

Margaret Page

The
POWER
Of **POLITE**

*A Guide to
Etiquette in Business*

Be more professional! Win more business!

margaretpage.com

Acknowledgements

I dedicate this book to two young boys. The first is my grandson Gavin. Thank you for inspiring me by demonstrating at the age of two and a half that male chivalry is alive and well, when you insisted on carrying out the garbage for your mother. May your world continue to be filled with love, respect and politeness.

The second boy only crossed my world for a moment, yet his memory has stayed with me for a decade. Whenever I do an etiquette training I always tell the story of the young man around the age of six who had such awareness to hold up a large heavy ferry door and wait at the top of the stairs while I climbed to the top and walked through it. As I walked through the door he said, "Have a nice day Ma'am," and then hurried off to rejoin his family.

Do people with good manners get remembered? Yes they do! But he will never know how many times he has brought a smile to my face just thinking about him and how many other people with whom I have shared the simple story. I don't know his name so I can't follow his life but I do imagine what a fine young man he is growing up to be and how someday he will be a loving husband, father and a great community leader.

* * *

A special thanks to Gwen Morrison for researching and editing this confidence-building book. I am glad you are on the team. It wasn't an easy process, but I believe we can be proud of what we are providing: knowledge and wisdom to help you the reader be more socially savvy and professional.

Last but not least thanks to Charles Jeffery my Operations Manager. Thank you for your helpful editing, your photography and your commitment to excellence. But most of all, thank you for making my life work.

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Introduction

In today's fiercely competitive business arenas, recognizing the critical link between etiquette and profit is the key to business success. Learning how to confidently interact with colleagues will make you and your organization shine.



The Power of Polite: A Guide to Etiquette in Business covers some of the most critical areas of etiquette and protocol.

Learning to operate with grace in the business world could not be more important. Business owners are looking for employees that bring value to their company, and knowing how to present yourself with a positive professional image will give you the ability to set yourself apart from your peers.

ENJOY!

Margaret Page

What will distinguish you from the competition?

Business Etiquette: What is it and Why Does it Matter?

Derived from the mandated practices of Louis XIV, “social etiquette” has been widely misunderstood in our culture as being associated with the social protocol of dignitaries, royalty, and the “upper class.” That’s why, today, when you hear the term “etiquette,” you are quick to relate it to fancy table settings and “how to choose the right fork.” Good manners are actually designed to help you navigate everyday situations, both in your personal life and in the workplace.

being socially-savvy

Today, more than ever, good social skills are a crucial element of business success. Companies are looking for employees who can handle themselves at a trade show, as well as in the boardroom—and everywhere in between.

Competition is fierce, and it’s no longer enough to be a functional expert in your field. Employers consider soft skills a key component when choosing the right candidate for the job. To excel in your profession, you need to complement your core competencies with strong communication, interpersonal and self-management skills.

Did you know?

- ✓ 86 percent of employers consider soft skills to be among their most important hiring criteria.

Based on the findings of a survey conducted by two University of Massachusetts economists.

- ✓ Your technical skills and knowledge account for only 15% of the reason you get a job, keep a job, and advance in your position. The remaining 85% of your job success is directly connected to your people skills.

Based on research conducted by Harvard University, The Carnegie Foundation, and The Stanford Research Institute.

A recent survey of more than 500 human resource and business professionals found that half of all college grads don't exhibit professionalism at work. That's an alarming figure, considering the increased attention employers are putting on people skills as a determining factor when considering career advancements.

so what are soft skills?

Soft skills refer to those personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that make you an easy person to be around, and work with.

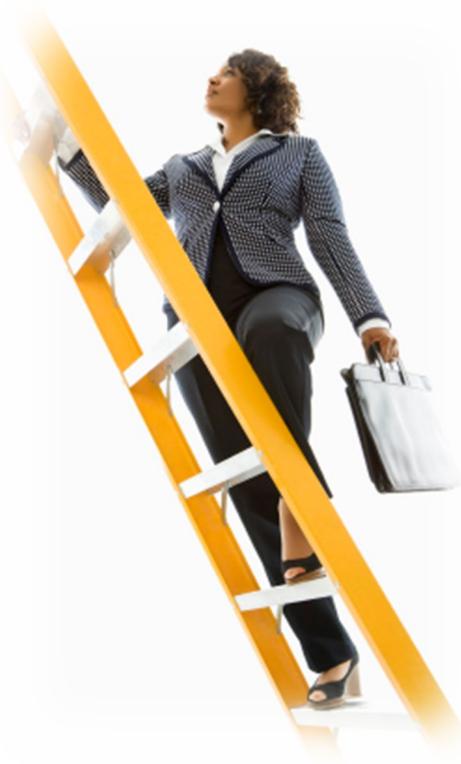
Some of the most common soft skills employers are seeking and will be assessing you on include:

1. Good communication skills
2. Positive attitude
3. Strong work ethic
4. Good manners and social etiquette
5. Time management abilities
6. Problem-solving skills
7. Ability to be a team player
8. Self-confidence / self-awareness
9. Ability to accept and learn from criticism
10. Flexibility / adaptability
11. Working well under pressure

Communication and relationship building are the lifeblood of business, and how you relate to others is what etiquette is all about.

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.” ~Bernard Shaw

The ROI of Etiquette



Everywhere you go you're being assessed on how you conduct yourself—both in business and in personal situations. In business, practicing good etiquette makes navigating the world of business much easier.

No one wants to work with you if they don't trust you, or enjoy your company. People want to engage and connect with individuals they respect, and who present themselves in a way that shows that they care about them.

In recent years, there has been an increased focus on "business niceties," – those simple things, the telltale signs of grace, style, and class.

Etiquette has become as important to professional image as technical knowledge and job skill because these rules help guide you through a variety of situations in our ever-shrinking and changing world. All of us can attest to situations in which, if we had known what to do or say, it could have saved us embarrassment—or even a job or promotion.

Good business etiquette yields a positive return on investment (ROI) not only for you, but also for employers. Companies who are watching their bottom line (and who isn't) understand that good manners = good business. And on the other side of the coin: employers are keenly aware that poor etiquette can adversely affect not only the workplace environment, but can directly affect their profitability.

A study from the University of Southern California found that 25% percent of employees toiling in workplaces where bad manners and rudeness is prevalent intentionally cut back on their production—and one in eight quits.

In the end, bad manners are bad business.

*“Life be not so short but that there is always time for
courtesy.” ~Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Leaving a Lasting Impression

Whether you're interviewing for a job or meeting with a new client, you will be assessed within minutes of meeting with someone. First impressions do matter. The old adage, "You only get one chance to make a first impression," was likely something your parents ingrained in you long before you went for your first job interview. And, they were right (as parents often are...).

The impressions made by the first contact between two individuals can make or break a personal or professional relationship. And that initial contact doesn't have to be in person. Introductions, especially nowadays, come in many forms: in person, written, e-mail, on the phone, on Skype, and of course, through social media networks.



Did you know?

- ✓ You have less than 10 seconds to make a first impression.
- ✓ Studies in Princeton have determined that in just less than one second we determine if someone is trustworthy, competent, and likeable, and how aggressive they are.
- ✓ According to research, appearance accounts for 55% of impression; our voice 38%; and the substance of the conversation, just 7%.

remember me?

Being memorable shouldn't be because you've stumbled and come across as being rude. Be remembered because of your good manners and as a person who makes others feel comfortable.

When interacting in business situations, always remember the **Platinum Rule**: "Treat others the way they want to be treated." This philosophy is different from the better-known Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

The Platinum Rule differs in that it accommodates the feelings of others. The focus moves from "this is what I want, so I'll treat others that way," to "let me first understand what this person wants so that I can treat them the way they want to be treated."

dressing for success

To ensure a lasting first impression with potential employers or key business contacts, you need more than an impressive resume and a good smile.

Your personal appearance reflects not only how you present yourself, the way you dress reflects the importance you attach to the situations and people around you. If your clothes are unclean or wrinkled, you appear to be careless and uninterested in the business situation or people you're interacting with.



If you're dressing for a job interview, choose attire that projects the image you want the employer to receive. Dress in traditional business attire vs. casual

business attire when meeting with a prospective employer.

Even after you get the job, consider your appearance. Someone once told me this, and it stuck, "I dress to the level I want to achieve." So, if you want to be CEO, think about how you look when you leave the house in the morning. Dress for the job that you want.

Here are some basic rules of thumb to follow:

- When meeting with business associates or clients, whether in your office or theirs, always dress accordingly—if they wear suits, you wear a suit.

- If you're interviewing for a job and don't have the inside scoop on their dress code, try to scope out the place before your interview to see how the employees are dressed. It's also perfectly appropriate to contact the receptionist and ask about the company dress code policy.

- Check your attire in the rest room before meeting with a client or for a job interview. For men: Make sure your shirt's tucked in and your tie is straight; and ladies, check that you don't have lipstick on your teeth!

- Traditional business attire is as follows:
 - For men – solid color, conservative business suit; long-sleeve dress shirt and tie; dark socks; and polished dress shoes.
 - For women – solid color business suit with coordinating blouse; dresses or mid-knee length skirts; tan or light-colored panty hose; polished dress shoes or boots; limited jewelry and minimal make-up.

Casual business attire is as follows:

- For men – khaki, gabardine or cotton pants; cotton long-sleeved dress shirts or polo shirts; sweaters, and leather shoes.

- For women – khaki, twill or cotton pants or knee-length skirts; sweaters or twinsets; blouse; cardigan; colored polo shirts; leather shoes.

Take your schedule into consideration before you leave the house in a pair of jeans. If you're meeting with clients outside the office, you might want to pass on casual day this week. Keep a spare jacket in your office for impromptu meetings or drop-ins.

All business attire, whether traditional or casual, should be reflective of a professional, dignified appearance.

Did you know?

A recent York College of Pennsylvania poll ranked inappropriate appearance the top unprofessional work behavior.

Important to note that when knowledge and skills are matched, your image is a powerful tool in business situations.

“Great men are seldom over-scrupulous in the arrangement of their attire.” ~Charles Dickens

Mastering Networking Etiquette

With the economy squeezing businesses and the unemployment rate creeping up, networking events are swelling with people who are ready, willing and able to do business. Knowing how to mingle well will help you build business relationships that could prove to be profitable both personally and professionally.

One of the tips I give people who are attending networking events is to spend at least 15 minutes researching the organization—and the attendees, where possible—before you show up for the event. Make sure you're up on what's current in the news so that you can contribute to the conversation.

Plan to have at least three goals for the event. Why are you going? What are you hoping to accomplish? Would you like to meet business prospects? Who would you like to meet? Are you going to enjoy a good meal? These are just examples of the type of goal you would choose. Select the goals that are most appropriate for your career right now.

Setting the goals gives you a way to get some clear direction on what you'd like to accomplish by attending the networking event. And if there isn't any useful purpose, then I suggest you stay home and enjoy your evening!

how to make an entrance

One of the most important factors in building new business relationships is in the way you enter a room. In social events, almost everyone watches the entrance to the room—this is your opportunity to “work it!”

First, check the mirror BEFORE you leave the house. When you arrive at the event, if you need to touch up your make-up—or check to make sure you don't

have anything stuck between your teeth—make sure all of this is done in the privacy of a bathroom, never in public.

Then, before you enter the room, relax the muscles in your face. Tension tends to collect right on our face, making us appear tired and stressed. Now, smile. Think of something pleasant. Your thoughts dictate what shows on your face.

To make a strong entrance, walk in confidently, with a sense of purpose. Stand up straight with your shoulders back, but don't overdo it. You want to appear confident and approachable, not stiff and uncomfortable. If you're interviewing for a job, how you present yourself will tell the employer how you will behave when you're meeting with clients. You don't want to come across as hurried or anxious.

Once you've entered the room, pause briefly (away from the doorway!), and casually look around the room. Breathe deeply—in through the nose out through the mouth—this will make you feel at ease, confident, and relaxed. Make eye contact with another guest, and then smile as you approach for conversation. Be careful not to rush across the room. Keep your hands at your sides and take small steps toward the person. Make sure you are smiling!

Keeping these tips in mind when you make an entrance will have an influence on how others respond to you. If you act like you're someone that commands authority and exudes confidence, they will want to get to know you!

handshaking – the nonverbal introduction

Whether you're introducing yourself to others for the first time or greeting a long-time business contact, a good handshake is a critical element in greeting someone.

Around the world, you'll find that countries have their own "greeting etiquette and protocol," but if you follow these handshake etiquette tips, you're sure to leave a lasting impression.

1. **Don't offer a damp fish.** Before you shake hands with someone, make sure your hands are not slippery and sweaty. And if you find yourself shaking hands with someone whose hands are as clammy as a damp fish, don't immediately wipe your hands on your clothing when you're done! Wait until you've moved away before discretely blotting the dampness away. That would be very embarrassing for your handshake partner.
2. **Be brief and to the point.** With a business handshake, you pump your hand just 2 – 3 times. If you hold on for too long you'll make your new acquaintance uncomfortable. It's a greeting not a date. Keep it short and sweet.
3. **Have a firm grip.** A handshake is a friendly gesture, not a show of strength. Use the same level of force it takes to open a door handle as a guide. But don't be too wimpy, either. Without going so far as to break the tiny bones of your handshake partner's hand, grip his hand with authority. A limp handshake will give the impression that you are uninterested.
4. **A rule of web-to-web.** A good handshake is one in which you put your hand fully in the other person's hand. Not finger to finger or a quick palm shake. The web between your thumb and index finger should meet the web between their thumb and index finger.
5. **Don't rush it.** Don't treat a handshake like you're trying to pump water from an old well. Shake from your elbow, not from your shoulder, to avoid

the risk of jolting your handshake partner.

6. **Only one will do.** Although you will see people using two hands in a handshake, resist the urge to follow suit. In business situations, it's proper form to use just one hand—your right hand—for the handshake. The two-handed handshake, or the “politician’s shake,” is notoriously known to appear less sincere when used on people you don’t know personally. It’s one of those “over-the-top” things you want to avoid in business introductions.
7. **Make eye contact.** Maintain eye contact throughout the handshake. Don’t be distracted by the CEO that just walked in that you’re dying to meet. Stay in the moment.
8. **Close encounters.** There are two pieces of advice here: Respect your handshake partner’s personal space by keeping an arm’s length from him before extending your hand in greeting. Don’t move too far away. If you have to lean forward to connect with an extended hand, you’re going to look awkward. In social situations, the following can be used as a guide for personal space: Intimate space is less than 6 inches; personal space is 1 – 2 feet, and used for interactions among good friends and long-time clients; social space is 4 – 7 feet, to allow for gestures and stretching without intruding; and public space is 10 feet or more, a good distance for delivering a speech or presentation. (Source: Edward T. Hall; the study of proxemics)

introducing yourself and others

When introducing yourself, always say your first and last name. Then, ask for the other person's name and follow that up by repeating the name of the person. An example would be "It's nice to meet you, Mary."

Maintain eye contact with the person you're being introduced to. Eye contact shows the person that you are paying attention and the introduction is important to you.

When making introductions, first state the name of the most honored person, "Melinda Gates, I would like to introduce to you Colleen Friesen."

Then, add a snippet of information about a topic of common interest to help them connect and pursue a conversation. Something like, "Colleen writes for Traveling Light. She's just returned from a trip to Italy. Aren't you planning a trip there this summer?"

When presenting one person to another, be careful to distinctly pronounce the names to avoid having to repeat the introduction.

remembering names

Remembering names is tough, especially if you are at a function and you're being introduced to dozens of new people. Having trouble remembering names is the ONE thing I hear most often from people, and yet, it's so important. Recalling someone's name, especially in a business situation, will show him or her that they are significant.

But, if like many people, you struggle to remember names, here are a few tips and tricks that might help:

- **Pay attention, and repeat.** First and foremost, pay attention when you meet someone. Really listen to their name and how it is pronounced. And repeat their name. For example, “It’s wonderful to meet you, Tzaddi.”
- **Don’t be afraid to ask for help pronouncing a name.** If it’s a unique name, learn the story behind the name. You never know what one tidbit might help you to remember that person’s name.
- **Use the person’s name during your conversation.** This will reinforce your memory, as well as make that person feel that you are engaged. Everyone loves hearing his or her name spoken.

Example: “Mark, where exactly are the offices of Facebook located?”

- **Remember a unique detail about the person.** Many of us are visual learners, so associating something physical with a person will help you remember. Laura has brilliant green eyes, the greenest you’ve ever seen. Tuck that detail away, associated with her name. When you see her the next time, you’ll notice her green eyes and it will help you recall her name.
- **Repeat the name to yourself.** If you’ve just met a group of people, and now you’ve stepped away, look toward the group and quietly repeat their names.
- **Write the name down as soon as you can.** If you are not presented with a business card, write the name down as soon as you can. Writing it down will provide a good reminder for future meetings. If you are given a business card, note the name on the card and look at the person. Add additional information on the card when you leave that would be helpful in remembering. Then you can easily associate the name to the individual in

future meetings.

- **Avoid modifying someone's name.** If their name is Pamela, for instance, don't call them Pam. Nowadays it seems that less and less people are using shortened versions or derivatives of their name—be sure to address people with the name they gave you during the introduction.

You can master the name game! Once you make this a priority it will become a habit that will put you miles ahead of the competition.

Did you know?

Nametags are worn on the right hand side so that they are in direct line with your eyesight when shaking hands during the introduction.

the art of eye contact

One of the most important factors in someone forming a good impression of you is making suitable eye contact. This provides a connection and shows the person you're interested in engaging with them. Do you want to do business with someone who won't look you in the eye?

When you are a speaker, don't "spray the audience,"—stop and look at someone for at least 5 – 7 seconds or for an entire thought or idea. When you're one-on-one with someone, they should never see your eyes moving around.

To present yourself with confidence and authority—as well as to come across as an approachable, friendly person—always use direct eye contact when speaking with people.

*“Speaking without making eye contact is like
talking with a bag over your head.”*

~Dorothy Sarnoff



how to communicate effectively with anyone

As you start a conversation, make the initial greeting brief and friendly; and always incorporate open body language. Crossed arms and a disinterested expression on your face are easy ways to ensure a limited exchange.

To be a good communicator, stay engaged in the conversation and listen. Ask open-ended questions, not questions that simply require a “yes” or “no” answer. Focus the conversation on the person you’re talking to. Learn about them. By doing so you demonstrate respect and it gives you an opportunity to ask follow-up questions. You’ll find that most people love to engage in conversations about themselves.

If you’re in a group setting, wait for an appropriate opportunity to jump into the conversation. Refrain from interrupting a conversation as the entire rhythm of it can be altered if your timing is off. Wait for a low point in the conversation, or when someone excuses himself, to add to the discussion.

Being a great communicator is the heartbeat of long-term relationships. Some people are naturally good communicators, while others need to practice – and

practice—and practice.

To be a good communicator:

Speak clearly and concisely, and make sure you're being understood. Don't talk too fast or with terminology that doesn't fit the audience. Don't use 25-cent words when a 5-cent word works. Your message will be lost on the receiver and you'll leave a poor impression. Avoid using jargon or acronyms.

Good communicators understand that communication is a two-way street. To be an effective communicator, you must first adapt effective listening skills. All too often, when having a conversation with someone, we're already formulating our response before we've even let the person finish what he or she is saying. In essence, we've tuned them out and made our own response—the conversation we're having with ourselves inside our head.

A good technique to use is to pause and ask the person what their thoughts are about what they've heard. A good communicator will solicit feedback.

If you want to sell a house, you talk about the house; if you want to sell a car, you talk about the car; if you want to sell yourself you talk about the other person.

There are three levels in communication:

1. Thinking about me
2. Thinking about them
3. Thinking about 1 and 2, plus being observant

To be an effective listener:

1. Face the speaker and establish eye contact with the speaker.
2. Stay engaged. Be attentive.

3. Try to visualize what the speaker is saying.
4. Don't interrupt the speaker.
5. Wait for the speaker to pause to ask the speaker to repeat something that you didn't understand.
6. Summarize what you thought you heard.
7. When you respond, include words or information that the person used when sharing their thoughts.

"It is the province of knowledge to speak, and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen."

~Oliver Wendell Holmes

Did you know?

On the phone you are being judged 14% by your message, and 86% by your voice. If you have a soft voice and increase your volume by 15–20%, people will think you're more confident.

business card protocol

When you give someone your business card, you're introducing yourself on paper. A business card is a representation of who you and your organization are so be certain that the card is in pristine condition before you hand it over. You wouldn't wear a wrinkled suit to an interview, would you?

Presenting your business card

Always present your business card in your right hand, or in both hands, and present it so that that it faces the person so they can read it. Never (and I do mean NEVER) pass out your business cards as though you were dealing a poker

hand. It is not a contest to see who gives out the most business cards. It's about building relationships that will drive your business.



If you travel for business, you'll save yourself embarrassment by following this rule. In some countries, presenting your business card in your left hand is a serious insult. Look the individual in the eye and smile when presenting the card. Not only is it good etiquette, it shows them you're engaged with them.

Do a little research on business etiquette before you leave the country. The etiquette "rules" in the UK, for example, are far more relaxed than in Japan. Understanding business etiquette allows you to feel comfortable and will help build trust when building business relationships.

Business cards are an internationally recognized means of presenting personal contact information—so have a good supply on hand.

Think about what you want to reflect when creating your cards. While it's fun to get creative when designing your cards, a card that's shaped like a pickle won't fit into any Rolodex I know of, and it definitely won't go through a card scanner. Yes, someday we will ALL have an App to put contact information into our databases with, until then -- use what will work.

Receiving a business card

When given a business card, accept the card in the same way it was presented—either in your right hand or both hands. Take a few moments to study the business card, commenting on it and clarifying information before putting it away.

Don't ever slide a business card into your back pocket and sit on it. Always keep

your business cards in a separate case. When you are back in your office, add the information from the card into your database as soon as possible. You never want to be in a position where you have to ask that person for another card.

the dos and don'ts of mingling

1. Hold food or beverages in your left hand, leaving your right hand free to shake hands with people and accept business cards.
2. Come prepared with plenty of business cards. However, you are at an advantage if you get other peoples' business cards. This puts you in control of contacting the individual. Only give out your card where you feel it's a good business connection or you believe you can be of value to an individual's business.
3. Stay engaged. Never look over the person's shoulder to pick out someone else to talk with.
4. To break into a conversation where there is a group of people engaged, watch for the body language. Look at the angle of their feet. If a person's feet are pointed outward, they are not totally engaged, leaving room for you to approach them. If two people are deep in conversation and their feet are pointed toward each other, stay clear. They are not open for you to enter their conversation.
5. Follow up your networking conversations with a call or e-mail within a day. Share with new contacts why you were interested in connecting with them, the value you can provide for them, and why you would like to develop a relationship with them.

the seven principles of referral success

Referrals are all about relationships and relationships thrive on excellent communication skills and respect. By having good referral etiquette, business relationships flourish. And when you have flourishing business relations, business success flows out from this.

- 1. Know the Industry Norm for Referring.** Know that by following a few simple guidelines you can create new business relationships and build up existing ones. Capital "R" referral etiquette means respect for those who connect parties and those who have something to give.
- 2. Disclose the Finders Fee Up Front.** It is important to have everyone in the referral loop on the same page when it comes to commissions. This is less likely to cause any misunderstandings or "falling-outs" due to poor communication.
- 3. Keep Track of Where You Got the Referral.** It is very bad form to take on work that the referring party usually does – if you were referred to for your specialty, stick to what you specialize in and send the person who was referred to you back to your mutual contact if more needs to be done. This builds trust and you will be referred to again and again.
- 4. Look for Opportunities to Reciprocate Referrals.** Reciprocity helps to build lasting trusting relationships, shows appreciation and strengthens business bonds. This reciprocity feeds on thoughtfulness -- and continued business success is the result.
- 5. Speak with Respect.** Be professional and positive at all times. Know that you put the referring body in a good light if the match is successful. Also, if

you speak ill of anyone, it could get back to them just as fast as they can flip their Rolodex to a new contact to send business to. Be courteous at all times, to all parties.

6. Prepare a “Thank You” Note to the Referring Agent. Say, “thank you,” whether you take on the work or not. If you take on the work, show your gratitude to the referring agent early on and always send a formal “thank you” note when you conclude the work.

7. After the Connection, Follow Up. It is a good idea to follow up as the referring body or the person who was given the referral. This is an excellent way to strengthen your relationship and improve how you do business together.

Effective Business Entertaining

In business today, relationships are developed and strengthened in many types of dining environments, and entertaining clients with confidence is just as important at the dinner table as it is in the boardroom.

In a survey conducted by an independent research firm, 49% of chief financial officers indicated that their most successful business meetings, outside the office, were conducted at a restaurant. And employers say that a person's table manners (or lack of table manners) may be a deciding factor in securing a signed contract, job offer or a promotion.

Whether you're taking a potential client out for lunch, dining with your new employer, or throwing a huge dinner party, knowing the ins and outs of appropriate business dining and entertaining etiquette will distinguish yourself, and your employers, from the competition.

invitation etiquette – sending and responding

Sending out and responding to business invitations in a timely manner is essential.

When hosting a business dinner or company event, clearly state the following information on the invitation:

- Name of host (including company name)
- Time and date of event
- Purpose of the invitation
- Dress code
- RSVP details: Complete address, including zip or postal code
- Any other specific instructions, such as where to park

Using typed labels to address envelopes is the way to go if you have poor handwriting. Whom it is addressed to should clearly state all who are invited to the function. Example: If you're inviting spouses, make sure you address the invitation to "Mr. & Mrs. B. Pitt."

Accepting an e-mail invitation. If you receive a personalized e-mail invitation, you are expected to respond in either the affirmative or the negative. If, however, you receive a blanket e-mail sent to a group of people, the expectation is that you will only respond if you are able to attend. And remember to click "reply," not "reply all," when responding to any e-mail sent to multiple people.

Accepting a verbal invitation. Unlike receiving a written invitation, a verbal invitation requires an immediate response. The very first thing to say when being invited to an event is, "Thank you for the invitation. I will check my schedule." If you are able to do so immediately, please do so, and respond in the affirmative that you may join them, or in the negative with your regrets that you are unable to commit as you have another appointment or engagement. If it's a one-on-one meeting, and you are unable to attend, please schedule a time that does work while you have the person on the phone. If you are unsure if you are able to attend, as you have a tentative engagement, let the invitee know and give them a time when you can get back to them with a response.

Accepting a written invitation. When you receive a written invitation, take time to read it carefully, and respond in the mode in which it was requested—in a timely fashion.

Some examples include:

- RSVP, but no response card included: Send a handwritten response to the address provided on the invitation.

- RSVP with a phone number: Call as soon as you know whether you will be able to attend. Make sure to speak to the host in person, rather than leaving a message on a machine.
- RSVP with response card included: Fill in and reply ASAP or at the latest by the date indicated on the invitation.
- Regrets only: Only respond if you are not able to attend. If the host doesn't get your response, he will assume you'll be in attendance.

When unforeseen circumstances cause you to cancel. If you have to change a "yes" to a "no,"—due to illness or a family emergency—call your host immediately. Do all in your power to speak to the host personally to describe why you are unable to attend. As a last resort, leave a voice mail to cancel. If you have had to cancel, reschedule the engagement while you have the person on the telephone.

host duties

As the host, you are responsible for choosing the restaurant. If you have just a few guests, consider their likes and dislikes when choosing the venue. If you're planning a lunch or dinner for a larger group, choose a restaurant that offers a wide range of menu items.

Be precise about where you will meet in the restaurant. And remember, if you're the one extending the invitation for dinner, you are the one responsible for paying the bill.

Confirm with your guests, and with the restaurant, a day or two prior to the meeting. If your guests are unfamiliar with the restaurant, send them a link to the website, and specific instructions, such as where you will be meeting them, and

where to park. All of these details make your guest feel comfortable—which is good for business.

As the host, plan to arrive at least 10 minutes before the set meeting time. This will give you time to make sure everything is fine with the table, and allow you to greet the first guest as he or she arrives.

When greeting your guests, be sure to make introductions so that everyone has an opportunity to be acquainted, and feels welcome.

To look polished and professional when entertaining in a restaurant, remember the following tips:

- ✓ Know the restaurant in advance.
- ✓ Pick a table away from noise.
- ✓ Affirm that you are the host with the wait staff.
- ✓ Allow your guests to order first.
- ✓ Offer beverage and be conscientious about alcohol consumption.

It's good form to provide some clue to the extent of your hospitality, such as "I highly recommend the steak and lobster."

guest duties

If you are a guest at a business function, you're usually invited for one of three reasons: Your host would like to express his gratitude toward you, to get better acquainted, or because you have something to contribute to the event. Know why you're attending before you accept the invitation.

If you aren't sure why you've been invited, it's perfectly acceptable to ask the question, "Can you tell me what the lunch is about?"

If you are running late, call ahead to give notice. When you arrive, wait for your host to signal where you are being seated. Sit up straight (yes, like your mother told you), and don't crowd your dinner partners.

Here are some more tips:

- ✓ Greet your host first.
- ✓ Don't be shy.
- ✓ Introduce yourself to the other guests.
- ✓ Mingle with all and make sure to meet new people.
- ✓ When leaving, thank the host before making your way out.
- ✓ Write a thank-you note within 24 hours, and mention something specific about the event that meant something to you.

seating etiquette

Often one of the most complicated aspects of dining etiquette, whether you're entertaining at home or at a restaurant, is arranging the seating for guests. The seating arrangements are made by the host, and if you're a guest it would be in poor taste to move place cards or seat yourself at a table other than the table to which you've been assigned.

The seating arrangements are important at a business function as they are a powerful way to facilitate verbal and nonverbal communication during the meal, and make your guests comfortable. You wouldn't want to make a mistake in your seating strategy that could jeopardize a business relationship. Yes, it is THAT important!

For your most important guest, choose the seat that provides the best view of the room and has the least amount of distraction. Where spouses are not present, at a business lunch or dinner, guests are more likely to be seated in accordance with their importance. The guest of honor is seated at the right of the host, with a second guest of honor seated to the left.

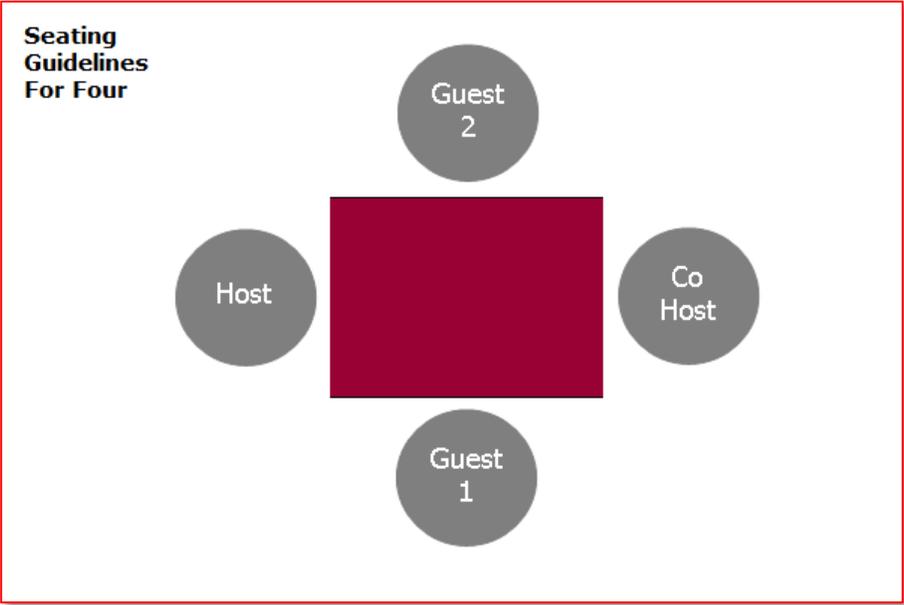
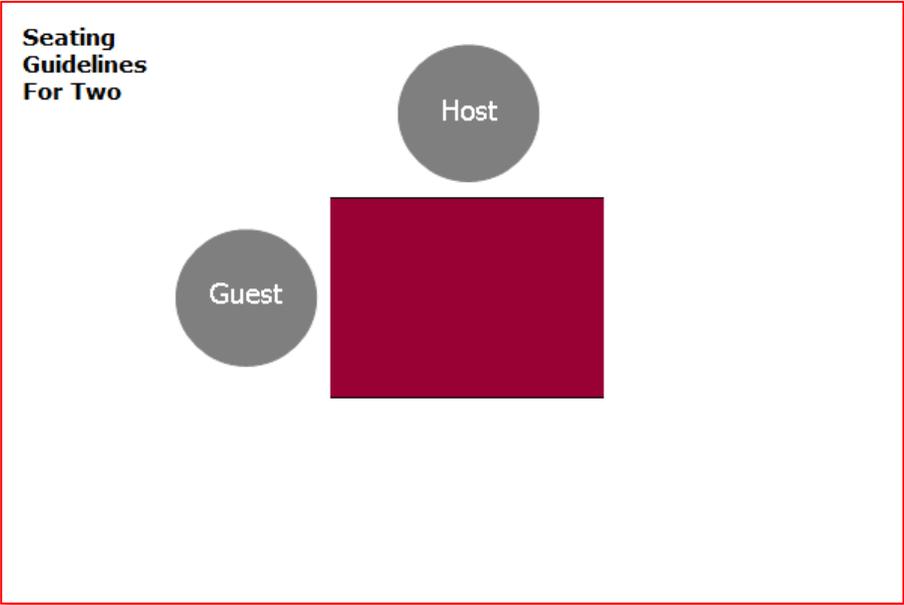
At a round or square table, the host sits to the left of the guest of honor, or alternatively the guest of honor sits to the right of the host. At a rectangular table, the host or hostess seats are seated at either ends of the table.

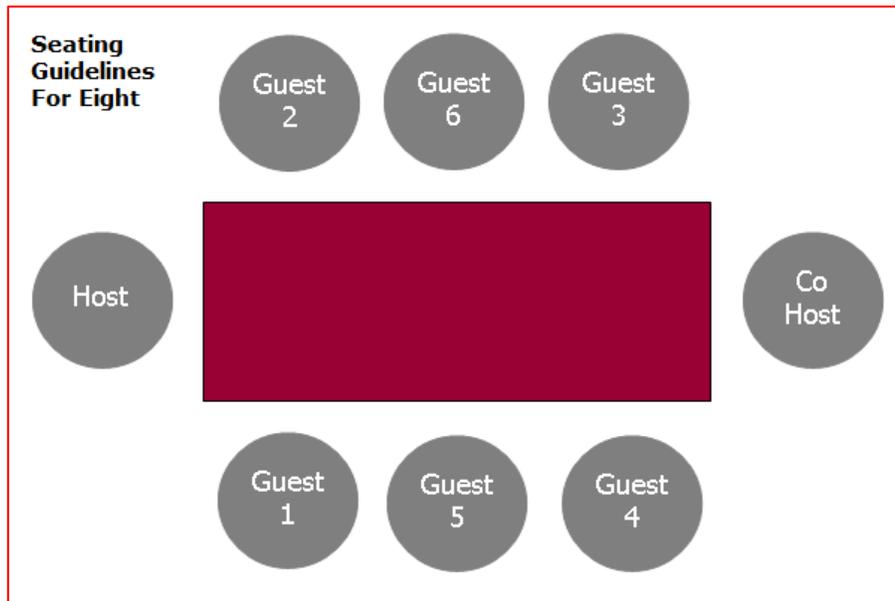
So how do you decide who is the most honored? It's not as challenging as it sounds, really. Place the person who is the most honored in the guest of honor seat.

Guests to be honored include:

- Your client or customer
- A visiting dignitary or guest with military ranking
- An elderly guest
- A guest who has a distinguished title or ranking
- A guest who is celebrating a birthday, anniversary, promotion, etc.

Here is a seating guide to help you out:





To seat yourself, approach the right side of the chair and enter it from your left side. When the meal is over, push your chair back from the table, rise and exit from the right side and gently push your chair under the table.

Note: At business meals, a woman never expects a man to seat her. She seats herself. However, if a man offers to seat her she accepts with a gracious *"thank you."*

stand (or sit) up straight

Yes, this is another one that I am sure you heard many-a-time while growing up—and it's just as important today as it was when you were slumped over your dinner plate on those nights your mom cooked meat loaf and brussels sprouts.

Good posture conveys confidence and authority, and portrays a certain level of respect to you and to others in the room.

Slumping posture and sagging shoulders project boredom, exhaustion, and apathy. Before you enter a room, take a moment to check your posture. Take your hands and put them at the back of your head, elbows pointed outward to each side. Take note of how your shoulders feel. Maintain this same feeling in your shoulders as you move throughout the day.

napkin 101

When you are seated at a dinner table, place your napkin on your lap only after your host has placed his or her napkin on their lap. If you're dining in a restaurant, the wait staff may place your napkin on your lap for you. If not, once you have your cocktail or have ordered your dinner, take your napkin, open it until it is folded in half, and then place it on your lap with the fold toward your waist. Avoid flapping the napkin above the table, in the air. If your napkin is folded in a triangle, unfold until it is folded in half and again place fold toward your waist, open end of napkin pointed toward your knees. All of this is to be done discreetly, either to the side or beneath the table.

If you have to leave the table before you are finished your meal, place your napkin on the back of chair. This alerts the wait staff that you will be coming back so please don't take away your food!

When you are all finished with your dinner, fold the napkin loosely and place it on the table to the left of your place setting. This tells the wait staff you are finished. Never place a used napkin on top of unfinished food on your plate.

Your napkin is to dab the corners of your mouth, before taking a drink and to wipe soiled fingers. It is not for blowing noses, dusting chairs or polishing silverware. Women should go to the ladies room and remove their lipstick (never at the table) before dabbing their mouth with a napkin.

toasting etiquette

There are two traditional toasts given by the host:

1. Host rises to deliver a welcome toast (when all the guests have arrived)
2. Host rises to toast guest of honour (during dessert)

Protocol note: One never drinks a toast to oneself.

It's important for the guest of honor to respond with a toast to thank the host.

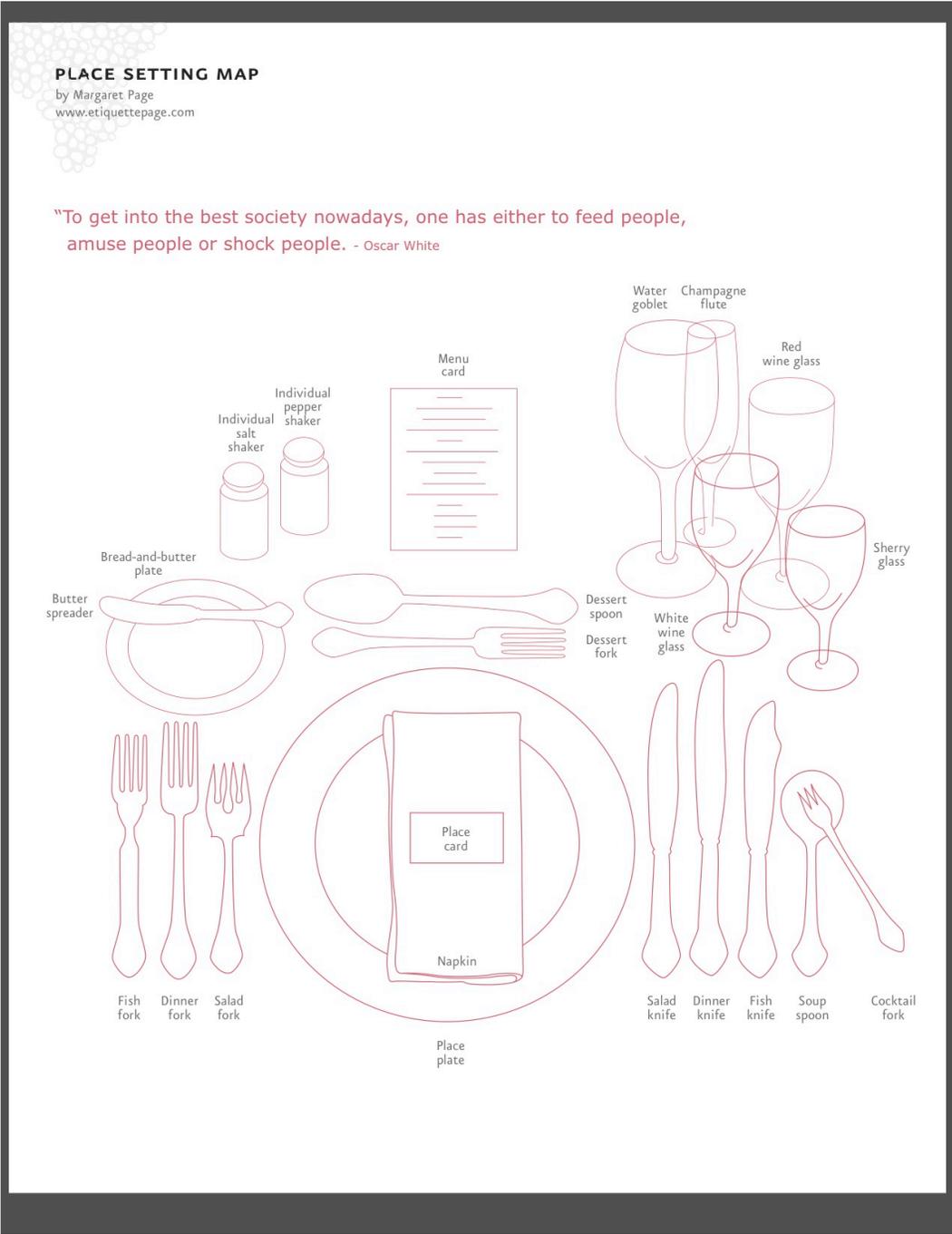
The guest of honor rises to toast the host.

4 B's of toasting

- ✓ Be Prepared
- ✓ Begin
- ✓ Be Brief
- ✓ Be Seated

"A bottle of wine contains more philosophy than all the books in the world." ~Louis Pasteur

Formal Place Setting Map



The above place setting is for the French style of dining with the salad course after the main entrée. Alternatively the salad course may be served before the fish course. Remember – always use the cutlery from the outside in.

dining styles

Until the 1840s, Europeans ate in the same style as Americans—forks positioned in the right hand to convey food to the mouth. Soon thereafter, the upper class in England stopped shifting their forks back and forth from the left hand to the right hand and began eating with the fork remaining in the left hand and the knife remaining in the right hand during the entire meal.

In 1853, a French etiquette book confided that those who wished to eat like fashionable people should not change their fork to their right hand after they have cut their meat, but raise it to their mouth in their left hand. Before long, Europeans of all classes began eating in this way.

There are three main styles of dining: American, Continental and Asian.

The starting point for both **American** and **Continental** styles is the same. Hold the knife in your hand with your right hand index finger on the handle, overlapping the blade no more than 1 inch. Hold the fork, prongs down, in your left hand. Cut only one piece of food at a time.

American Style

After cutting the food, lay the knife on the plate, as shown in the illustration. The cutting edge of the blade always faces the center of the plate.

Switch the fork to your right hand before raising it to your mouth. The fork is held the way a pencil is held, steadied between the index finger and the



Starting point in American and Continental style of eating



When eating American style, rest your knife with blade facing center of the plate

middle finger, except that the thumb is turned up rather than down, as when one is writing. Left-handed persons may reverse the position.

The silent service code. In **American style of eating**, this is the **rest position**. Use this position when you are talking, drinking, or blotting your lips. When your hands are not in use, you may rest them on your lap



Rest position with American style of eating

Imagine your plate as a clock. When you finish a course, place the knife and fork in the 10:20 I am **finished position**, with the tips of the knife and fork at 10 and the handles at 4, with the tines of the fork facing up.



To signal you are finished your meal in American style of eating place your knife and fork in the 10:20 position

Continental Style

The illustration shows how to hold the knife and fork to cut food in either the **Continental** or **American** and styles. Cut only one piece at a time. In Continental style dining, to secure the meat on the tines of the fork, put the blade underneath the piece of meat and twist your hand slightly. Left-handed persons may reverse the position.



How to hold the knife and fork to cut food in either Continental or American styles.

Bring the fork, in your left hand, tines down, to your mouth by twisting your wrist and raising your forearm slightly. The knife remains in your hand.

The silent service code. With **Continental style of eating**, this is the **rest position**. The knife and fork are crossed on the plate with the fork over the knife, tines pointed down on the fork, blade of knife pointed downward and toward the middle of the plate. This position is the silent signal that you are not finished. When your hands are not in use, you may rest them on the table, from the wrist up.

When you finish a course, place the knife and fork in the **“I am finished position”**. Visualize a clock face on your plate. The tips of the knife and fork are at 10 and the handles are at 4, with the tines of the fork facing down.

dining dos and don'ts

- Turn off cell phones and beepers.
- Keep elbows off the table.
- Do not apply make-up or comb your hair at the table.
- Break your bread/rolls and butter each piece individually.
- Gently stir your soup to cool it instead of blowing on it.
- Spoon your soup away from you.
- Don't talk with your mouth full.
- Don't use your napkin as a tissue.



Rest position with Continental style of eating



With Continental style of eating, this position signals you are finished your meal

- If you have to sneeze, leave the table.
- Wait for the host to signal start of meal before starting yours. Alternately, at a banquet, wait for those around you to begin before starting your meal.
- If something undesirable is in your mouth, discreetly remove it with the fingers of one hand.
- If you have any problems with the meal, quietly bring it to the waiter's attention.

“An empty stomach is not a good political advisor.”

~Albert Einstein

Tipping Etiquette

First things first: If you invite someone to a business lunch or dinner, always expect to pick up the check—and all other expenses, such as coat check and gratuities. Always bring a credit card and cash with you to make sure you have what you need to cover all the costs.

Not sure how much to tip?

- Wait service: 15–20%, pre-tax; for extraordinary service – 20% or more
- Maitre d': This is something that is at your discretion
- Valet: When your car is returned to you, a \$2 - \$5 tip is appropriate
- Wine steward: 10–20% of wine bill before taxes
- Coat check: \$1 - \$5



The Power of a Thank You Note

Even (and maybe “especially”) in a world where we communicate with quick texts and e-mails, the personal thank you note is KING, and still the best way to show your gratitude.

Your personal note doesn’t have to be written on fancy paper, and you don’t have to have a degree in journalism to find the right words to say. Don’t be intimidated. Be authentic. Be personal. Keep it simple.



Here are four key components to cover in your thank you note, to help you get you started:

1. In the first sentence, say “thank you for” and state the specifics. Example: *“Thank you for the lovely lunch, today.”*
2. Next, express a further detailed appreciation by remarking on the quality of the thing you’ve been given, such as the food in the restaurant. *“VJ’s is such an exotic restaurant.”*
3. Share specific reasons why you enjoyed the gift. Example: *“I particularly liked the butter chicken.”*
4. Below closing sentence, sign it pleasantly and friendly, such as *“I look forward to our next lunch in July.”*

Expressing gratitude will never go out of style, no matter how technically advanced we become. Sending a personal note of thanks sends the message that you value the relationship enough to take the time to personalize your message.

Example:

Dear Dawn,

Thank you so much for the scarf. I love the silk fabric and the soft blue colour. You seem to have a knack for selecting just the right gift for the occasion. I look forward to getting together with you at the spring conference.

Warm regards,

Margaret

During a time when you're looking for the next shiny object to improve business and advance your career, a thank you card is a simple solution that can have an immediate and positive effect on building business relationships.

Don't drag your feet...send out a personal thank you note within 24 hours of your meeting.

How to Practice Business Meeting Etiquette

If you're like most business professionals, you find yourself in a lot of meetings. It can be overwhelming, and can eat up a lot of your day. There's often a temptation to multi-task during meetings, which is not only disrespectful to the chairperson, but can contribute to the overall effectiveness and outcome of the meeting. You've been invited as a participant to bring value to the meeting and collaborate with the group.

A recent Yahoo! HotJobs poll sums it up: "A third or more of the 5,000 respondents said they often check e-mails during meetings."

No one likes to go to poorly run meetings (and I am sure you've been to plenty!). Understanding meeting etiquette will ensure that meetings are more productive, and that all in attendance are engaged in the discussion.

If you are leading the meeting, follow these tips for a successful meeting:

- Have a goal for the meeting. What do you want to accomplish?
- Draft an agenda prior to the meeting and attach to the meeting attendance request.
- Select attendees carefully—key decision makers and contacts that will be crucial to the conversation. Too many attendees at a meeting yields the same results as "too many cooks in the kitchen."
- Know and understand parliamentary procedure for more formal meetings.
- Keep the meeting on track. Don't let side conversations take over focus of the meeting.
- Give everyone a chance to provide input. A good leader is a good listener.

- If there are participants who have called into the meeting, make sure there isn't a lot of side chatter and that when people in the room are called on, they speak clearly into the speakerphone.
- Start and end the meeting on time. This sends a message to meeting attendees that you value their time.
- Be organized. If you have handouts or slides, make sure you have prepared your material at least a few days prior to the meeting and are ready to deliver your message.
- Thank attendees for participating.
- Always send out meeting notes within 48 hours of the meeting to all attendees, for approval, as well as people who were invited but couldn't attend.

If you're an attendee at a business meeting:

- Reply to the meeting request.
- Review the agenda before the meeting. Do the necessary research and bring the agenda with you to the meeting.
- Be punctual.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Come prepared with pen and paper, and business cards.
- Listen. You don't want to find yourself asking a question that someone else has already asked.
- Wait for your turn to speak. Don't interrupt the speaker or other attendees.
- Signal the chair when you wish to speak, and make your comments only when called on.
- Thank the chairperson for organizing the meeting.

Adherence to the proper etiquette for a business meeting establishes respect among meeting participants, helps the meeting begin and end on time, and fosters an atmosphere of respect and cooperation.

The Dos of Dais

The dictionary definition of a dais is:

“A raised platform, as in a lecture hall,
for speakers or honored guests.”

If you are invited to sit at the dais, you are considered either a person of distinction or you are someone who is involved in a top capacity in relation to the purpose of the function.

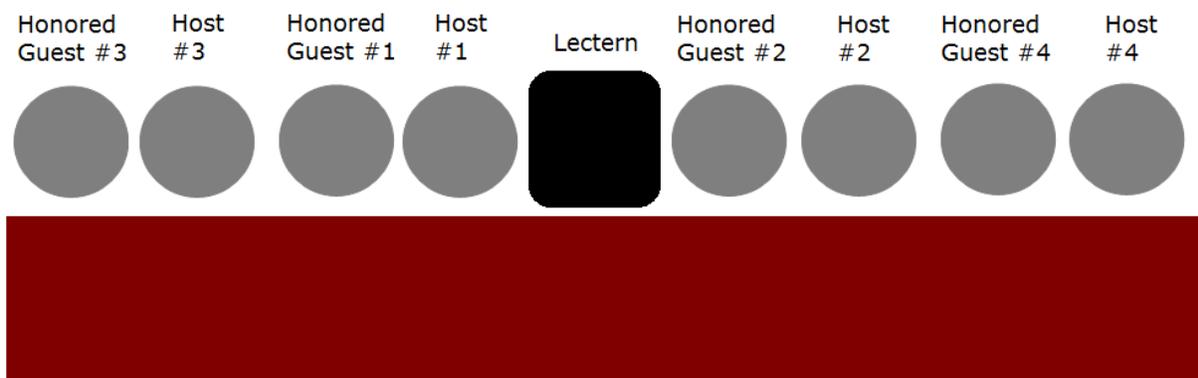
Invite dais guests to meet in a room—closest to the ballroom or area where the function is being held—at least thirty minutes prior to the time they are scheduled to march in formation into the ballroom. A company representative should be on hand to greet the dais guests as they arrive. It’s his or her responsibility, to introduce the dais guests to the company hosts and guest(s) of honor, make sure they are served refreshments, brief them on the details of the affair, and get them into their proper places in line.

When organizing a large dais group, it’s wise to set up the chairs in the convening room to duplicate the seating placement in the ballroom. Have your dais guests sit in their assigned chairs so that they are ready to march to the dais in the proper order.

When everything is ready, the Master of Ceremonies will go to the microphone in the ballroom and announce, “Ladies and gentleman, the honored guests!”

When planning the seating, place guests close to each other in pairs so that all of the dais guests have someone next to them to talk to. No one should ever be seated behind the lectern.

The host or highest-ranking executive is seated to the right of the lectern and the guest of honor is seated to the right of the host. The second ranking guest of honor will be to the left of the lectern with the second ranking host or second ranking executive to their left. Whether seated to the right or left of the lectern, guests of honor are always to the right of hosts.



DAIS TABLE SEATING

When you are the one responsible for organizing an event, it's important that you communicate to the people you've invited to sit on the dais whether or not they are responsible for their lunch or dinner ticket. Normally, the answer is "yes," but it's important that the expectation is clear in your letter of invitation. Indicate either, "We are enclosing a complimentary dinner ticket for you," or "You can purchase your benefit ticket by completing the enclosed card and returning it by mail, along with you check..."

The New Rules of Phone Communication

Whether you're answering an office phone or a cell phone, always answer the phone by introducing yourself: "Hello, Etiquette Page Enterprises, Margaret speaking." If you receive a call on your cell phone, it's just as important to identify yourself. A simple, "Good morning, this is Margaret," is appropriate.

Other telephone etiquette tips include:

- Answer promptly—at least by the third ring.
- Always answer the telephone in a professional and pleasant manner, and with a smile. Believe it or not, people can feel it or hear it on the other end.
- Keep business conversations to the point – don't go off on a wild tangent about the new restaurant around the corner from your office.
- When you contact someone by phone, ask, "Is now a good time to talk?"
- Stand up when speaking on the telephone (except when driving). It helps activate energy and makes a person sound more upbeat.
- Make every effort to return calls on the same day.
- Don't keep someone on hold more than 30 seconds.
- If you have to leave a message, state the reason for your call, the time you called, and give your telephone number twice. Leaving your number twice is a courtesy, as often people can't write down your number as fast as you say it. This helps the recipient so they wouldn't have to listen to you message a second time. If you are expecting someone to return your call, don't leave it up to call-display.

Practice good speech habits when talking to someone on the phone (and otherwise!) Avoid terms like: "Hang on," or "Yeah," "Nope," or "Okey-dokey." Instead, use: "One moment please," "Yes," "No," and "All right."

teleconference call etiquette

If you use a speakerphone, ask the person on the other end of the line if you can put them on speaker before doing so. If there are other people in the room, introduce them.

When choosing a location for the call, make sure it's an area that is free from noise and distraction. Barking dogs and loud voices can be amplified on the other end, making it difficult for the caller to stay engaged in the conversation and miss important details. Use the mute button to cut down on background noises.

be cell phone savvy (and courteous)

Even though cell phones have been around for many years now, there are still those who haven't mastered the skills (and manners) of cell phone use.

In the Sprint report, "Wireless Courtesy Report" respondents stated the following:

- 3 out of 4 people believe people are less courteous today than they were 5 years ago.
- 77% of respondents have overheard a wireless phone conversation while in a public restroom.

The simple guidelines of common courtesy when using a cell phone in public are designed to make public areas—in and out of the office—more enjoyable for everyone. Chances are if you don't practice good cell phone etiquette, you've annoyed someone at some point.

For example: It's good manners to put your phone on silent, or turn it off, when you're in a public setting such as a doctor's office, movie theatre, dentist, courtroom, church, restaurant—anywhere you are gathered with other people, or in a private place such as a bathroom. I, personally, don't need to hear the person

in the next stall arguing with her teenager while I'm using the bathroom.

If you must be available for emergency calls, put your phone on the vibrate setting. Phones are also equipped with environmental settings that automatically adjust the phone and its features so you do not disrupt others in your surroundings. Excuse yourself from the activity/event and find a quiet area to respond to the call.



When answering your cell phone, use the same volume level you would use on a landline. Avoid "cell yell." Be conscious of where you are. People have a tendency to talk much louder when on a cell phone.

video conference calls

Web cameras have revolutionized international business communication. Now, with the click of a button you can "virtually" be in the same room as your biggest client in Europe. With Skype and other programs, you can meet (and see) clients, share your computer screen, and follow a presentation—all in real time. Collaboration couldn't be easier than it is today. But with that, comes protocol. Being professional at all times becomes even more important



because your client in China can ring you up on Skype anytime...and you better be ready!

Tip: Before you accept a Skype call, take a quick note of your appearance. Would you go to a meeting dressed the way you are dressed? Professional appearance—even with remote workers—at all times is even more important today, now that video conferencing has become so available. Working in your PJs is not an option!

*“The more elaborate our means of communication,
the less we communicate.” ~Joseph Priestley*

The 10 Commandments of E-mail Etiquette

Companies today still have not realized how important their e-mail communications are to their bottom line. How many times have you received an e-mail with misspelled words, or worse yet—not received a reply to an important message? Or worse yet, how many times have you been guilty of firing off a quick e-mail without thinking about spelling or grammar?

Just like any other form of business communication, e-mail correspondence follows the same rules of business etiquette. You wouldn't use abbreviations in a written communication to a client, would you?

In today's hurried culture, e-mail can seem like a quick way to communicate your message, but if you don't take the time to follow the basics, you might end up shooting yourself in the foot (in a business sense, of course). One misconstrued message, sent via iPhone while running from one meeting to another could adversely affect a business relationship.

Here a few reminders to help you keep your digital communication etiquette in check:

1. Thou shall use e-mail to convey only ideas and factual or logistical information, not emotions. To express emotions and sentiment, take time for a one-on-one meeting or telephone conversation rather than sending an e-mail. The sound, tone, timber, and quality of your voice will help to better communicate your message and avoid misunderstandings.



2. Thou shall write the topic of your message on the reference or subject line. Always write a succinct, accurate description of what recipients can expect in the body of your e-mail in the subject line. It helps them prioritize their messages and quickly sort them for future reference. It also allows them to easily follow the trail of responses back and forth. If you correspond with the same people on multiple subjects, separate the e-mails by the appropriate topic clearly stated in the reference line.

3. Thou shall address the e-mail using the name of the intended person. Have you ever received a personal e-mail note destined for someone else? I did—and it was a love note that made me blush! I read half of it and realized it wasn't meant for me. Since then, I'm never sure I'm the intended recipient unless I see my name at the top.

Don't muddy your messages; always address the recipient by name.

4. Thou shall use "blind copy" for e-mails sent to groups. Avoid sharing names of the whole group via e-mail unless it's a small, closed group such as a Board of Directors or a Club and you know members have previously been given the list of names and e-mail addresses. E-mail addresses are to be kept private.

5. Thou shall never ever forward a chain letter that states if you do or don't do something within a certain time, your life will forever be changed. It's nice to create change for someone but not by using threats. If you really must send the letter to others, remove the threatening language. If you don't, you will be excommunicated from the hall of good manners.

6. Thou shall use "delivery receipt notification" only when it's imperative that you know if the intended recipient received it. Don't create a need to

send any unnecessary e-mail by using this tool. It can annoy people.

7. Thou shall use capitalization, upper and lower case, and proper punctuation in e-mails as in all other written communications. Studies have proven that if people read text written in all capital or all lower case letters, it takes much longer to read and understand a message. Use a standard way of writing.

8. Thou shall close your e-mail message with heartfelt words that show that the sender is fully present. Don't just rely on your automated signature line to close your e-mail. Let your recipients know that, indeed, a real person is sending them a message.

9. Thou shall proofread your e-mail messages before sending them. Although e-mail can be an informal way to communicate with people, it's always a good habit to use spell-check and read through your note before hitting "send" so that the message is clear. Sometimes just one missing word can make a difference. "I love your ," and "I love your work," can mean two very different things.

10. Thou shall respond to e-mails within 24 hours. Even if you cannot yet provide an answer, replying to someone's e-mail within a day lets the sender know you received it. Sending immediate responses also keeps you organized and up to date on your e-mail correspondence.

Social Media Etiquette

In the “real” world, would you randomly approach an acquaintance and ask them for a favor? Consistently talk about yourself without any regard for others around you? Jump into a conversation with strangers without introducing yourself? Accept a gift without saying “thank you”?



The same rules apply to social media etiquette as they would in real relationships. (And if you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, you might need to start reading from page 1 again and reinforce your social skills—both online and offline!)

Here are a few social media etiquette tips, for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn that will not only save you from experiencing a “foot-in-mouth” situation, but will also help you understand some of the rules of engagement in this new world of social media.

facebook dos and don'ts

- Do:
 - Be a “real” person on Facebook. It is about sharing who you are and what you do, whether it’s a business page or a personal Facebook profile.
 - Acknowledge when someone posts on your wall. It’s a conversation.
 - Welcome people who join your business page, and visit their pages to learn about them.
 - Stay engaged. For personal: comment on your friends’ wall. Share photos and update your status. For business: update your page at

least once a day. Promote your brand, share interesting articles and photos – that’s why people are there, to get to know what your business is about.

- Don’t:
 - Don’t bombard your friends with group invites—Ask once. Move on.
 - Don’t use your personal page as a platform to sell your latest gadgets. If you’re using it for business, be transparent about it – set up a business page and let your friends decide if they want to join.
 - Don’t use profanity on your wall. If it’s not something you’d want your kids or your grandmother to see, don’t post it
 - Don’t tag people in unflattering pictures. Think before you tag. This is definitely one of those “Do unto others...” type things.

twitter dos and don’ts

- Do:
 - Update your profile with your personal information, and a profile picture. Think of it as your business card.
 - Acknowledge when someone retweets your tweet or mentions you. It’s the “Twitter” way of showing gratitude.
 - Promote yourself. But mix it up. Share interesting articles, competitor’s links even. Keep it interesting.
 - Engage in conversations. Think of Twitter as a “cocktail” party, where you can jump in on different conversations, even if you weren’t originally invited—as long as you’re adding value to the conversation.
- Don’t:
 - Don’t follow everyone and anyone—or use an automated tool—just to raise your # of followers.

- Don't use profanity. Again, a no-brainer here. It's just in bad taste, online or offline.
- Don't tweet just to tweet. If you don't have anything to say...don't say anything.

linkedin dos and don'ts

- **Do:**

- Include a profile picture. Investing in a photographer to take professional headshots is worth the investment. It's the first thing people notice when they visit your LinkedIn profile.
- Complete your profile. Add your professional info, website address, honors and awards, interests, groups, etc. Also include widgets to pull in content such as your reading list, events, and your business blog.
- Give and receive recommendations. Utilize the recommendations feature to request endorsements from business contacts. While it's great to be recognized, it's important that you also recommend others. In good LinkedIn etiquette: what goes around—comes around.
- Join groups. LinkedIn allows you to connect with people who are in the same group as you are. But don't just join: contribute and add value.
- Post regular status updates. Updating your LinkedIn status is a great way to stay on your network's radar.

- **Don't:**

- Don't post an inappropriate photo. LinkedIn is not Facebook and humorous photos are not appropriate in your profile. Keep it professional.

- Don't overlook grammar and spelling. LinkedIn is a great place to promote yourself and misspelled words are not going to make your personal brand shine.
- Don't use automated invites. Add a personal message to the invitation.
- Don't spam group discussions with comments that are blatantly self-promotional

Remember, every time you submit a comment on a blog, tweet about your new product, or share a link on Facebook, you're leaving your signature. It tells people who you are. Behind the computer screens are real people who will form an opinion about who you are—and whether they want to do business with you – through all those random posts and tweets. And it's permanent.

So, before you hit "send" or "tweet," think about how it will reflect your identity.

"Social media is not a media. The key is to listen, engage, and build relationships." ~David Alston

In Conclusion

“Knowing is not enough we must apply. Willing is not enough we must do.” ~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Thank you for this opportunity to guide you in gaining valuable tools to assist you to be more professional and win more business.

We’re always available to answer any questions you might have. Feel free to contact us and be sure to connect with for more etiquette tips to help you navigate the social landscape both personally and professionally!



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I look forward to “meeting” you!

Sincerely,

Margaret Page

Etiquette Consultant