introduce a team of employees to a customer. *“Mr. Sing, I would like to introduce our plastics engineering team. This is Mark Smith, Jessica Ramos and Liang Zhu. All three participated in last week’s teleconference regarding product definition.”*

- ✓ Introduce a host to a guest. *“Serge, I don’t think you have met my daughter, Anna. Anna arranged for all the food at this festival party. Anna, Serge is my Project Manager.”*

✓ If you are introducing people of equal rank in the business world, then introduce the person you don't know as well to the person you know better. You should say the name of the person you know better first.

- **SECOND**, say *I would like to introduce* or, *please meet* or, *this is*, etc.
- **THIRD**, state the name of the person being introduced. This is the 'lower-ranking' person.

Always state the name of the person with higher rank and present the person of lower rank to them. This can be a bit confusing, but it basically means that you should state the name of the person of higher rank, and then "present" the other person to them. This makes the person of higher rank stand out as the more important person in the situation.

- **FINALLY**, offer some details about each, as appropriate. Add a snippet of information about a topic of common interest between the two parties. Do not elaborate. This will help them connect and pursue a conversation.

For example, you might say: "*Mr. Boss, may I present Mark Jones. Mr. Boss is my boss. Mark Jones is my associate.*"

Make a formal introduction correctly. Most formal introductions will relate to the workplace, but they can also take place during formal social events, or if you're with distinguished people. If you're introducing people in a formal setting, then you should use the first and last names of the people, along with the phrases, *May I present*, *I'd like to introduce*, or *Have you met...* Some people think you should not use the word *introduce*, as it can cause confusion or come off as too direct, but it's up to you to decide.

Intro Sentences:

I'd like to introduce you to

There's someone I'd like you to meet, this is

Have you met?

Letting them know the position of the person being introduced:

He/She is responsible for..... (In plural: *They are responsible for.....*)

She/He is in charge of (In plural: *They are in charge of.....*)

He/She is my (followed by position in relation to you, for example: *colleague at the office*)

Together these create sentences such as:

I'd like to introduce you to Mark, he is in charge of human resources.

There is someone I'd like you to meet, this is Laura. She is my wife.

Have you met John? He is responsible for the shoe department.

I'd like to introduce you to Jenn and Stacy, they are in charge of customer relations.

Make an informal introduction correctly. For a less formal occasion, such as your backyard barbecue, you can simply present both people to one another by name by saying something like, "*Fitzwilliam Darcy, Elizabeth Bennet.*" You can also connect the people more casually and say something like, "*I've been dying for you to meet...*" In an informal setting, you can worry less about how to phrase everything and

more about getting people talking. Using first names only is fine in informal situations.

Make a group introduction correctly. In this case, you will need to spend a little time introducing the newcomer to each individual of the group unless it's a small, informal group where a general introduction would suffice and it's neither time-consuming nor disruptive to name each member of the group while you have the group's attention.

Though you may think it's funny or just easier to say, "*Mary, this is everybody. Everybody, this is Mary,*" this doesn't actually help get a conversation going. Besides, it's rude to "everybody," because it makes it seem like **you** don't think it's worth it for Mary to get to know each person. Of course, use your discretion: if you're at a loud party and Mary just got there, it may be overwhelming to introduce her to twelve new faces immediately. Instead, ease Mary into the conversation and introduce her to a few people at a time.

For more formal, larger groups, introduce the newcomer to the whole group first, then take the newcomer to each person and introduce by name: "*Caroline, this is Fitzwilliam, my boss; Lydia, this is Fitzwilliam, my boss,*" etc. Continue working your way around the group in this manner.

Speaking to a group you should move your eyes from one person to another, so try to keep eye-contact with the whole group.

If somebody doesn't introduce you in a group of people by mistake be calm and just wait for a convenient time to introduce yourself.

Be delicate when you don't know a person's name. We've all been there. You try to introduce two people when you realize that you just completely forgot the name of the person standing in front of you. There are two approaches you can take:

Politely excuse yourself and say, "*I'm so sorry, would you mind reminding me of your name?*" Or try to be sneaky, if the situation is rather informal. Say, "*Have the two of you met?*" Then pause and wait for the people to introduce themselves. This isn't a perfect maneuver, but it can help you in a pinch, especially if you've forgotten the name of a person you've met several times!

Yet another technique is to introduce a third person. Say, at an office holiday party, you fail to remember the name of a colleague. Turn to your colleague and say, "I don't think you have met my husband, Frank." Frank and your colleague exchange greetings: "Hi, I am Frank. Nice to meet you." Your colleague reveals her name: "Hi, I am Isabella David."

At any rate, avoid embarrassing yourself by using an assumed or a wrong name. Apologize and ask the person to state or confirm his/names.

How do I introduce my parents to my boss?

It depends on the setting. In your parents' home or family member's home on a social occasion, you introduce your boss to your parents. In a public or business setting, you introduce your parents to your boss. Your mother and father are referred to as "mother" and "father," followed by their names. Your boss is referred to by his name, unless he is entitled to an honorific such as doctor, professor, or the honorable.

How should I introduce a well-known person in a meeting, while inviting them to deliver a speech?

Try something like, *"Now I'd like to invite Mr. Smith, who needs no introduction, to say a few words."*

Avoid including in introducing:

a. Using *"should"* or *"must"* in your introduction. This can easily come across as pushy, bossy, and impolite. For example, avoid saying *You must meet*, *You should get to know one another*, or *You must have lots to talk about* (how could you possibly assume that?!).

b. Equally, saying something that requires an action such as shaking hands is also crossing the line of politeness, for example, stating: *"Please shake hands with."*

c. Using *"This is"* when introducing can be a little too informal, and doesn't convey the importance of the introduction for a formal occasion.

d. Forcing someone to meet when they have already made it clear to you that they're not keen to meet the other person. Don't act as rift-healer or belittle their concerns—their desire to not be introduced is their own issue.

Responses to being introduced should be simple, such as *Hello*, or *Nice to meet you* or *Elizabeth has told me so much about you*. Avoid any gushing or flowery language that can appear insincere or old-fashioned. Smart to use the following phrases:

- ✓ *It's very nice to meet you.*
- ✓ *It's a pleasure to meet you.*
- ✓ *Pleased to meet you.*
- ✓ *Pleasure to meet you.*
- ✓ *It's pleased to (finally) meet you.*

How to say goodbye

Formal professional goodbyes

These expressions are best for formal or professional situations when you'll need to end a conversation and say goodbye in situations such as:

- Leaving a business meeting
- Finishing a job interview
- Saying goodbye to senior management at the end of the day/week
- Ending a conversation with your elderly neighbor or your friend's parents
- Communicating with new clients, high-level clients, angry clients

In these situations, you will use more formal or professional language to show respect or to keep a professional tone. Use the example words and expressions below to appropriately end a conversation and say goodbye.

✓ *Have a good day!* Wishing someone a good day, good evening, or good weekend is always a kind gesture. This expression is used both in spoken and in written form, which means you can use it to end a conversation face-to-face, on the telephone or at the end of an email.

✓ *It was wonderful to talk with you. I must be going. I've got to* If you are chatting with someone or talking on the phone, this is a very polite way to end a conversation. Everyone is busy and there is always something else to do (another business meeting, a phone call, children to pick up from school, etc.), so, of course, you cannot talk all day.

✓ *I've got to* is an easy way to give a reason for ending the conversation. For example: "*It was great to talk with you but I must be going. I've got to*

- *join a conference call in 5 minutes*
- *pick up the kids from school*
- *share this information with my boss*
- *get to a meeting*
- *finish running my errands* (To run errands = to make a short, quick trip to do something such as go to the post office, go grocery shopping, buy some milk, pick up the dry cleaning, etc.) You can use any reason you might have but make sure it's true!

✓ *It was great to talk with you. I look forward to seeing you again soon (or talking with you again soon).* Instead of simply saying "goodbye," use this kind expression to end the conversation on a positive note. You can use it for face-to-face conversations or for the telephone – just be careful about using "*seeing you again soon*" vs. "*talking with you again soon.*" Use *see* for face-to-face conversations and *talk* for the telephone.

✓ *It was great to see you again. Have a good day/weekend/evening.* Similar to the previous expression, this provides an alternative expression for saying goodbye in professional settings. And it's particularly nice to hear because everyone is happy at the end of the work day or end of the work week.

Informal professional goodbyes

With colleagues you know well, clients you have developed a relationship with, or people who are acquaintances of yours (not close friends or family, but people you are friendly with), it is appropriate to be a little more relaxed with the language. These expressions are more informal but are still professional and friendly.

You can use the expressions below to end a conversation or say goodbye in situations such as:

- The office with your team and colleagues
- A meeting or a lunch with a regular client
- Networking events
- Trade show or job fair
- Conferences
- Talking with neighbors
- Seeing an acquaintance unexpectedly (for example, seeing someone you know at the grocery store or in a restaurant)

Take care is a simple alternative to goodbye. You can use this expression in speaking situations and at the end of emails. This expression is not normally used

with people we see every day, such as colleagues or close friends. Use this to say goodbye to someone you don't see often.

I'll see you soon. / We'll talk again soon. When you are certain that you will see or talk to someone soon (in a few days or within the next couple of weeks), this is the perfect way to say goodbye.

Have a good one is similar to *have a good day* but is more informal so is best used for people that you are close to or in casual situations. In the United States, for example, this is commonly used when saying goodbye to colleagues at the end of a work day. It's also used in casual speaking situations such as talking to the cashier at the grocery store or coffee shop.

Good seeing you. / Good talking with you are a great way to end a conversation with someone who you haven't spoken to or seen for a while. For example, if you unexpectedly see a client or an acquaintance in a grocery store. Avoid using this for someone we see every day.

How to address people

When you meet someone new, under social or business circumstances, it's important to know how to address the individual standing in front of you. Properly addressing people in different situations shows you're respectful of their position and mindful of not offending them in any way.

Here are 5 tips for properly addressing people in different situations:

✓ In doubt, keep it formal. If you meet someone in a situation and you're unsure of how to address him or her, just stick to formal address, either Sir or Madam. If the person you're addressing feels this is too formal, they will let you know. For example, you may say, *Nice to meet you, Sir!* The person may answer, *Please, call me Bill.*

✓ Use Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms. when you know their last name. Unless told otherwise, and if you know their last name, use the person's surname with their title when you meet them. In the case of a man, *Mr* [ˈmɪstə] (irrespective of marital status), and in the case of a woman the honorific may depend on her marital status: if she is unmarried, it is *Miss* [mɪs], if she has been married it is *Mrs* [ˈmɪsɪz], and if her marital status is unknown, or it is not desired to specify it, *Ms* [mɪz]. In business, the proper way to refer to a woman is *Ms.*, regardless of their marital status. This is more than a passing fad; it was established in the seventeenth century as an abbreviation for *Mistress*.

✓ Use professional addresses when applicable. Are you addressing a member of the medical or academic profession? If so, be aware of their title as relates to their profession. This is where the use of Dr. and Professor come in. These titles are used equally for men and women.

✓ If you're still not sure, ask. Sometimes it doesn't hurt to ask someone how he or she wishes to be addressed. Use formal address first, and then ask them if they prefer something else. When you know their name, you can ask this: "*May I call you Jane?*" or more casually, "*Is it okay if I call you Rachel?*" They will either say *yes*, or tell you what they prefer.

✓ When corresponding in writing, be formal...at first! When you are writing to someone for the first time, use a formal address: Mr or Ms + the person's last name if you know it. If you can't find the last name, use a generic title such as Sir or Madam. The respondent may address you by your first name and sign off with their first name. In today's business world, the following correspondence is usually more casual. If you write back a second time you can use the respondent's letter as a guideline. If they address you by your first name and sign off with their first name, you can do the same.

Use common sense when deciding what to call people. The general rule is that you should introduce people to each other by what you normally call them. For example, if you're great friends with your former professor, Lucy Houston, you can just introduce her to your boyfriend as *Lucy*, if that's what you always call each other. If you're in a more formal situation and the person has not given you permission to call him or her by his or her first name, and you have always called the person by *Dr.* or *Mr.*, then you should keep doing that.

When in doubt, go with the more formal option. It's better to have your boss say, *You can call me Bob instead of Mr.* instead of having your boss bristle when you call him *Bob* instead of *Mr.*

Refer to individuals frequently by their names: Take the time and make the effort to pay attention to the name of the person you are being introduced to. A person's name means everything to them. To build rapport with a client, mention their name at least three times during the conversation. It will help you remember their name and make a connection - they will remember you. A person's name is the sweetest music to their ears.

The 5R Technique for Remembering Names

Here are five simple tips that can help you remember names. For an example, suppose that you attend an informal gathering of professionals from the financial industry; *Renuka* is one of the attendees.

Resolve to remember. Habitually, you fail to remember names because you do not make a conscious effort at it. When a person states his/her name, by reflex you reply with a *Nice to meet you* while your mind is possibly busy judging the person's appearance or processing some other information. Consequently, your short-term memory registers the person's name briefly and discards it before long. Commit to pay attention to the person's name and deposit it in your longer-term memory.

Review. Ask for a spelling of the person's name. If required, ask the spelling of how the person's name is pronounced. For instance, *Renuka* is pronounced *Rae-nu-ka* — the 'e' is pronounced 'ae' as in *aerospace*. Additionally, note that *Renuka* sounds, for example, like *Rebecca*.

Relate. Associate the person's name with somebody you may previously know. Suppose that *Renuka* states she grew up in Hyderabad, India. Then, you recall that your former colleague, *Pavan* is from the same city too. You can say, "*Renuka, my previous project manager, Pavan, is from Hyderabad too. He spoke often of the Museum of Clocks there. His wife had prepared ethnic food for me; it was hot and spicy.*"

Repeat. During your conversations, state the person's name as frequently as appropriate: "*Renuka, what are your thoughts,*" or, "*That is an interesting observation, Renuka,*" or, "*Thank you for your time, Renuka.*"

Record. Following your conversation, step aside if possible and record the person's name along with a few other details to help capture an impression of the person. For instance, record "*Renuka. Sounds like Rebecca. Grew up in Hyderabad, India — same city as Pavan. Black-coloured Mercedes Benz Coupe. MBA in finance from Columbia University. Risk analyst at American Express.*"

What to Do When You Forget a Person's Name

Despite your best efforts, on occasion you may not be able recollect the name of another person

Even if you were introduced minutes earlier. In such cases, simply ask, "*I am sorry, I forgot your name.*" Do not elaborate or try to qualify. Alternately, ask for the person's business card if appropriate

Another familiar situation is when you run into someone you know—you can remember several details of the person and your prior interactions,—but cannot recall the person’s name. This person may assume that you know his/her name and hence may not self-introduce. You may go through an entire conversation trying to call to mind this person’s name. Simply say, “*Forgive me. I remember we met at last year’s sales conference. I can remember everything about you, but, I can’t recall your name. Could you please repeat it for me?*”

Handshake, hand-kiss and cheek-kiss

There are only few physical contacts that are appropriate in business; the most important and acceptable is your handshake. Your handshake is a non-verbal clue that indicates to the other person whether or not you are a take charge person. For example, a firm and strong handshake suggests that you are decisive, in control. Now think of the impression you had after shaking hands with someone that presented a weak, slippery or lifeless handshake. What did that make you think of them?

The rules for shaking hands are: extend your hand with the thumb up, clasp the other person's entire palm, give two or three pumps from the elbow, avoiding both the painful "bone crusher" and the off-putting "wet fish" shake, and look at the person directly in the eyes with a smile.

The shaking of hands in the business world has become gender neutral. Either can extend their hand. But in social occasions mind, please, that the man should wait for the woman to initiate the handshake. In business environment the oldest or the most powerful person will initiate handshaking.

If you are sitting and someone approaches and offers to shake your hand, you should stand up and shake the person's hand.

The other possible physical contact is cheek kiss or air kiss. You may use it only in the case you know each other very well and this type of greeting is rather informal.

The corporate culture of the field in which you work will influence whether a hand shake or kiss is more appropriate. If you work within a conservative field, such as banking or consulting, handshakes are the norm. However, if you work within a more forward field, such as fashion or entertainment, a kiss may be the way to go.

A hand-kiss is initiated by the person receiving the greeting by holding out their hand with the palm facing downward; or by the person giving the greeting, by extending a hand to grasp the recipient's hand. The person kissing bows towards the offered hand and (often symbolically) touches the knuckles with their lips, while lightly holding the offered hand. However, the lips do not actually touch the hand in modern tradition, especially in a formal environment where any intimate or romantic undertones could be vastly inappropriate. The gesture is short, lasting less than a second. And the man should wait for the woman to initiate hand-kissing.

Hand-kissing has become rare and is mostly restricted to the conservative upper class or diplomats.

Smile: This seems very simple, but it's amazing how people's moods and words are misjudged because their expressions are often overly-serious. A smile shows that you like yourself; you like your current place in the world and you're happy with the people you're interacting with. No one will say you're crabby if you're smiling. A smile says, I'm approachable and confident.

Make eye contact: Every time a person begins talking to you, look them in the eye and smile first, then get on with the conversation. Also, when you enter a room for a meeting, smile and look around at everyone. If you want to start talking to one person - or even a group - come up to them and smile. Again, this is another way to say, I'm approachable.

Business card etiquette

Let's imagine that you are in a meeting where you will be directly meeting another person (whether it is a boss, a coworker, partner or client). You want to approach this person (or persons) and let them know who you are and possibly your position in your company, or who you work for.

Keeping your professional business cards on hand is a "must" when it comes to reinforcing a strong first impression. A professional business card is not only an essential tool in your executive tool box, but will positively influence how you are perceived by clients and business associates.

It is better if you purchase the best quality card you can afford. Don't skimp on paper stock or design. Your business card should reflect your personal image and attention to detail. Be selective in your choice of font and the size of business card; an odd shape or creative design may be unique, but difficult for others to find or store it.

Be concise with the information provided. While you may be tempted to list off all of your qualifications, save it for your website. Offer only the most pertinent information, including your company name, your first and last name, job title and contact information (to include website or blog).

You might assume that everyone doing business in Europe knows English. While that might be right, keep in mind that European countries are fiercely proud of their own languages. It would be unreasonable to expect from you to learn each and every language spoken by your European business partners, but a token of respect will go a very long way. One of the most effective ways to show your European partners you respect their national identity is to have your business card printed in English on one side, and your partners' language on the other side.

Every introduction does not require a business card exchange. Unless you have made a strong connection, or discussed a potential follow up conversation, keep your business card in your pocket or purse. Handing out your business card to everyone that walks by sends the message you are desperate for business, or peddling a free product.

Before you hand out a business card, it's a polite gesture to ask, "*May I give you my business card and follow up with you next week?*" You have a better chance of reaching the other person in the future if you make the follow up call yourself, rather than waiting for someone to reach out to you.

Keep your cards in an attractive, preferably leather, card case. Discard any cards that have been soiled, dented in the middle or bent at the corners. Never hand out a card that has been held together with a rubber band or has been floating around the bottom of your purse or briefcase. This sends the wrong message about the level of importance you put into your work, which could deter potential clients.

And bring as many business cards as possible. Phrase *I'm out of business cards* is not acceptable.

Remember your business card etiquette. When someone hands you a business card, it is proper etiquette to take a few seconds to look at the card and repeat his or her name. Carefully put the card someplace specific, such as the side of your portfolio pocket or in your own business card case, the opposite side of where

you keep your own cards. A small zipper coin case is often the perfect size to hold business cards you have collected at a networking event. The goal is to show respect for the person and the business card that was given to you.

The best time to send a follow-up email or note is within a few days of the initial meeting. Keep in mind that he or she may have met countless others over the course of the event, so a thoughtful prompting of your meeting and conversation is always welcome. For example, “*It was so nice to meet you at [event name here] recently...I especially enjoyed discussing our mutual admiration of [topic here].*” Keep your email short and friendly, with a call to action.

Dress yourself

Professional speakers and trainers have long asserted that people make up their minds about people they meet for the first time within two minutes. Others assert that these first impressions about people take only thirty seconds to make. As it turns out, both may be underestimates. And sometimes the decisions may occur much faster – think instantaneously or in two seconds.

Whenever we have to make sense of complicated situations or deal with lots of information quickly, we bring to bear all of our beliefs, attitudes, values, experiences, education and more on the situation. Then, we catch the situation to comprehend it quickly.

This ability to think without thinking, to make snap decisions about situations and people in a “blink”, has significant implications for how staff are interviewed and hired. It impacts how we develop friendships with people at work. It affects our networking and business relationship building. It affects who we believe in a work disagreement or confrontation.

Our awareness of the fact that we make snap (often unconscious) judgments about people and situations can provide the opportunity for controlling our “blink” response. As an example, there is the fact that many try-outs for orchestras are now held with the applicant musicians playing behind a screen. All sexual, racial and physical characteristics are eliminated so selectors can concentrate on listening for the best musician.

At the same time, this ability we have as humans, to quickly make judgment calls, saves lives, provides interpersonal insight, recognizes fake artifacts, allows us to assess situations and take action quickly and can even predict the future of a relationship. So, it’s not an ability you want to discard, even if your first snap decisions or judgment calls can also be terribly wrong.

So business attire can play dramatic role when you wish to represent yourselves and it refers to the clothing that employees wear to work. Depending on the workplace, various levels of the formality of business attire are expected and the norm.

As a businessman or woman it is important that you make a good impression. The way you dress, for instance, impacts the way you are perceived by others. Other peoples’ impressions of you should be positive so that they continue doing business with you. To accomplish this, start with your attire. Ask yourself if you look professional, or if your outfit needs some fine-tuning. Looking sloppy, messy and dirty will put off your coworkers and turn away potential clients.

A dress code is a set of standards that companies develop to help provide their employees with guidance about what is appropriate to wear to work. Dress codes range from formal to business casual and casual. The formality of the workplace dress code is normally determined by the number and type of interactions employees have with customers or clients in the workplace. In workplaces that are frequented by clients who expect their counselors to exhibit professionalism and integrity, the dress is often formal.

This includes law offices, financial consulting firms, banks, and some large businesses.

However, even these organizations are relaxing their dress codes. For example, banking giant J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. now allows its employees to wear business casual attire most of the time. In a visit to a law firm, it was noted that employees were dressed in business casual but most had jackets hanging on their office doors.

In workplaces where some employees interact with customers or clients and others do not, an organization may choose to have two dress codes. A more casual dress code is normally adopted for employees with no customer or client contact. This is the dress code that the majority of employees want. Competitive employers allow this dressing for work.

Depending on the organization, the dress code may be written in great detail, or in the case of a casual dress code, very little detail is necessary. Over the years, employees have seen a shift towards a more casual dress standard, even in industries that were previously very formal. Startups, in particular, tend towards a more casual dress code.

In some professions, dress codes are so strict that you call them uniforms. You want everyone to know who the police officer is, for instance. If your company sends out plumbers or cable television installers, your employees are showing up in strangers' homes to do work. In other jobs, dress codes are important because you are representing the company.

Employees that work at clothing stores are often required to wear clothes the store sells. Target requires khaki pants and red shirts so that their employees are easy to spot.

Fast food restaurants require a strict uniform so that it doesn't look like customers have wandered behind the counter.

For office jobs, the person who sits at the front desk might have a stricter dress code than the Chief Information Officer (CIO). Why? Because everyone who walks in off the street sees the receptionist, but you'll only see the CIO if you have an appointment. Or you should become a Steve Jobs.

The dress codes range from traditional and formal to smart casual, business casual, and casual. Your attire needs to be suitable for the workplace. It should be clean, unwrinkled, and look professional. Also, business casual clothing should not be too revealing.

Employees who want to fit well in their workplace, wear the standard clothing that is expected, and often dictated by a written dress code. But, you don't need an official dress code to understand what constitutes appropriate business attire in your workplace. Look at what your boss wears. Observe what other successful employees wear to work. Your observations will tell you all that you need to know about proper and expected business attire for your workplace.

Your best success will come when you emulate the business attire of the favored employees. Draw attention to yourself by the quality and the value of the work you provide, not by the flashiness or fashion-mindedness of your business attire.

If you're a new employee, ask when you receive your job offer what employees are expected to wear to work. Start out a new job by dressing just a little bit better than you believe is the norm in your new workplace to make a good first impression. First impressions are significant and you want yours to be memorable for its positive predictive message.

Workplace success guide books have suggested that **employees need to dress for the job that they want to have, not the job they have**. Usually even in a casual business attire environment, executives usually dress slightly more formally, in business casual attire.

Casual Fridays

The present trend is that employees want to wear business casual attire. When it comes to office attire, employees want to dress more casually. Surveys show that more than a half of employees surveyed said that they prefer more relaxed dress codes. Often companies allow their employees to work comfortably in the work place. Yet, they still need their employees to project a professional image for their customers, potential employees, and community visitors. Business casual dress is the standard for this dress code.

Even in a business casual work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. All seams must be finished. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that has the company logo is encouraged. Sports team, university, and fashion brand names on clothing are generally acceptable.

Certain days can be declared dress down days, generally Fridays. On these days, jeans and other more casual clothing, although never clothing potentially offensive to others, are allowed. If you experience uncertainty about acceptable, professional business casual attire for work, please ask your supervisor or your Human Resources staff.

A casual dress code differs from a business casual dress code in many ways. Chief among them are that in a business casual environment, shirts for men usually have collars and the pants worn are khaki.

Jeans are only proper attire on the weekly jeans day which many companies offer. In a casual workplace, jeans are everyday attire and shirts with or without collars are the norm. You will rarely see men wearing ties or sportcoats in either business casual or casual workplaces unless the employee has a customer or client-facing day planned.

Women have a wider range of options. They can wear skirts, slacks, or dresses in either a casual or business casual workplace. The degree of formality goes up in a business casual environment but it rarely approaches the attire that is worn in a workplace with a formal dress code.

Even in the most casual work environment, your employees' choice of clothing is not a free for all though. After all, in a casual work attire environment, because the

workplace is a job with coworkers and other people around, employees are still asked to maintain a particular standard in clothing worn to work.

A company's objective in establishing a relaxed, casual, and informal work dress code is to enable our employees to work comfortably in the workplace. Yet, certain standards are established so employees are not confused about the meaning of the terms relaxed, casual, and informal dress. Clothing that reveals too much cleavage, your back, your chest, your stomach or your underwear is not appropriate for a place of business. So avoid looks that you would wear to a party, the beach, an athletic competition, to do house cleaning, or to a club. In our work environment, clothing should be pressed and never wrinkled. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable.

In a casual work setting, employees should wear clothing that is comfortable and practical for work, but not distracting or offensive to others. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that has the company logo is encouraged. Sports team, university, and fashion brand names on clothing are generally acceptable.

Dress Code for Travel, Client Interaction, and Trade Shows

While the office setting can be casual because customers don't visit, traveling to see customers, exhibiting at or attending trade shows, and representing the company in the business community, requires different decisions about attire. Business casual dress is the minimum standard that must be observed when you are representing the company or interacting with customers or potential customers.

Before visiting a customer or potential customer ascertain the accepted dress code and match it in your attire. This is especially important when you are traveling globally representing the company as customs and dress may differ from those observed in your country.

Additionally, some community events, when you are representing the company, might require formal dress. These might include Chamber of Commerce and other civic or business development meetings, luncheons, and dinners. Take your cue from other employees who have attended and be observant at the event. Certainly, if you are a speaker at a business event, consider wearing formal dress.

Finally, on the occasions when a customer or a business partner does visit the office, the employee groups with whom the visitor is interacting, should adhere to business casual standards.

One important point to remember, when dressing in either business or business casual attire is that quality is much more important than quantity. Do understand, the total impression that you make on your colleagues and bosses has implications for how you are viewed in your workplace. How you dress is such a simple aspect of your self-presentation to modify that career success and advancement should be more important than your need to express your personality at work. Business attire is important because it sends messages about you—fairly or unfairly—to customers, clients, bosses, company executives, and coworkers. People do judge you by your appearance.

Degrees of Formality in Business Attire

Traditional business attire consisted of:

Men: formal suit, tie, business shirt, upscale sports jackets with ties and a business shirt, leather dress shoes, appropriate conservative leather accessories such as briefcases, portfolios, and diaries. Men were encouraged to keep accessories like watches and cologne subtle.



Women: skirt suits or pant suits with formal business blouses or tops, stockings, closed toe and heel leather shoes, and appropriate business accessories including a briefcase, a leather folder for pads of paper, and a conservative pen. Women were encouraged to keep jewelry, makeup, and perfume subtle and elegant.



Smart casual business attire, just a step down from traditional, formal attire, consists of:

Men: sports jacket with a tie, dress pants, button down or traditional business shirt or nice turtleneck, dress shoes, and attractive accessories as described in traditional business attire.



Women: jacket or dressy sweater, dress pants or skirt, blouse, shirt, top or turtleneck, hose, dress shoes, and accessories as described in traditional business attire.



Business casual attire consists of:

Men: khakis, dress, or Dockers-type pants, shirts or golf-type shirts with collars, sweaters, vests, occasionally an informal jacket and tie, and attractive leather shoes and accessories.



Women: nice pants or skirts, blouses, tops, sweaters, vests, occasionally an informal jacket, and attractive leather shoes and accessories.



Casual business attire consists of:

Men: casual pants and jeans, shirts with collars or not, sweaters, vests, sweatshirts, casual shoes including sandals and athletic wear.



Women: casual pants, skirts, and jeans, blouses, tops, sweaters, vests, sweatshirts, casual shoes including sandals and athletic wear.



Jewelry

Jewelry should be in good taste, with limited visible body piercing.



There are some rules how to choose the smart jewelry for your business attire:

✓ **No Noise.** This rule is surprisingly simple. For best results, stay away from bracelets that clink and necklaces that jingle. Creating noise in an office environment is great if you're chatting up a potential client, but is significantly less impressive if your arm candy erroneously causes it. In order to stay strictly professional, stick with jewelry pieces that are silent.

✓ **Bye-Bye Bling.** Although there are exceptions to this rule, for the most part, major sparkle is an office "don't." Excluding diamond rings or studded diamond earrings. Jewelry with big shine is best for a night on the town or romantic dinner. Work accessories should be minimalistic yet fashionable. Jewelry worn to the office should merely serve as a way to further highlight your overall style and professionalism; it should never be the focal point.

✓ **Classics are Forever.** Because you're avoiding too much bling, you may be left wondering what jewelry you can wear. The answer is easy: keep it classic. Simple studs or huggies are the best earring options, and a watch is the number one accessory for career women. If you feel like adding extra flair, try a simple pendant necklace. When in doubt, stick with a strand of pearls; it's impossible to go wrong.

✓ **Be True to Yourself.** Although rules are a wonderful starting point, your corporate accessories should ultimately be a reflection of your personality. The key to self-expression is a simple test. After accessorizing for the upcoming workday, look

in the mirror. Does your jewelry distract from the professional traits you want to be known for at the office? If the answer is yes, remove the offending piece. When it comes to accessorizing for the corporate world, the old adage, “less is more” has never been truer.

Makeup, Perfume, and Cologne

Remember, that some employees are allergic to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up, so wear these substances with restraint. You might love your gardenia-bomb perfume, but the office is a place to keep scent subtle. If you choose to put on fragrance, remember it’s meant to go on pulse points only and not clothing—it can permeate the whole room.

Hats and Head Covering

Hats are not appropriate in the office. Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honour cultural traditions are allowed.

Hairstyle

Every **WOMAN** needs to pay attention to her appearance. The big part of it is how your hair looks. If you’re having troubles deciding which hairstyle to wear for work tomorrow, check out these 11 best hairstyles for work.

Remember that how your hair looks tells a lot about what kind of person you are. This is especially important when choosing a business hairstyle. These styles bring success – try them!

Move the hair away from your face

Regardless of length and general style of your hair, when it comes to business hairstyles, the most important rule is to never have your hair falling over your face.

This doesn’t mean that fringe hairstyles are out of the question, just adjust them. The fringe should not reach over your eyebrows. If you have a layered hairstyle, pin the shorter parts or style them with hairspray. You should never be in a situation to have to fidget with your hair or to flip your head to get the hair out of your eyes.

Although this may sound like quibbling, if your hair covers any part of your face you may appear as a person who has something to hide. This is not a message you want to send in the business world. Your face should be visible and open, because that is a quality of a confident professional.

The bun is always a good choice

Whenever you’re thinking too much about your hairstyle for work, go with a bun. You can never go wrong with it; it is a classical business look.

Some women think that the bun is too strict or too cold. It may actually appear that way, but you can soften it in a couple of ways; don’t make a firm bun, let a couple of locks stick out from it. Just be careful not to cross the line between having a fun hairstyle and being sloppy.

You can also pin your bun with bobby pins with discreet ornaments, nothing too big or too shiny; bobby pins with small flowers the same color as your shirt will do perfectly.

And what about the ponytail?

A lot of people think that ponytails are not really the best hairstyle for work. But as long as you don't just tie your hair as you would do if you're going for a run, a ponytail can look great.

It is acceptable to choose middle ponytail, not too high or too low. The high ponytail is pretty much a hairstyle for little girls whereas the low one looks like you didn't want to bother with your hairstyle at all.

The beautiful and slightly forgotten braids

Braids are a beautiful hairstyle and can look very professional. Furthermore, they are a way better choice than a ponytail if you want your style to last longer without hairsprays and gels.

Half up half down

The general rule to make it is very simple. Take the upper half of your hair and tie it in a ponytail. Let the lower half hang loose. That's it – you're done.

The French roll

The French roll or the French twist is a very classic and sophisticated hairstyle. It also makes one of the best hairstyles for work – especially combined with a strict dress code.

Blunt bob

If you have fine and straight hair, then blunt bob is just right for you. You can add layers in the front and make it bouncy.

Short bob

Bob cut is very popular among office goers. Jaw-length bobs are good as they are neither too short nor too long. With short bob be assured to get compliments from colleagues.

Classic bob

Classic bob shapes are excellent for all ages and frame the face while simultaneously coming off as polished and professional.

But, it goes a long way in influencing the impression of your boss, coworkers and customers about your capabilities and professionalism. Professional business attire is a must in any workplace.

Traditionally, many office jobs for **MEN** have required more conservative haircuts in order to maintain a well-groomed appearance among the staff members. Recommended haircuts are typically anything from super-short crew cuts to a slightly longer cut or classic taper haircut.

When fashion-forward men enter the workforce, they might find it difficult to abide by company code and find a style that suits them at the same time. Of course, not every white collar worker wants a mohawk, but some men crave a more stylish hairdo that fits the confines of a traditional business hairstyle.

So what makes a good business hairstyle for work or the office? There are three essential components to a good business hairstyle:

- **Conservativeness:** This doesn't have to mean "plain" or "boring." The aesthetic of the business hairstyle is often more laid-back and nondescript, but it can still be stylish. In other words, a mullet with a spiky top would be a bad business hairstyle.

- **Cleanness:** Good business hairstyles are nicely and closely trimmed around the edges. The cut is even, and the haircut looks tidy. This is often the result of the barber or stylist who's cutting your hair, so make sure you choose a reputable stylist.

- **Versatility:** This might seem counterintuitive at first, but a true business hairstyle can be worn in a wide range of situations. It should be appropriate whether you're heading to work, having dinner with your family, or attending a prestigious ceremony. Many guys choose business hairstyles for their flexibility.

Office etiquette

Communication is an important part of running a business. It allows everyone to share their inputs and feel that their ideas are being valued. Here are a few of the primary reasons that communication is so important in a workplace:

- It improves productivity and efficiency
- It can increase job satisfaction
- It can reduce absenteeism and employee turnover

When a group learns to communicate their needs and wants with each other, productivity and efficiency increases. People are more willing to help out other team members when everyone is able to communicate openly. Instructions are properly delivered and suggestions are considered. When an employee feels that they are being listened to, they are more likely to meet or exceed their job expectations.

This can also go a long way towards increasing employee job satisfaction. If managers are willing to listen to ideas presented by an employee, then the employee will take more pride in their work performance. This will directly lead to an increase in job satisfaction.

Improving communication can also reduce absenteeism and employee turnover. By increasing productivity, job satisfaction, and communication, you will find yourself dealing with fewer instances of absenteeism and a reduction in turnover rates. When you keep your workforce satisfied, they are less likely to seek employment elsewhere.

So, here are several rules to follow in any office:

✓ The saying, 'treat others how you want to be treated' is never truer than in the workplace. Make sure you listen to others and value their opinion and, if they also follow office etiquette, they shall do the same for you. Even if you're friendly with your colleagues, be aware of crossing boundaries. Over-sharing details of your personal life is unprofessional no matter how close you are with your team.

✓ Teamwork requires you to be diplomatic and while this can be difficult especially when dealing with troublesome colleagues, it will help to ensure all hell does not break loose when you reach a disagreement. Working in a team environment means that it is important not to forget your team. Never make a tea or coffee or undergo a beverages run without consulting the rest of your colleagues. Otherwise be prepared for a sea of beady looks eyeing you off while you obliviously sip your mocha frappuccino. If your office usually collects money for birthdays or even just for the weekly milk, remember that 'chipping in' is not voluntary. If you don't contribute to team presents, don't expect one on your birthday, but do expect to be labelled a scrooge for the rest of your working life.

✓ Mind your Ps and Qs (= mind your language / be on your best behavior) so being on your best behaviour means that you cannot treat the office like your bedroom and your colleagues like your siblings. Opening the door for your colleagues, asking them how they are and using 'please', 'thank you' and 'sorry' are small acts that can make a huge difference in your office relationships. And if you happen to enjoy a bit of colourful language when you're with friends, it's best to leave it at the office door and keep your workplace lingo cuss-free.

✓ With air-conditioning systems, shared kitchens and windows that don't open, the office can be a breeding ground for all sorts of bugs and bacteria. If you are sick and decide to come to work, take steps to avoid creating an epidemic in the office, infecting all your colleagues and bringing productivity to a grinding halt. Take the necessary precautions to avoid spreading your germs by covering your mouth when you sneeze and cough, and washing your hands on a regular basis. Dispose of your used tissues quickly and thoughtfully. Your colleagues will not look too kindly upon your sickly state if they find dirty tissues sandwiched between important files.

✓ It is poor etiquette to turn up late to anything, and in the office this can be a strong reflection on your work ethic. Turning up late to meetings can leave you frazzled and unprepared and the other party unimpressed. Synchronise your watch with the main clock in your office to ensure that you're not turning up to work five minutes later than you think you are. And if unforeseeable circumstances mean you do happen to arrive late to work, show your good manners and stay back late to make it up.

✓ If you have a door, close it if you take personal calls. If you don't have a door or are in an open plan space, keep private calls short by saying you'll call the person back on your next break, or walk to an area that is more conducive to personal calls like a lounge area or even outside. If you work in an open office space and professional phone calls distract you, remember that it's probably not the person's intention to bother you. Try to be understanding of the situation and keep a good pair of headphones nearby.

✓ Some offices encourage "fun" work spaces that are full of pictures, magazines, and personal flair. Others companies expect more straight-laced and plain desks. But whatever the office etiquette is for your work space, remember to keep your desk clean and organized. If your desk looks like a sloppy mess, people will think the same about you. Invest in some antibacterial wipes, and periodically wipe down your keyboard, telephone, and desk.

✓ Build cohesion between yourself and coworkers by sharing your interests and passions. This will connect you on a personal level, building trust with those you work with—this will come in handy down the road when you have to work on a team project. Sharing your interests and passions also articulates who you are as a person, and what's important to you.

✓ Don't block the elevator door. If the elevator's full when someone tries to get out, and you're in the way, simply exit the elevator altogether and then re-enter.

✓ When it comes to opening doors, only go in front of someone who opened the door if they motion you through. Same rules apply to whoever swiped their card to access the door—wait until the first person has walked through before you follow.

✓ Etiquette in general is becoming more gender neutral, so when it comes to opening doors and getting in and out of elevators, what matters more is showing respect to people who are more senior to you in your office. If you're entering your floor or the elevator at the same time as your boss—or your boss's boss—be sure to hold the door open for them and let them enter first.

✓ While it's impossible to **always** be on time, it's important to let people know you're running late. For every minute you think you'll be late, give two minutes warning. So if you think you'll be 10 minutes late for the call, email 20 minutes ahead so your colleague or client can adjust their schedule accordingly.

✓ Remember that these rules do not only apply to the people you work with, but also anyone else who occupies your office space. Cleaners and deliverymen, as well as other businesses, deserve the same respect you bestow upon your colleagues and it would be poor etiquette to neglect them. Good etiquette is just all-round good form and should be adopted in all scenarios, inside the office and outside, to ensure that practice makes perfect.

Open-space office rules

✓ Loud people, loud music and loud ringtones can make working in an office unbearable. The more distracting you are, the more you are going to get on people's nerves. Unnecessary interruptions can severely disturb one's train of thought. Be careful that your voice is not an assault on your colleagues' eardrums, especially in an open plan office. Turning your phone off or on silent when you enter the building will ensure that no one has to share your love for Justin Bieber whenever you receive a phone call.

✓ Just because others are sitting nearby doesn't mean they are available for conversation at all times. Respect one another's privacy. Act as if there is a door between you and if they appear to be busy, ask if they have a moment to talk.

✓ Within a tight space smells can be magnified, so use consideration when packing your lunch or snacks. Try to eat meals in the kitchen, break room or outside, rather than at your desk. Since many people have allergies to scents, forgo wearing perfumes, cologne or strong after shave to the office. Pay attention to your personal grooming as well. Unfortunately, common sense is not so common anymore.

✓ Do not use a conference room to take long personal calls or treat it as your personal office. Squatting is for the gym—not the workplace. In addition to doing your part to keep the bathroom clean, do not use the restroom to socialize, whether you need to call your mom or catch up on the latest office news. It's called water cooler chat for a reason.

✓ When it comes to throwing out trash and recycling, be considerate of everyone's space as much as possible. If you go to put your box or recycle in the designated area and see that it's overflowing into someone's work space, think of your colleague and hold off on piling more on. You never know where your next desk will be.

How to prevent office gossip from ruining your business

Does your office sometimes resemble a middle-school schoolyard? Office gossip is inevitable, but an overactive rumor mill can create an uncomfortable and unproductive work environment. They say gossip is a natural human behavior. Gossip is simply making up stories about what we believe, see or feel. We may make assumptions about why a co-worker called in sick ("Maybe she's pregnant") or why

the boss hasn't come out of his office in two days ("The company must be in trouble").

Not all gossip is bad. When we think of gossip, we most often think of the malicious chatter behind co-workers' backs that can damage reputations and cause hurt feelings. While this type of gossip certainly can exist and results in a culture of mistrust and uncertainty, the reality is, not all gossip is bad. One study out of the University of California, Berkeley, found prosocial gossip – that is, gossip that is driven by concern for others – can promote camaraderie and can even help to relieve stress. The study measured the heart rates of participants who were observing two people playing a game where one person was clearly cheating. When the participants were able to pass a "gossip note" and tell the player about the poor behavior of their opponent, the participants' heart rates lowered and they reported feeling less anxious.

Where gossip becomes a problem is when it's malicious. The type of gossip that stirs up trouble for your business is the kind that is caused by ill intentions towards an individual or group. This type of gossip can be harmful to productivity and tarnish the culture of the work environment. If left ignored, this negative gossip can cause employee turnover, poor morale and disruption of work flow.

How to prevent gossip from spreading out of control? – Communicate.

The majority of office gossip is a result of poor internal communication. When people lack clarity, they're forced to make assumptions about what they see, hear or feel. If you as a leader start changing direction and people don't understand why, people start gossiping. Suddenly cancelling a staff meeting, for example, can start a rumor that people are being laid off.

The type of gossip that starts when people feel uncertain is the worst kind of gossip and can be incredibly damaging to an organization. Preventing this type of gossip starts with implementing proper channels of communication and creating a safe environment for people to make suggestions, ask questions and clarify their concerns. If people have clarity and feel their concerns are heard, they will have no reason to gossip.

Essential rules of office kitchen etiquette

✓ Office kitchen is not the space to update your work friends on personal stories. Besides, it's a bad career move if your boss overhears your tale of how you just took a three-hour nap on the toilet.

✓ If someone shares their baked goods with the group, you're taking just one cookie, slice, or brownie. Otherwise, people will be rage-whispering about the Two-Blondie Incident of '14 for days. If someone is nice enough to bring in food to share with the rest of the office, don't leave the cleanup all to them. If you take the last slice of cake, wash the dish it came on and make sure it gets back to them.

✓ Respect the limited fridge space. You might've scored a sweet deal on a case of Nesquik, but you're only keeping one or two cans in there at a time. People have actual lunches — and actual sodas! — to chill, too.

✓ Do not forget about the perishable foods you stashed in the fridge, either. Remembering you put some leftover guacamole in there a week ago is six days too late.

✓ If you drained the coffee pot, you're filling it back up. Mind your thirsty colleagues.

✓ While eating lunch away from our desks is a luxury these days, remember those sitting around you. Try to avoid foods that splatter or slurp or have a lingering smell in a shared office space. As much as you may love steamed fish, the rest of your team will probably won't.

✓ Remember that others need to use the communal kitchen too. If someone continues to prep their lunch in front of the communal microwave after heating up their food, it's okay to politely bring attention to the fact that they're taking up the space by saying something like, "*Looks yummy! Do you mind if I pop my bowl in?*"

Office holiday party etiquette

Holiday office parties are a great tradition: they foster 'offline' connection with colleagues, show appreciation for staff members, and are generally a great way to build team spirit. While there are many ways to make the occasion truly unique to your company, your behavior — whether you are an employee or the boss — needs to be top shelf for both professional and legal reasons.

✓ **Be On Time.** While a party is not a meeting, Lavelle encourages people to think of an office party as an extension of work. It is perfectly acceptable to be fifteen minutes late to a social function, but it's important to remember an office party is social, but also work related. Arriving late bellowing: '*I'm here! The party can start now!*' won't create the sensation you might think it will. Common courtesy dictates that you arrive on time and leave before the cleaning staff start sweeping.

✓ **Dress for Success.** While you don't want to be seen as a stiff, the office party is not the place to let it all, literally, hang out. Unless the invitation is specific about attire (Pajama Party on the 30th!) or is being held somewhere that demands a certain dress code (white tie optional), dress in the manner you would to go to work. Want to be a bit more festive? You can always kick it up a notch with accessories to reflect the style of the evening. The key here is to remain professional. It's always better to be a little overdressed than under. If everyone else is in work attire and you show up in your favorite Hawaiian shirt, you might feel both foolish and somewhat disrespectful.

✓ **Limit the Drinks and Watch Your Words!** This seems obviously but it's the sagest advice. Depending on your tolerance for alcohol, you will need to be VERY careful about overdoing it. One drink, maybe two, is probably more than enough. You want to relax and have a good time, not end up on YouTube with a lampshade on your head. Relaxing your speech inhibitions so that you're suddenly sharing the latest gossip about this or that person and using lewd language to do so won't win you any points with your co-workers, or your boss. Always remember that you are a professional and you want your co-workers to still see you as one the next morning.

✓ **Limit the Shop Talk.** While office parties are work related, no one wants to be discussing business. Drinking and gossiping are bad, but so is showing up to the party with your work hat on. Nobody wants to discuss those upcoming project goals or the latest management changes. The whole point of an office party is to create a more informal setting within which to mix with your co-workers and staff. If others feel they have to take off their ‘fun’ hats to respond to your query about a project status, the point of the party will be missed.

✓ **Don’t Become the Complaints Department.** In addition to watching excess shoptalk, you need to keep gossip in check. Sure, almost everyone has a gripe or two about a co-worker, ex-husband or annoying girlfriend — but the annual office party isn’t the place to let them out. Office politics tend to rear their ugly head when people have had a couple of drinks, freeing up their inhibitions that otherwise serve them well. You may end up sharing far more than you intended and it won’t reflect well on you, in the long term, no matter how right you are. Private matters should remain private, for everyone’s sake.

✓ **Nix The New Office Romance.** Work romances are often problematic, which is why many companies try to ban them entirely. Even if not explicitly forbade at your startup, the office party is a dangerous place to kindle a new romantic fire. Getting to know your co-workers a little more personally doesn’t give you the green light to hit on everyone there or try to hook up with the guy/girl from IT who keeps looking at you in the lunchroom. Discretion is the order of the day. Remember: you have to see all these people in the morning, so don’t do anything that will leave you blushing every time you run into them!

✓ **Show Your Appreciation.** There’s usually a team of people who make an effort to create the office holiday party—to say nothing of the bosses who usually pay for it—so take the time to seek them out and say thank you. It’s a little thing, but often party planning tasks are taken on over and above regular work. Those who undertake them will appreciate having someone acknowledge their efforts. It’s just plain politeness.

✓ **Don’t Call in Sick.** Even if you hate office parties, unless you have the flu and 38° temp, you need to buck up and go. Ditto for the next workday. No one will believe you came down with the flu just hours after you were whooping it up at the office party. It’s another good reason to keep your ‘whooping’ at the party in check. You wouldn’t go to a networking event and let it all hang out, so it’s wise to approach the annual office holiday party with the same caution and mind set, and all will be well.

Giving gifts at work

There’s simply one basic rule of gift-giving, which mandates that your gift must not be the product of an inevitable panic-stricken jump and rush to Amazon or any other store; but that of thoughtfulness. It is, in reality, way too thrilling for the one on the receiving end to know how you have taken the trouble. Individuals who actually master this special art of giving gifts out of the goodness of hearts without

any self-serving motives have always been appreciated. Giving then becomes more of a blessing for both the giver as well as the receiver.

Gift Giving Etiquette for Business Associates:

Choosing gifts for colleagues or clients for the upcoming holiday season could turn out to be a very challenging task. It's not quite easy to come up with that much desired perfect present and simultaneously following the business gift giving protocol.

Irrespective of whether you've headed to a mall, hauled out the holiday catalogs or gone online, here are some tips that can guide you to give a gift effortlessly that'll definitely be appreciated, appropriate, and stand as memorable for the right reasons.

Follow these guidelines: Some companies do have some really strict policies regarding what types of gifts their employees could receive (they might not allow exchanging gifts also). If you have a doubt, ask the clients or opt to clarify with the Human Resources department. If allowed, considering a client's interest is a must. Find out more about the favorite pastimes, hobbies or sports they tend to enjoy. Perhaps the client is a foodie and would likely appreciate the favorite food or a beverage. If you cannot determine anything yourself, contact his/her assistant or the associate. Do strive to make your gift stand out as you desire your company to similarly stand out.

Consider a budget. Many think that the inexpensive gift can make you look cheap. On the other hand, any lavish present could look over the top and embarrassing, or even alienating. Furthermore, gifting or even receiving expensive gifts could be against the company policy.

Do the homework. It'd be tremendously embarrassing to have a corporate present returned or even worse – refused.

Think twice about printing the company logo on the present you're about to gift. Ensuring that the gift is of a quality standard and that the logo is understated enough so as not to look like a blatant advertisement is always a good idea.

Additional thought ought to be given when it comes to any sort of humorous gift. What could appear to be funny in one person's view could be insulting to the other. Know the sense of humor of the client first and be appropriate.

Especially try to avoid any kind of gift which is sort of intimate, specifically if you're gifting to the members of your opposite sex.

Consider a charitable donation. The bottom line is no matter whom you give and what your gift is, the proper presentation is a must.

Giving Gifts to Your Boss:

No business etiquette rule mandates you or the other workers, to give a gift to the boss for any particular occasion. As a matter of fact, giving a gift to the boss that's inappropriate could even make the boss feel quite uncomfortable, alienate the co-workers, or appear as if you're trying to "purchase" or pave your way into your boss's good books.

However, if you really feel compelled to gift (say if you do not, the boss is going to hold it against you, which is actually quite a good indication that you're not

working for the right boss) or if you have been long wanting to thank your boss with a gift, here are some guidelines that apply.

- Consider a group gift to start with. Be discreet if you give any gift from yourself. Do make sure that you are delivering it privately and not making a scene in front of the other coworkers or management.
- Aim at pleasing and not at impressing. Keep your gifts sincere and simple, and quite inexpensive, and keep away from giving a personal item.

Giving Gifts for Co-Workers:

Most workers wait until the very last minute for giving co-workers a gift for any specific occasion. Our tip is never freaking out; here's our expert, best guide. The real question on everyone's mind at the workplace is should you or shouldn't you be giving a gift.

Even in the workplace, purchasing a present indicates a personal gesture. For instance, do not feel obligated for buying the lady in the finance department (whose name you do not know) a gift. Consider buying gifts only for those in your department; those you inevitably interact with daily, people who strike a small talk around your cubicle, and the co-workers-turned-friends sharing your office frustrations after work during the happy hours.

There are companies which prohibit purchasing gifts for the boss or the departmental head since it is considered as trying too hard for another promotion. Depending on the work environment and the relationships shared with the supervisor in charge, feel comfortable to purchase a gift for the boss, but do make sure it is on a less extravagant side.

Never exchange your presents in front of the other co-workers who haven't made it on your list. As you distribute your gifts, do check and avoid broadcasting it before other co-workers. Although you had made purchases for a selected few, it's wise to keep your sense of exclusivity at the workplace and not be labeled as "clicky". Do come to the workplace early and leave gifts on their desks, or put them inside the office mailboxes if they are small enough. It'd be a sweet surprise too.

Once you have purchased or you are about to purchase your gift, look at these office gifts, ask yourself always, how would you feel if you had received that particular gift from any business associate?

Basically, the bottom line is to remember that giving a gift must always focus on a recipient instead of focusing on the giver. Any gift that is given with genuine intention will turn out to be better received than one given for just the sake of gaining something or the other in return.

Over the phone

When making a phone call to a customer, partner or colleague, identify yourself by your name and company affiliation. Don't assume that the person on the other end recognizes your voice. Speak clearly and be polite. The same rules apply to receiving phone calls at your business. Have employees identify themselves by name along with the name of the business. Work with your employees to put this phone etiquette into practice and lead by example.

Phone Greetings That Make a Positive Impression

Proper introducing yourself over the phone is an opportunity to make an impact. We make judgments about people the first time we see or hear them. Your tone of voice and the words you use will create an impression. Make sure it is a positive one.

Calling a place of business

Do not permit the phone to ring into the office more than three times.

When you call a business or organization and someone other than the person you are calling answers the phone, it is recommended introducing yourself in the following manner: *“Hi, my name is Todd Smith. May I please speak with Katy Williams?”*

If the person answering the phone uses their name in the greeting, you should take the time to repeat their name. For example: *“Thank you for calling ABC Widgets. This is Amber, how may I help you?”* I would respond in a friendly tone, *“Hi, Amber, my name is Todd Smith. How are you doing today?”* After exchanging pleasantries with Amber, it can be said, *“May I, please, speak with Katy Williams?”*

When you introduce yourself, you will stand out from all the other people calling and you will likely make a positive impression on the person answering the phone. Not only is this a friendly and professional way to request to speak to someone, but also it's important to recognize the person answering the phone often has influence on the decisions made within a business or organization. Even if you call a utility company to report a problem, being friendly and introducing yourself often results in better service.

Another reason to introduce yourself immediately is to save time. Rather than having an exchange where the person asks. This may seem inconsequential but if you can implement 100's of tiny time management tips throughout your day, they will compound for increased productivity.

Side tip—If you make a call and you are not sure that the person who answers is the one you want to speak to, always introduce yourself by saying, *“Hi, this is Todd Smith. Is Sherry available?”* Even if it turns out to be Sherry, you haven't offended her by asking. It's always better to play it safe.

Answering the phone

Do not answer the phone if you are eating or chewing gum.

When you answer the phone, be proactive and introduce yourself as part of your greeting. Don't make people wonder if it's really you. As an example, you can answer your phone with such phrase as *“This is Todd”*. Most of successful people

answer their phones by using their first and last name. For example, “*Jeff Mack*” or “*Hi, this is Tina Williams.*”

If you are a business owner, you would better have all your employees answer the phone by introducing themselves within the first sentence. Obviously they should also speak in a professional and friendly manner. Something along the lines of: “*Thank you for calling ABC widgets, this is Amber. How may I help you?*” This is such a simple thing to teach your employees and it will make a huge impression on the people who are calling your place of business.

Before placing a caller on hold, ask their permission first and thank them. Mind it is better to return a call than to keep someone on hold too long. If the phone rings back to you, you’ve kept them on hold too long. Do not forget to return the call as you promised.

Speaking

Never interrupt the person while he/she is talking to you. Never engage in an argument with a caller.

Do not give the impression that you are rushed. It is better to return the call when you can give the person the time they need to handle the reason for their call.

Always use a pleasant, congenial and friendly tone and make sure you speak clearly and are smiling as you answer the phone – your interlocutor will hear your mood.

And some more advice:

Do not make it a habit of receiving personal calls at work.

Learn how to handle several callers simultaneously with ease and grace.

Do not ever leave a message with someone else or on an answering machine or voice mail regarding details of a delinquent account. Instead, leave a message asking the person to call the “Accounting Department.”

Always make collection calls in private and away from the patient flow or public areas.

Do not call a patient, customer or client’s home before 8:00AM or after 9:00PM, unless they’ve given you permission to do so.

When hanging up the phone, make sure the caller or person called hangs up first if the phone is slammed on the receiver. Otherwise, always hang up the phone, gently.

Voice mail etiquette

When leaving a voice mail message, include your name, phone number and briefly mention the purpose of your call. Speak clearly.

Answer voice mail messages promptly - within one business day.

Keep your personal voice mail message current (ideally, identify yourself, your department name, the date and why you cannot be reached). When on holiday, identify an alternate number where someone can receive assistance.

Taking Messages

If you answer someone else's phone or answer for someone who is not around, you should always offer to take a message. Again, this can be as simple as saying

"I'm sorry, John's stepped out. May I take a message?" or "I'm sorry, he's busy at the moment. May I take your name and number and have him call you back?"

If the person who is calling asks you to help out instead and you don't feel comfortable or don't know the answer to their questions, it is always polite to say, *"I'm sorry I don't know but I'd be happy to pass the message on to John."* Just remember to pass the message on! If someone leaves a message, be sure to write down their name, phone number, time they called and the message – then be sure to give the message to the person they were calling.

Taking messages does no good if the person they are for never sees them. Set up a system for delivering phone messages. If it's at home, you might decide to put a notepad by the phone and write messages there, or put them on the refrigerator. If it's at work, you may set up a 'message box' or agree to leave messages in a certain place (on the bulletin board, in someone's inbox, etc.)

Conference calls

Conference calling continues to be a great alternative to in-person meetings. With the evolving workplace, back-to-back meetings and endless tasks on the “to-do-list”, it's often difficult to get everyone in one room for a meeting. Rescheduling and organizing diaries can be a big pain when there are different teams, directors and/or agencies involved so conference calls help employees stay agile to last minute changes and commitments.

But as there are certain tendencies and etiquette that are normally tried to stick to in the office and in meetings, it doesn't mean that for a conference call these all get thrown out the window. Like any meeting, there's etiquette that you try to stick to, to help you run a polite, effective and pleasant call.

Conference call etiquette is often assumed but not often spoken about, so before you get on the nerves of your participants, make sure you take a look at our conference call etiquette essentials, because for all you know, you could've already been bugging them the whole time!

So here are our tips for conference call etiquette:

✓ **Be on time**– you wouldn't show up late for a face-to-face meeting as it looks unprofessional, same goes for conference calling. To give your colleagues the courtesy of being on time and ready for the call.

✓ **Always come prepared** – when it comes to conference calls, it's always important that you know how the service works and how to dial in. This means keeping the dial-in number and PIN on hand, so you're not stuck scrambling at the time when the meeting is meant to start. If you haven't dialed in before, it's best you try to dial in early so you give yourself enough time to troubleshoot in case you run into any complications. Forgot your PIN? Send it to yourself.

✓ **Know the agenda** – To make sure your conference calls runs smoothly– regardless of whether you're the host or participant – it's important to know the purpose of the call. Make sure you're clear on what you want the outcome to be and what needs to be discussed or agreed upon to avoid asking questions at the start of the call like *“So what are we discussing?”*

✓ **Don't forget introductions** – similar to how you would in a face-to-face meeting, it is common etiquette to introduce yourself as well as your colleagues that are on the call. Sometimes teams dial in on one line so other participants might not be aware of who else is on that one line. This way, quickly introducing yourself and asking how each other are, will set the tone of the call and make participants more open to ideas and opinions.

✓ **Don't be afraid of the mute button** – background noise on a conference call has been known to drown out the sound of the person speaking on a call. So particularly if you know you have a lot going on around you, or if there's a lot of people dialed into the call, it is best you put yourself on mute and un-mute yourself when you speak, so it doesn't interrupt the person speaking on the call.

✓ **Avoid the hold button** – if you need to step away from the conference call for a minute and intend to come back, it's best you use mute instead putting the line on hold or leaving the conference call and dialing back in. Most phones have music that automatically plays while the phone is on hold, so before you leave your conference call with the overpowering sound of your hold music, exercise the mute button instead.

✓ **Know when to, and not to speak**– talking over people is rude in any situation, and when you're on a conference call, you can't see the body language of when someone's about to speak. No one likes being spoken over and conference calls don't have a limit on the amount of time you're on the call, so make sure you take note of your cues to speak and don't speak over (or louder) than the participants on your conference call.

✓ **Be conscious of the environment around you** – fighting to hear over someone else's background music is one thing, but trying to speak or listen to those on a conference call with your own hold music is a whole another issue. If you're in a loud environment, it's best to step out of it and find a quieter place to join the call, because the likeliness is, by the time you need to speak, neither you or your participants will hear your thoughts over all that noise.

Netiquette

In the age of social media, remember that nothing is “private” anymore. Don’t complain about your colleagues or work on Facebook or Twitter. Even if your account is private, it could get back to them.

Recognizing that the internet is not some new world in which anything goes, but rather a new dimension or extension of our existing society. Applying the same standards and values online as we are accustomed to applying in the rest of our lives. In simple terms this means that the values society has in place against such things as hate speech and bigotry, copyright violations and other forms of theft, child exploitation and child pornography, remain intact. As do the values around courtesy, kindness, openness, and treating others with the same respect we wish to receive.

Accepting that the laws which are currently in place to protect the rights and dignity of citizens apply online, and that where needed, laws are updated to reflect these rights in the extended environment. Theft online is still theft, stalking, bullying, harassing, tormenting online is still abusive, and so on.

Acknowledging that cultural differences remain, even when national boundaries no longer apply. This requires finding a way to accept that the social values and norms of some netizens (internet users) will not be the social values and norms of all netizens.

For companies, being a good netizen, applying online ethics, or using netiquette also includes

- Respecting the rights to privacy assumed and possessed by citizens in their offline interactions.
- Maintaining transparency in their policies and actions so that consumers can easily and quickly understand how that company is using their information, protecting them from harm, and giving users a clear means of ownership and self-determination as to what is, and isn’t shared about them.

Respect other people's time and bandwidth

It's a cliché that people today seem to have less time than ever before, even though (or perhaps because) we sleep less and have more labor-saving devices than our grandparents did. When you send email or post to a discussion group, you're taking up other people's time (or hoping to). It's your responsibility to ensure that the time they spend reading your posting isn't wasted.

The word "bandwidth" is sometimes used synonymously with time, but it's really a different thing. Bandwidth is the information-carrying capacity of the wires and channels that connect everyone in cyberspace. There's a limit to the amount of data that any piece of wiring can carry at any given moment – even a state-of-the-art fiber-optic cable. The word "bandwidth" is also sometimes used to refer to the storage capacity of a host system. When you accidentally post the same note to the same newsgroup five times, you are wasting both time (of the people who check all five copies of the posting) and bandwidth (by sending repetitive information over the wires and requiring it to be stored somewhere).

You are not the center of cyberspace. Presumably, this reminder will be superfluous to most readers. But when you're working hard on a project and deeply

involved in it, it's easy to forget that other people have concerns other than yours. So don't expect instant responses to all your questions, and don't assume that all readers will agree with – or care about – your passionate arguments.

To whom should messages be directed?

In the old days, people made copies with carbon paper. You could only make about five legible copies. So you thought good and hard about who you wanted to send those five copies to.

Today, it's as easy to copy practically anyone on your mail as it is not to. And we sometimes find ourselves copying people almost out of habit. In general, this is rude. People have less time than ever today, precisely because they have so much information to absorb. Before you copy people on your messages, ask yourself whether they really need to know. If the answer is no, don't waste their time. If the answer is maybe, think twice before you hit the send key.

Make yourself look good online

Whether you are applying to business school or applying for a job, it might be time to review your online presence and clean up any embarrassing albums and outbursts, and demonstrate your level of professional engagement. Poor judgment online can even affect you keeping your job

Social media continues to blur the lines between our personal and professional lives, and your activities online say a lot about our identity. Consequently, business schools and employers are interested to know if the profile you present in your application and resume is consistent with your identity in the market, at your workplace, and on social media. Your online footprint should be generally consistent with how you see your personal brand.

So here are 5 social media tips to consider:

Do a personal online audit. Scour the net with your name with a searching engine. If there are any mentions of you on the first few pages that might negatively impact your application, then it is time to remove or edit any inappropriate content. The person who was offered a job at Cisco and tweeted "Now I have to weigh the utility of a fatty paycheck against the daily commute to San Jose and hating the work" presumably forgot that Cisco is, well, quite engaged in the internet.

If in doubt, delete. Review your history of posts, comments, and old photos on Facebook, Twitter, blogs, or any similar sites to see if you have anything viewable to the public that might reflect badly. Posts of a sexual nature, drug references, profanity, etc. – may not go over well with any admissions committee. While Facebook pages and Twitter profiles littered with spelling and grammar mistakes hardly inspires confidence about you as the great communicator. Employers are not going to screen out candidates for their political views (unless particularly extreme e.g. racist), for loving a good party, or for expressing the occasional gripe. On the other hand, admissions committees might raise an eyebrow if, for example, you have frequently expressed job frustration or if there is anything that suggests unprincipled behavior, such as making public fun of a colleague, or gloating about having hoodwinked a client.

Make sure your LinkedIn profile is up-to-date. You can take a step further and join the groups that are driving the debate in fields that you claim to be passionate about, such as impact investing, renewable energy or social enterprise. And don't forget an appropriate photo. Make sure your profiles are up-to-date as this is an ideal shop window to share your experience, skills, and knowledge. Your LinkedIn page should be professional, informative, and active, so use it!

Start cultivating a more professional side on Facebook, Twitter, and similar platforms. Engage with your target schools (and alumni) by 'following' and 're-tweeting' their twitter feeds and blogs, and 'liking' their Facebook pages. This will help you keep up-to-date and connected with the latest school news and will help deepen your knowledge of the institution. To advance your personal brand, you could even post intelligent, well-argued, and interactive comments to profile your thought leadership and get you noticed by the admissions committee. And if you get to the interview stage, your previous interaction may provide some good talking points.

Consider changing your privacy settings. If in doubt, it may be worth changing your social media settings so that only a select group can see your past and future updates. Social media updates are often spontaneous, unfiltered statements and communicate how you feel at a particular moment in time. They are often used to let off steam. However, when they are left as a permanent record and are publicly available, remember that they become part of your personal branding. So if you are in the habit of making such spontaneous updates, it is recommended that you change your settings so that they are not available to someone outside of your immediate network.

At the end of the day there is no need to become paranoid and imagine that admission officers are going to spend hours checking out your blog archives and Facebook photos posted in 2008. They have a heavy workload, and in the majority of cases any online audit will most likely be quite brief. But you should err on the side of caution, and everything you put up on a social media site should be an accurate reflection of who you are as well as how you want to communicate your personal brand to the outside world.

Don't let yourself be judged by your past when you are working so hard to build your future.

Video conferences

With global teams and remote working now the norm video conferencing is a necessary tool that can prove invaluable to your business. From virtual meetings to engaging webinars, a video conference can provide a catalyst for great ideas, expand your reach, and help you achieve specific goals. But despite their popularity, there are still companies and individuals making major mistakes when it comes to video conferencing. This results in a lot of wasted time, frustration and in some cases, completely losing your audience.

So, what are the best practices of video conferencing? Here are rules everyone should follow:

For administrators:

✓ Make sure everyone knows about the conference well in advance. Then, send two reminders: one just a day before and another one hour before starting.

✓ If possible, conduct a dry run (= rehearsal) with at least one presenter the day before. You don't have to go through everything; just make sure things work on the technical side.

✓ Designate someone ahead of time to take notes and vet any questions people have, since time is limited. (Most conference software allows participants to submit questions through chat.)

✓ Call in 10-15 minutes early to double-check that everything looks good, and to welcome participants as they arrive.

✓ The administrator (or moderator) should introduce the meeting or presentation, about two minutes after the scheduled start. (Two minutes gives just a little more time for people to call in, without annoying the others.) By beginning the conference, the administrator ensures things get off to a good start and eliminates any awkwardness for presenters who aren't prepared to introduce themselves. Set the ground rules at this time, including letting others know how questions will be handled.

✓ If the conference is in the form of a meeting, make sure any follow-up is clearly assigned to the appropriate participants.

✓ Send out a recording, slides, or any other pertinent information within 24 hours of the conference.

✓ Jot down any lessons learned.

✓ Can you repurpose? Depending on the goal of your conference, you may be able to use clips on your company's blog, YouTube channel, or recruiting and/or promotional materials.

✓ Consider hosting a follow-up live discussion or informal Q&A.

For speakers/presenters:

✓ When writing your presentation, keep the audience in mind. Look for opportunities to engage them through questions, picture illustrations, and real-life examples. (When introducing a product or a piece of software, real-time demonstrations are valuable.)

✓ Conduct a dry run with your administrator the day before. You don't have to go through your whole presentation, but you want to get familiar with the conference software and make sure it's working properly.

✓ If you're delivering a webinar, decide in advance whether or not you want the audience to see you.

✓ The advantage to being visible on screen is you can use facial expression and gestures to show emotion and clarify points. In contrast, keeping only your slides visible may make you less nervous and allow you to use more notes.

✓ Practice, practice, practice! You may know your material well, but it will sound different out loud than it does in your head. Going through your presentation once or twice before delivering it will make a major difference in how you sound to the audience.

- ✓ Call in at least 15 minutes early, to make sure you're properly setup and prevent any nervousness from having to rush. Close out any applications on your computer, especially those that make your personal information visible.
- ✓ Show some enthusiasm: If you aren't interested in this event, why should others be?
- ✓ Get to know your material well so that you can make it come alive for those listening.
- ✓ Do not read your slides (a.k.a. death by PowerPoint). As with any presentation, best practice for slides is to use big fonts and as few words as possible--it's up to you to explain, elaborate, and engage. (Moderate use of numbers and statistics can be beneficial – but don't go overboard.)
- ✓ Speak at a good pace. Most people tend to speak too fast when presenting, so slow it down. Exercise special care if you're demonstrating software, to make sure the audience is with you.
- ✓ Schedule pauses in your presentation to handle questions.
- ✓ Stick to a predetermined time for your core material. Additionally, make sure there is plenty of time scheduled for questions, both during and after your presentation.
- ✓ Conclude with a sum-up and actionable advice; focus on key takeaways.
- ✓ Provide your contact information and social-media handles when concluding, so it's easy for others to reach you. (Or spread the word about the great information you just presented!)

For participants/attendees:

- ✓ Make sure you have access to the conferencing software. (This may require you to download in advance.)
- ✓ Call in a few minutes early, so you don't annoy everyone else. Also, make sure your phone or device is on mute.
- ✓ Don't interrupt: if there's no opportunity to submit questions through chat, make sure to write them down so you can ask when given an opportunity.
- ✓ Reach out to the speaker or moderator after the presentation if you'd like more insights, or to let them know you enjoyed the conference. Doing so promotes a better working relationship – and may even lead to unexpected opportunities.

Webinars

Webinars come in handy when you are assembling company staff around a big table or reaching out to far-flung customers where face to face just doesn't work. A mash-up of the words “Web” and “seminar,” a webinar is a short-term session held over the Internet. Attendees log into a specialized website at a specific time to view a presentation that's either live or recorded. Just because your session is online doesn't excuse you from standard rules of etiquette. Keep a goal of getting the right message across politely.

Stop slang. You may think that everyone on your company webinar is as familiar with your company lingo and industry slang as yourself, but if you are wrong, you could lose participants in droves. Instead, make it part of your practice to

explain everything in the webinar explicitly. This doesn't mean you have to talk down to your audience, but simply keep in mind that members may be at different levels of understanding. Spell out names, for example, instead of using initials or product acronyms and nicknames. Offer call outs on the screen that provide definitions of terms that may be potentially derailing, and avoid chat-specific lingo such as KWIM – know what I mean.

Maximize your minimizing. In many cases, the person driving the webinar will have his computer connected to specialized software that broadcasts what he is looking at on the screen to everyone else in the webinar, even though the other people may be remotely based. This means that participants can see the host's screen – and everything else on it. To avoid distraction, prepare this workspace before the webinar. Participants don't need to see a pop-up barrage of incoming email notifications or the email icons themselves, alarm reminders, instant messages and other items that often populate a desktop. You should also have everything that isn't directly related to the webinar closed or minimized to the task bar before the meeting goes live. Starting a webinar by asking people to wait while you boot up your screen doesn't broadcast professionalism.

Eye on time. Whether you sent an email invitation or your webinar company did it for you, you probably asked participants to keep a specific segment of time reserved for the session, much as you would a face-to-face meeting. Just as you would try to be on time with that off-screen meeting, etiquette for webinars dictates the same. Start the meeting within five minutes – giving a slight berth at the beginning allows for people experiencing connection problems to join in – and make sure to end on time. This may mean forging ahead with your planned agenda to leave room at the end for questions, and you may want to have a team member with you keeping one eye on the clock. If you run over, you may notice your attendee count dropping the later the time becomes.

Proof power. The on-screen nature of a webinar may make you consider it less necessary to proofread the information going on the screen, since you won't be handing out paper copies and may be clicking rapidly through, but you'd do yourself a disservice to skip this step. It only takes a blink of an eye for webinar participants to notice a spelling error, grammatical mistake or other serious issue, and in that blink, your entire webinar can get discredited. Show a degree of respect for own work and the time and attention of others. Proofread your webinar before you broadcast it. You can also ask someone else in the organization to either sit through or read the webinar materials. Sometimes stepping away and getting a fresh pair of eyes can reveal something you glossed over. Making sure your on-screen messages are error-free is another way you pay heed to your audience.

Business emails

Email provides business professionals with an easy and fast way to exchange information electronically. As with all forms of written correspondence in the business world, emails must be composed and formatted professionally. Although

this form of advanced communication promotes rapid messaging, not taking the time to adhere to etiquette standards can get you into hot water with your supervisor.

Use subject lines. Always fill in the subject line with the topic of your email. This lets recipients know what your email is about and how they should prioritize reading your email versus the dozens (or hundreds) of other emails they have to read. You must also consider that your recipient(s) may have been waiting anxiously for an email from you on a particular topic, but, unless your email has a subject line, they may not know to open it.

Set a professional tone. The tone of your email should always be professional. Do not joke around or use sarcasm, avoid trendy slang or jargon, and avoid being playful or cutesy. Adding smiley faces and other emoticons in a business email is inappropriate. Even if you know the person you are sending the email to, you do not know how many other people might see your email.

Proper salutations. As you would with a handwritten (or typed) letter, use proper salutations in your email. Email writers are advised to address recipients with a warm greeting, such as “*Good morning,*” and conclude the email with “*Sincerely*” or “*Thank you.*” These types of salutations keep your email professional and polite.

Use professional fonts. The font you use in your email is a reflection of you. Cartoon-looking fonts, such as fonts with squiggly or bubbly letters, make the sender come across as childish, which diminishes the professionalism of the communication. Keep fonts professional. The best fonts to use for business purposes are Times New Roman, Arial and other book-print fonts. Additionally, refrain from changing the font so that it is in all capital letters, as this is construed in online communication as yelling.

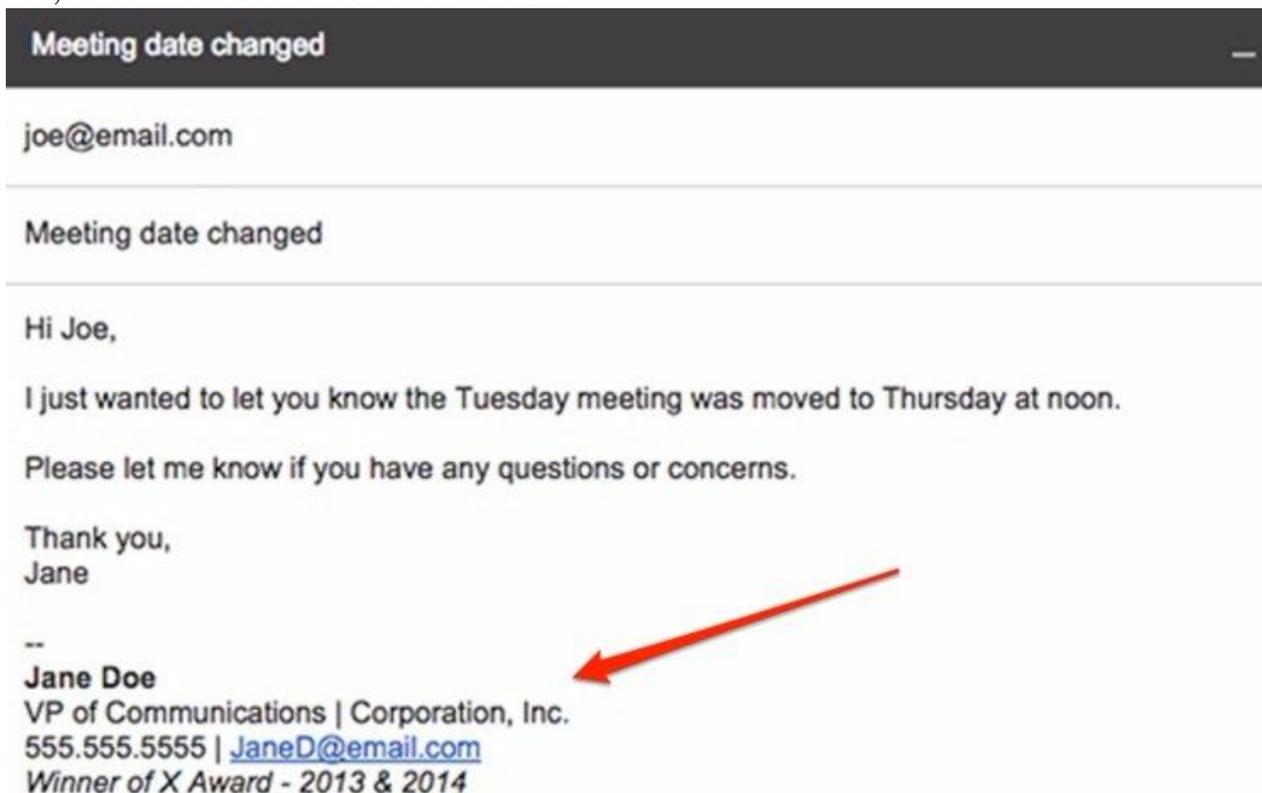
Proofread your email. It is unprofessional to send emails with spelling errors, punctuation errors and other types of grammatical or technical mistakes. Such errors make it appear as though you do not possess adequate writing skills. Use the spell check feature of your email program to correct misspelled words, and always proofread your composition before hitting the "Send" button.

Use a professional email address. If you work for a company, you should use your company email address. But if you use a personal email account – whether you are self-employed or just like using it occasionally for work-related correspondences – you should be careful when choosing that address. You should always have an email address that conveys your name so that the recipient knows exactly who is sending the email. Never use email addresses (perhaps remnants of your grade-school days) that are not appropriate for use in the workplace, such as "babygirl@..." or "beerlover@..." – no matter how much you love a cold brew.

Think twice before hitting 'reply all.' No one wants to read emails from 20 people that have nothing to do with them. Ignoring the emails can be difficult, with many people getting notifications of new messages on their smartphones or distracting pop-up messages on their computer screens. Refrain from hitting "reply all" unless you really think everyone on the list needs to receive the email

Include a signature block. Provide your reader with some information about you. Generally, this would state your full name, title, the company name, and your

contact information, including a phone number. You also can add a little publicity for yourself, but don't go overboard with any sayings or artwork. Use the same font, type size, and color as the rest of the email.



Use exclamation notes sparingly. If you choose to use an exclamation point, use only one to convey excitement. People sometimes get carried away and put a number of exclamation points at the end of their sentences. The result can appear too emotional or immature. Exclamation points should be used sparingly in writing. But at the same time although email tone is very hard to read, it is better to be sure you're using language that helps the recipient understand it. And despite what your middle school English teacher may have told you, exclamation points are almost required these days. A simple line like "Really appreciate your help! Thank you, Michael" is better than "Thanks. Michael"

Know that people from different cultures speak and write differently. Miscommunication can easily occur because of cultural differences, especially in the writing form when we can't see one another's body language. Tailor your message to the receiver's cultural background or how well you know them. A good rule to keep in mind is that high-context cultures (Japanese, Arab, or Chinese) want to get to know you before doing business with you. Therefore, it may be common for business associates from these countries to be more personal in their writings. On the other hand, people from low-context cultures (German, American, or Scandinavian) prefer to get to the point very quickly.

Reply to your emails — even if the email wasn't intended for you. It's difficult to reply to every email message ever sent to you, but you should try to. This includes when the email was accidentally sent to you, especially if the sender is expecting a reply. A reply isn't necessary but serves as good email etiquette, especially if this person works in the same company or industry as you. Here's an example reply: "I know you're very busy, but I don't think you meant to send this email to me. And I wanted to let you know so you can send it to the correct person." And, of course, you should remember to answer all business letters within one working day!

Double-check that you've selected the correct recipient. You are to pay careful attention when typing a name from your address book on the email's "To" line. It's easy to select the wrong name, which can be embarrassing to you and to the person who receives the email by mistake. Also you don't want to send an email accidentally before you have finished writing and proofing the message. Even when you are replying to a message, it's a good precaution to delete the recipient's address and insert it only when you are sure the message is ready to be sent.

Keep tabs on your tone. Just as jokes get lost in translation, tone is easy to misconstrue without the context you'd get from vocal cues and facial expressions. Accordingly, it's easy to come off as more abrupt than you might have intended. You meant "*straightforward*"; they read "*angry and curt*." To avoid misunderstandings you should read your message out loud before hitting send. If it sounds harsh to you, it will sound harsh to the reader. For best results, avoid using unequivocally negative words ("*failure*," "*wrong*," or "*neglected*"), and always say "*please*" and "*thank you*."

Table manners

Having beautiful table manners will open many doors for you. You'll seem like a true sophisticate and you'll be invited more often. Bearing in mind you'll be invited to business dinners and lunches whether or not you're a messy eater, here will be laid out guidelines that must be followed.

Whether you're eating at a fancy restaurant, in the cafeteria, or at home with friends and families, good table manners make for a more pleasant meal. While you may not need to worry about confusing your salad fork with your desert fork when dining with friends, some basic table manners should never be forgotten during special occasions like business meals.

- ✓ Before the meal shake hands with all present at the table. If necessary, introduce yourself. Concentrate on remembering your host/hostess' name. Remain standing until host sits. If you are a host, point out chairs for your guests.

- ✓ If you or someone you are dining with is left-handed, it is best for the left-handed person to sit at the left end of the table or at the head of the table. This arrangement helps ensure that everyone has adequate elbowroom to eat comfortably. However, if the person you are eating with is not familiar with the fact that you are left-handed, do not mention it.

- ✓ Wait for your host to begin to eat. If you are at a table of 8 to 10 being served by waiters, wait to eat until all at the table have been served. Never start eating off of your tray or plate until you are seated.

- ✓ Stand up every time when a woman stands up.

- ✓ Place your napkin on your lap after everyone is seated and after your host has moved his/her napkin. Wait for the oldest person at the table to take his and for the acknowledged head of the table to take hers before taking yours.

- ✓ Should you need to leave the table before the end of the meal, simply place it on your chair. This tells the waiter you're returning.

- ✓ At the end of the meal, fold it casually and place to the left of your plate.

- ✓ You should not leave the table during the meal except in an emergency. If you must go to the bathroom or if you suddenly become sick, simply excuse yourself. Later you can apologize to your host by saying that you did not feel well.

- ✓ Sit up straight and don't tip your chair back.

- ✓ Don't ask the waiter to explain everything on the menu; you will annoy others and appear indecisive.

- ✓ Let the host take the lead when ordering; this will give you an idea of what to eat. If they order an appetizer, order one. If the host isn't first in line to order, then ask for his/her recommendation.

- ✓ Order foods that are easy to eat such as chicken, fish, or salads. Avoid sloppy hard to eat foods like spaghetti or ribs.

- ✓ Don't order the most expensive item on the menu and don't order any unfamiliar food. Your choice of food and drink also will label you. This isn't the place to experiment with something you don't know how to eat properly.

- ✓ Offer to the person on your left and pass everything to the right. Never reach over someone's plate for something. Ask politely for the item to be passed.

✓ Pass the salt and pepper together. Also, do not season your food before you have tasted it.

✓ Do keep your elbows off the table and out of your neighbor's ribs. When you are not eating, keep your hands on your lap or resting on the table (with wrists on the edge of the table). But in some cultures, like French and Italian, it's impolite to keep your hands under the table.

✓ When you speak, put your silverware on your plate, not on the table.

✓ Don't speak with your mouth full, swallow your food before speaking. Although it is possible to talk with a small piece of food in your mouth. Don't eat with your mouth open. Do not smack your lips or chew noisily.

✓ Avoid talking about religion, politics and other controversial topics.

✓ Maintain good eye contact.

✓ Do take your time eating, talking and especially listening to everyone at the table.

✓ Don't over indulge; this is not your last meal. And don't ask to finish anyone else's food. Eat at a moderate speed and don't make others wait for you to finish. Remember—you're first priority is the business, not the food. You can always eat more later if needed.

✓ Don't lick your utensils or fingers. Use your napkin to clean your fingers.

✓ Do say "please" and "thank you," people do notice. Say "no thank you" if you don't like or want something.

✓ Don't argue over that check or offer to pay the tip; the host who invited you must take care of both.

✓ Don't use toothpicks in the presence of other people. If something is caught in your teeth, wait till you are in the restroom to remove it.

✓ Make sure you thank the host for the meal. Shake hands before you leave and maintain good eye contact.

✓ Be careful with food with a high splash-factor, such as long pasta, clams, etc.

✓ Noodle length and width dictate whether you will be winding the pasta round your fork tines or cutting it.

Table manners for eating thin noodles. Thin noodles are wound around fork tines. Try to pick up two or three strands with each bite to avoid a bite that becomes too large. For leverage, balance the tips of the tines against the side of the plate and wind the strands around them. In the US, a spoon is at times used to steady the fork.

Inevitably, some pasta strands will still be hanging from your fork. Just quietly suck them into your mouth (this is not improper dining etiquette).

Table manners for eating wide noodles. Wide noodles (like ravioli or lasagne noodles) are cut.

If you eat soup, sip it silently from the side of the spoon. When serving soup, place the soup plates or bowls on an underplate. When the soup is finished or the spoon is laid down, the spoon is left in the soup plate, not on the dish underneath. If the soup is served in a cup, the spoon is left on the saucer. Remember, it does not

matter how soup is served in a plate or in a cup you should always eat it with a spoon, do not drink it.

Table manners for eating soup. Hold the soup spoon by resting the end of the handle on your middle finger, with your thumb on top. Dip the spoon sideways into the soup at the near edge of the bowl, then skim from the front of the bowl to the back. Sip from the side of the spoon, avoid improper table manners and do not to slurp. To retrieve the last spoonful of soup, slightly tip the bowl away from you and spoon in the way that works best.

If you want a bite of bread while eating your soup, don't hold the bread in one hand and your soup spoon in the other. Instead, place the spoon on the underplate, then use the same hand to take the bread to your mouth.

Place setting



If your place is set with more than one fork, begin from the outside and work your way in. The place setting is laid out in the same order the food is served. If in any doubt, follow the host's lead.

Keep your hands off all glassware or crystal to your left. They aren't yours. Yours are to the right of your place setting. Likewise, any bread on a plate or tablecloth to your right isn't yours either. Yours is on the left. When looking at the place setting in front of you, remember: solids on your left (bread plate), liquids on your right (water, ice tea, coffee).

Cut your meat or meal one piece at a time; avoid dicing it into bite-sized pieces all at once. Cut your salad into bite-sized pieces.

Hold your knife or fork with the thumb and three fingers. Keeping the forefingers above the tines of the fork and the blade of the knife, the ends of both handles should rest in the center of the palm of the hand. The fork is turned tines-down as you use the knife to cut only one or two small pieces at a time.

Continental style of using utensils is to hold fork in left hand, tines downward and to hold knife in right hand, index finger extended along blade. Food goes from fork to mouth, bypassing your clothing, the tablecloth and everyone else. Never spit a piece of bad food or tough gristle into your napkin. Remove the food from your mouth using the same utensil it went in with. Place the piece of food on the edge of your plate. If possible, cover it with some other food from your plate.

If a piece of your silverware falls onto the floor, pick it up if you can reach it and let the server know you need a clean one. If you cannot reach it, tell the server you dropped a piece of your silverware and ask for a clean one.

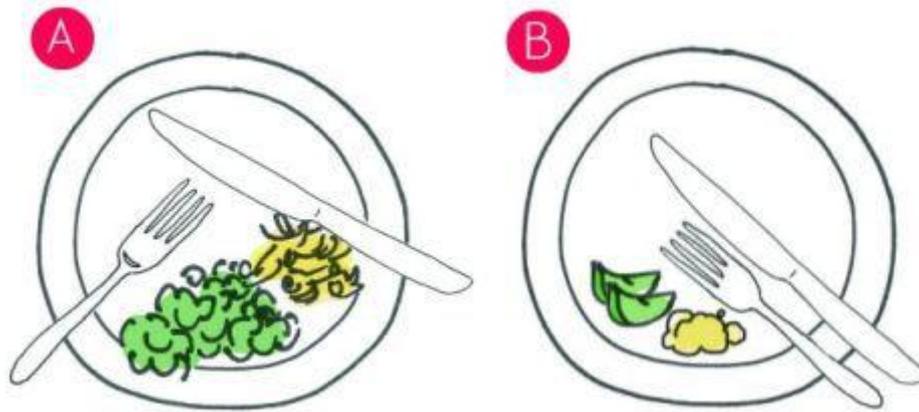
Finger food meal

You can be offered finger food: either appetizers or entrée \ main course items. Examples of generally accepted finger food are miniature meat pies, sausage rolls, sausages on sticks, cheese and olives on sticks, chicken drumsticks or wings, spring rolls, miniature quiches, sandwiches, pitas or items in buns, risotto balls. Other well-known foods that are generally eaten with the hands include burger, pizza, hot dogs, fruit and bread. Dessert items such as cookies, pastries, ice cream in cones, or ice pops are often eaten with the hands but are not, in common sense, considered finger foods.

Finger food meal is very often included into stand-up meal. A lot of catering agencies offer specially designed food that is easy to eat while talking and standing during such events as weddings, birthday parties, conference reception parties.

If you stop eating

During the meal, if you stop eating, you should leave your utensils in “I’m resting” position (it is A in the picture below). You should simply cross your fork and knife on the plate and turn down the tines of the fork.



If you finish you should place your knife and fork parallel across the plate pointing between 11 and 12 'o clock, but place your fork upside down so the prongs are touching the plate (it is B in the picture above). The whole point of this placement is to allow the server to easily stabilize the cutlery on the plate and prevent it from sliding off. Also, avoid letting the cutlery touch the table at any point, particularly if there's a tablecloth involved. Used silverware should never touch the table; rather, they should rest on your plate.

Cell phone at the table

If you're like most people, you have your cell phone with you at all times. However, there are certain situations when you should turn it off or put it on silent. And the dinner table isn't the place for your cell phone. If you are dining, whether it's at home, at a friend's home or at a restaurant, you should definitely turn off your cell phone. If for some reason you don't want to turn it off, it should at least be put on silent mode. For instance, you choose to attend a dinner party, but are expecting an important work call. Let your host know that you may have to step away for a moment to take a call. When you feel the vibrating phone in your pocket or jacket, excuse yourself and leave the table. It is also important to note: if you are hosting a meal, you have a right to kindly ask that your guests not use phones during their time at your table.

Answering and holding a conversation during dinner or at the dining table is considered rude behavior. The message you send by talking on the phone during dinner is that this call or person calling is more important to you than those with whom you are dining.

If you are dining alone feel free to hold a conversation. Still, if you are eating it may cause discomfort to the person with whom you are speaking. It really is okay to be out of pocket for the time it takes to eat a meal. Take a little time off and just relax and enjoy dining with family and/or friends without interruptions.

When you talk on your cell phone in front of others, they only hear one side of the conversation, and this can come across as rude as whispering. It creates discomfort and confusion in the people who are physically in your presence. If you must answer it, let the person know you are busy and you'll call him back. However,

if it's an emergency call, get up and leave the room. When you return to the dining table, apologize for leaving, and if necessary, offer a brief explanation of the call.

Group Calls

During your dinner conversation, you and your dining partners may decide you'd like to chat with someone who isn't there. Only if you all agree to place the call should you do so at the table. However, it is bad form to hold a group chat while everyone is eating, so it's best to wait until you are finished with the meal. Remember that it isn't polite to talk with your mouths full. You also don't want to disrupt others if you are at a restaurant. And never expect your server to wait while you finish your phone conversation.

Texting

It's also rude to text on your cell phone at the dinner table. You're still engaging in a conversation with someone who isn't there, while ignoring those who are dining with you. If you're in the middle of a text conversation, let the person know you'll resume your "conversation" later and give your attention to your fellow diners.

Photographing

Some people enjoy having their pictures taken with people they eat with. If everyone at the table agrees, take a few pictures with your cell phone, but don't have a long photo session during dinner. Do it before the food arrives or after everyone is finished. Your server may offer to snap a photo, but don't get upset if he or she is too busy to stop working to take your picture.

Posting on Social Media

Let's say you're eating at a really cool restaurant, and you want all of your followers and "friends" to know you're there. Is it okay to post this on social media? The answer is yes, but only if you're at a fast food restaurant or super casual dining establishment. And do it only after you place your order, but before your food arrives. In other words, most of the time it's bad form to post on social media from the dining table.

Google search

It is also becoming commonplace for a table discussion to resolve itself with a Google search from a smart phone. Or looking up a game score if everyone at the table is dying to know. However, we need to tread carefully when it comes to allowing a phone at the table. While it can contribute to dinner conversation, a phone can also cause huge distractions with its message dings and social media alerts.

Test yourself

1. Unlike social etiquette, office and business etiquette are primarily based on:

- a) Hierarchy and power
- b) Personal relations between co-workers
- c) Common sense and courtesy
- d) Option a and c

2. What are the ABC's of Etiquette?

- a) Advise, Be Respectful, Create
- b) Acceptable, Believable, Courteous
- c) Advertise, Beneficial, Charitable
- d) Accurate, Boastful, Courageous

3. Good ethics is based on:

- a) A set of values
- b) Legal rules of ethics
- c) How you were raised

4. True ethics means:

- a) Holding yourself to a high standard of what is right
- b) Following the rules of ethics so you don't get into trouble
- c) Doing what your superiors feel is true ethics

5. Some people are born with good manners.

- a) True
- b) False

6. You should look someone in the eye when you or they are talking.

- a) True
- b) False

7. When you meet a British business contact you should

- a) Hug and kiss him / her
- b) Bow
- c) Handshake
- d) Pat his / her shoulder

8. When you meet a business contact at 7P.M. you should say

- a) Good evening
- b) Good night
- c) Good afternoon

9. What should you do if you see someone at a business event that you have met before, but you can't remember their name?

- a) Ignore the person.
- b) Introduce yourself, apologise for not remembering their name but say where you met them before.
- c) Introduce yourself and wing it.
- d) Try to find out the person's name from others at the event and then introduce yourself.

10. You pass a co-worker in the hallway and he asks “How are you?”. You respond by:

- a) Telling him that your back has been hurting you and you have a cold
- b) Saying “Fine, thanks”
- c) Explaining that you are tired and stressed out in your job

11. Being on a party when meeting a contact of the opposite sex the man should wait for the woman to initiate the handshake.

- a) True
- b) False

12. European business people value closeness and friendliness. It is appropriate to stand close to a business contact and frequently touch his/her arm while talking.

- a) True
- b) False

13. You’re attending a conference and you’d like to have the card of a senior executive you meet. How do you get it?

- a) You offer them your card and ask them for theirs.
- b) You tell them you need their card so you can remember their name.
- c) You create an opportunity and establish rapport with them and develop a specific reason for them to ask you for your card in hopes they will offer you theirs.

14. If you walk into the office of a person you do not know, do you offer to shake their hand?

- a) Yes. It’s important to be a gracious guest when entering someone’s office.
- b) No. You enter their office slowly (with a pleasant expression on your face) and wait for them to offer to shake your hand; only then do you extend your hand for a handshake.
- c) You introduce yourself first, and then you initiate a handshake with them.

15. If you are sitting and someone approaches and offers to shake your hand, you should:

- a) Stand up and shake the person’s hand.
- b) Raise yourself slightly from your chair and shake the person’s hand.

c) Dismiss the handshake as an unnecessary formality and motion for the person to sit down and join you.

16. If you are considered a junior officer in your company and approach a senior officer, do you offer to shake hands?

- a) Yes, it is an excellent opportunity to make create trust and rapport.
- b) No. You wait for the senior officer to initiate the handshake.
- c) You should only initiate the handshake if the other person is a man. Woman must be allowed to initiate handshakes according to their preferences.

17. You're talking with a group of four people. Do you make eye contact with:

- a) just the person to whom you're speaking at the moment?
- b) each of the four, moving your eye contact from one to another?
- c) no one particular person (not looking directly into anyone's eyes)?

18. When making a business introduction you should:

- a) Wing it.
- b) Introduce a client to your colleague.
- c) Introduce your colleague to a client.
- d) Don't do anything. It is their responsibility to introduce themselves to one another.

19. Who is appropriate to introduce first, the CEO or the junior client who is a recent college graduate? Hint: The person of greater importance is introduced first.

- a) CEO
- b) Junior client

20. When meeting someone for the first time, you should convey all of these feelings except.....

- a) Respect
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22. I have become a client of yours and we have a meeting scheduled so you can show me what your company can do for me. When you're speaking to me, you should refer to me as:

- a) Ms Rotz

- b) Kathie Rotz
- c) Kathie
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23. You, a business consultant, are walking along with your client, the President of ABC Company, and two of his employees, when you meet a business acquaintance of yours. Obviously it falls to you to introduce the four of them to each other. Whose name should you say first?

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- b) The person you've known the longest.
- c) The President of ABC Company.
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- a) A woman is introduced to a man.
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- a) Hi! Nice to meet you!
- b) You mispronounced my name, it's Smythe, not Smith.
- c) A pleasure meeting you, Mr. Monroe.
- d) Hey Timmy, nice to meet ya!

26. How should you react if someone forgets to introduce you when you are in a group of people you have not met?

- a) Take offense, how dare they forget to introduce you!
- b) Stand quietly and never say anything.
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27. A co-worker comes to your office to introduce you to a friend of his. You:

- a) Smile and nod
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- a) Say your own name before introducing the two people
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29. You're chatting with your boss at a networking event when you spot your ex-boss. They have never met before. Who do you introduce first?

a) Your boss.

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c) Neither. Instead, you say something genial to your former boss, such as, "So nice to see you, Carl," and then let your current boss and ex-boss introduce themselves to each other.

d) Neither. You dive into the hors d'oeuvres, hoping that your former boss won't notice you behind the crudit s.

Check yourself

The correct answers are printed **in bold**.

1. Unlike social etiquette, office and business etiquette are primarily based on:

- a) Hierarchy and power
- b) Personal relations between co-workers
- c) Common sense and courtesy
- d) Option a and c

Correct (d): People who meet under social circumstances are generally considered equal with some exceptions for age among other things. However, when socializing within the office or a professional environment, ranks and hierarchy dictates etiquette.

2. What are the ABC's of Etiquette?

- a) Advise, Be Respectful, Create
- b) Acceptable, Believable, Courteous**
- c) Advertise, Beneficial, Charitable
- d) Accurate, Boastful, Couragous

3. Good ethics is based on:

- a) A set of values**
- b) Legal rules of ethics
- c) How you were raised

4. True ethics means:

- a) Holding yourself to a high standard of what is right**
- b) Following the rules of ethics so you don't get into trouble
- c) Doing what your superiors feel is true ethics

5. Some people are born with good manners.

- a) True
- b) False

Answer: False. Although it may seem as though some people were born knowing the right thing to say and do, they developed their good manners the same way everyone else did - through practice and consideration of others. And with patience and practice, you too can make good manners seem effortless.

6. You should look someone in the eye when you or they are talking.

- a) True
- b) False

Answer: True. Making eye contact with people is important. While you don't want to start a staring contest, looking someone in the eye while you or they are talking is a way of letting them know that you are paying attention.

7. When you meet a British business contact you should

- a) Hug and kiss him / her
- b) Bow
- c) **Handshake**
- d) Pat his / her shoulder

8. When you meet a business contact at 7P.M. you should say

- a) **Good evening**
- b) Good night
- c) Good afternoon

9. What should you do if you see someone at a business event that you have met before, but you can't remember their name?

- a) Ignore the person.
- b) **Introduce yourself, apologise for not remembering their name but say where you met them before.**
- c) Introduce yourself and wing it.
- d) **Try to find out the person's name from others at the event and then introduce yourself.**

The worst thing that you can do is ignore someone that you have met before. Always acknowledge someone that you have met. If you have forgotten their name, you should remind them of where you met before to show that you do remember meeting them.

10. You pass a co-worker in the hallway and he asks "How are you?" You respond by:

- a) Telling him that your back has been hurting you and you have a cold
- b) **Saying "Fine, thanks"**
- c) Explaining that you are tired and stressed out in your job

11. Being on a party when meeting a contact of the opposite sex the man should wait for the woman to initiate the handshake.

- a) **True**
- b) False

12. European business people value closeness and friendliness. It is appropriate to stand close to a business contact and frequently touch his/her arm while talking.

- a) True
- b) **False**

13. You're attending a conference and you'd like to have the card of a senior executive you meet. How do you get it?

- a) You offer them your card and ask them for theirs.

- b) You tell them you need their card so you can remember their name.
- c) You create an opportunity and establish rapport with them and develop a specific reason for them to ask you for your card in hopes they will offer you theirs.**

14. If you walk into the office of a person you do not know, do you offer to shake their hand?

- a) Yes. It's important to be a gracious guest when entering someone's office.
- b. No. You enter their office slowly (with a pleasant expression on your face) and wait for them to offer to shake your hand; only then do you extend your hand for a handshake.**
- c) You introduce yourself first, and then you initiate a handshake with them.

15. If you are sitting and someone approaches and offers to shake your hand, you should:

- a) Stand up and shake the person's hand.**
- b) Raise yourself slightly from your chair and shake the person's hand.
- c) Dismiss the handshake as an unnecessary formality and motion for the person to sit down and join you.

16. If you are considered a junior officer in your company and approach a senior officer, do you offer to shake hands?

- a) Yes, it is an excellent opportunity to make create trust and rapport.
- b) No. You wait for the senior officer to initiate the handshake.**
- c) You should only initiate the handshake if the other person is a man. Woman must be allowed to initiate handshakes according to their preferences.

17. You're talking with a group of four people. Do you make eye contact with:

- a) just the person to whom you're speaking at the moment?
- b) each of the four, moving your eye contact from one to another?**
- c) no one particular person (not looking directly into anyone's eyes)?
 - B. Make eye contact with all of the individuals you're talking with.

18. When making a business introduction you should:

- a) Wing it.
- b) Introduce a client to your colleague.**
- c) Introduce your colleague to a client.
- d) Don't do anything. It is their responsibility to introduce themselves to one another.

19. Who is appropriate to introduce first, the CEO or the junior client who is a recent college graduate? Hint: The person of greater importance is introduced first.

- a) CEO
- b) Junior client

Clients are always considered more important than an executive regardless of their age, net worth, or status.

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21. If uncertain about the proper greeting with a foreign counterpart, it is better to use your own country's greeting to avoid the risk of embarrassing yourself and creating an uncomfortable situation for all.

- a) False
- b) True

If possible, do cross-cultural protocol research beforehand. Otherwise, pause and mirror the foreign counterpart's greeting

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Keep a certain level of formality.

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Business intros are determined by precedence.

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- d) Neither. You dive into the hors d'oeuvres, hoping that your former boss won't notice you behind the cruditiis.

Answer: A

You always present the most important person first; in this example it would be your current boss. That means saying his name first:

"Stanley Wibbick, I'd like you to meet Carl Jekyll. Carl was my boss at Jekyll & Hyde. Carl, Stanley is my boss at Kiss & Kowtow and the director of business development & strategic partnerships, worldwide."

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