



## Welcome to the Contemporary Business Etiquette Workshop

It takes more than a college degree to succeed in the business world today. Projecting a polished professional image and knowing proper business etiquette will place you light years ahead of the competition.

The new business etiquette is governed by one simple principle:  
Respect others and help them feel comfortable by behaving in the least  
offensive manner possible.

In today's workshop you will learn how to distinguish yourself by knowing how to behave comfortably in business situations. Knowing good manners will put you at ease as you present yourself with confidence and poise.

People will judge you on your manners. Remember: good manners are important because they show that you possess self-control, that you exude civility and that you care about, and are capable of respecting, others.

In the business world you will be evaluated on your looks, your body language, your gestures, your ability to converse and interact with others and how you manage social / business situations such as receptions and meals.

### **TOPICS TODAY:**

The Art of Conversation  
Introductions  
Networking Tips  
Receptions and Dining Etiquette  
Business Meetings Protocol  
Office, Email, Phone and Dress Etiquette

I have included a detailed packet of information to supplement the workshop. Books and Internet resources are listed and I encourage you to purchase one good reference book on business etiquette for your personal or professional use.

It is my pleasure to present this workshop to you today.

## Introductions

*“Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect, to those that are present.” ~ George Washington*

Every day we encounter people in a variety of business and social situations. The way we meet and greet them creates lasting impressions and paves the way for a productive encounter. Introductions project information. Besides the obvious elements of name, title, and affiliation, an introduction conveys a level of respect and reflects how the person making the introduction views the other person’s status. Mastering the art of the introduction will help put you and the people you are introducing at ease. Learning the basics ~ and they are not very difficult ~ is the first step.

The most important point about introductions is to make them. Failing to do so causes embarrassment and discomfort. Most people would prefer you to make the introduction incorrectly, even if you forget their name, rather than stand there unacknowledged and disregarded.

### **Business Introductions**

In business, introductions are based on power and hierarchy. Simply, persons of lesser authority are introduced to persons of greater authority. Gender plays no role in business etiquette, nor does it affect the order of introductions.

Simply put, **always mention the name of the higher ranked person FIRST.**

*For example, you would say, “Mr./Ms. Greater Authority, I would like to introduce Mr./Ms. Lesser Authority.”*

#### **1. Introduce a junior executive to a senior executive.**

*Example: Mr. Senior Executive, I’d like to introduce Mr. Junior Executive.*

There is one exception: A client, for instance, always takes precedence over anyone in your organization. Here are examples of pecking order:

#### **2. Introduce someone from [your company] to a client or customer.**

*Example: Mr. Dawson (client), this is Ms. Saunders, Our Chief Financial Officer. Ms. Saunders, Mr. Dawson is our client from Atlanta.*

### **Introducing Yourself**

If nobody introduces you, step in and introduce yourself. Someone may be too embarrassed to admit forgetting a name or may be distracted by other matters. Feeling slighted because you were not introduced only puts you at a disadvantage. Introduce yourself by extending your hand, smiling, and saying something like, “I’m Matt Jones, financial analyst at [your company].” “I help people with \_\_\_\_\_ or “my work helps \_\_\_\_\_”

As a guest, it’s your duty to circulate and introduce yourself at any function, large or small, especially if the host or hostess is busy.

Always use both names when introducing yourself to convey the message that you take yourself seriously as an adult and expect the same treatment from others.

Be clear and concise in your introduction, and give some information about yourself ~ or the person(s) you are introducing ~ to help get the conversation going. Once a conversation has begun and everyone seems at ease, you may excuse yourself.

At any business meal, always introduce yourself to the people sitting next to you to open the way for conversation.

### **Responding to Introductions**

The way you respond to someone else's introduction is just as important as making the introduction. In response to *informal* introductions, simply say "hello". Add a phrase like, "I've heard so much about you", only if it is true and if it is complimentary.

"How do you do?" followed by the person's name is the customary response to a *formal* introduction. Refrain from the use of first names until the person to whom you've been introduced has indicated that the familiarity is preferred.

### **Rising to the Occasion**

**Always** stand for introductions. Everyone should rise to greet newcomers at both business and social functions. Rise, shake hands, and say good-bye when others leave the table or office. If you cannot reach far enough to shake hands a slight head nod will suffice.

### **Remembering Names**

If you forget someone's name when making an introduction, try putting the other people at ease rather than concentrating on your own embarrassment. Be straightforward and yet tactful in admitting your memory lapse: Say, "I've forgotten your name, or I've just drawn a blank, and I am embarrassed." or "my memory seems to be malfunctioning." If you can't remember someone's name, but you remember an interesting point about them, cite it. You might say, "I clearly remember our conversation about Thai food, but your name seems to have temporarily slipped my mind. Please help me out."

When you're introduced to someone, say the person's name, and then repeat it several times during the conversation. Not only do you project a genuine interest in someone by repeating their name, but the repetition is more likely to imprint the name on your memory. When someone seems to have forgotten your name just jump in, hand outstretched, a smile on your face, and offer your name.

### **Business Card Etiquette**

The biggest mistake you can make when you receive someone's business card is to glance at it and slide it into a pocket. The treatment shows little respect for the other person's position or rank. When a business card handed to you, read it thoroughly. You may want to repeat the person's name for pronunciation and acknowledge the person's company as being well respected, or ask about the duties of his or her position. Finally, express your gratitude for being given this information.

Do not give cards to anyone and everyone. When in a group, do not pass them around the table. Never exchange cards during a meal. Obviously, if you are on the selling side and the buying side asks for it, you should oblige.) Always ask, "May I give you my card?" and not "Here's my card." Refrain from asking a very senior employee for his or her business card.

Present your card with the printed side facing the other person.

- Sources: *Business Etiquette for Dummies*, Sue Fox & Perrin Cunningham  
*The Complete Idiot's Guide to Business Etiquette*, Mary Mitchell with John Corr  
[www.etiquetteintl.com](http://www.etiquetteintl.com)

## Cocktail Party Panache

Don't you just think the world of someone who extends a wet, ice cold hand for you to shake? And, aren't you simply overwhelmed by guests who look like they're practicing "Juggling 101" every time they meet someone new? Of course not! Nor is anyone impressed by your social savvy when you behave like a bungling amateur at an affair. However, cocktail party panache is easily mastered. By learning a few simple rules and by practicing some easy maneuvering, you, too, can handle canapes and cocktails with panache and make good first impressions.

**Learning the Basics:** Panache starts well before you arrive at any function, but not because you've hired a limousine. Seasoned party-goers understand why they're attending an event. They've done their homework about the other attendees, and they've determined their goals in attending. Then they go to work on their attitude. Do whatever mental gymnastics it takes to put you in a positive frame of mind. Or stay home; there is no alternative if you want to succeed.

**When you walk into a room, walk with purpose:** First impressions are made, for the most part, within 5 seconds of meeting someone. That doesn't get you past the "How do you do's." In fact, words only account for 7% of an initial impression. Vocal quality accounts for another 38%. A whopping 55% of any first impression is based on non-verbal perceptions of appearance and behavior.

**Keep Your Purpose in Mind:** The bar or the hors d'oeuvres table need not be your first port of call. The purpose of any business/social function should not be free food or unlimited booze. Social occasions, especially those that are business-related, are about people and making connections. Concentrate on greeting and meeting people, and on getting into conversations rather than on appeasing your appetite. Remember to make eye contact while having a discussion. No one wants to talk with someone who is always scanning the room for a more important prospect.

Keep conversation clean, avoiding any sexual innuendoes. Excessive flirting is not appropriate, especially at a business-related affair. Also, steer clear of taboo topics like dieting, health (yours or theirs), the cost of anything, malicious gossip (yes, you do know when it's malicious), religion and politics. Most important, don't leave someone hanging. Close a conversation before moving on to another person or group.

**Guidelines for Eating and Drinking:** Never, ever, drink on an empty stomach; stop on the way to the event to grab a snack if necessary. The risks of losing control or being indiscrete are too great. In fact, be sure to pace your alcoholic intake throughout the course of the evening so you won't reveal your company's secrets to a major rival or tell a client's spouse what you really think of him/her.

At the bar or food station, take what you want and move away. Don't hold court directly in front of the bar; give others a chance to get something too. But, how can you move away when you have nowhere to put the food and drink? Here's where a little practice is required.

**How to juggle hors d'oeuvres and accoutrements:** First of all, the right hand should always be kept free to shake hands with any man or woman who may be arriving or leaving. Food, drink, napkin - everything - goes into the left hand. Then you'll never look like an amateur juggler when the opportunity to meet someone new presents itself. While all this may sound like even more ridiculous juggling act, it really isn't.

**Here's how to do it:** Take that cocktail napkin and put it between the ring and baby finger of the left hand. Then, spread the ring and middle fingers to act as a base for the plate of hors d'oeuvres. Use the thumb and index finger to hold the stem or base of the glass and to stabilize the top of the plate at the same time. As you need something, reach for it with the

right hand, use it, then return it to the appropriate finger slot in the left hand before continuing.

A cold, wet drink should never be held for more than the time it takes to have a quick sip. In fact, a chilled drink like white wine should be held by the stem, never the bowl, so you don't heat the drink. Hold a highball by the base of the glass rather than wrapping your hand around the drink. Only room-temperature drinks, like red wine, brandy or a neat scotch that benefit from the added body heat to release the bouquet, are held by the bowl of the glass.

Don't fill your plate to overflowing. People seldom notice you going back for seconds at large cocktail functions but they will notice the mountainous heap on your plate. And, claiming it's for the table sounds like an excuse, not the truth. A pertinent example comes to mind: while on a three-day promotional cruise several years ago, a businessman reached for a cookie on a large silver tray heaped with a generous assortment, when a woman yelled to him not to touch; the cookies were all hers. The businessman remembered her months later when she tried to solicit his firm's business.

If refreshments are being served by waiters, all the better. It eliminates the necessity for a the plate ... provided greed doesn't get the better of you and you try to take more than one hors d'oeuvre at a time. Refuse if the foods are messy, dippy or drippy. Murphy's Law will ensure that the drip lands on the most difficult or expensive to clean article of clothing you happen to be wearing.

While food served on toothpicks or cocktail sticks may keep your fingers clean, there is the problem of what to do with those sticks. Don't litter, but don't put them back on the serving tray; it is unappetizing to others and it's unhygienic. If no containers have been provided for the toothpicks, put them in an ashtray, on a dish or on the tray when the waitstaff is collecting empty glasses. If nothing is available, wrap the toothpicks in a napkin and dispose of them later.

**How to Handle Difficult Foods:** Some foods, although not messy, can still create problems. Years ago, fraternities used the olive test on pledges, serving them olives without providing a place to put the pits, to ascertain the pledge's social savvy. While that may no longer be a criterion at fraternities, in business/social situations it does help to know how to handle difficult foods. Here are some guidelines:

- Olives with pits are held in the fingers and eaten in several bites, then the pit is discarded on the side of your plate, in an ashtray or into a napkin.
- When eating shrimp with the tail still on, hold the shrimp by the tail and dip it into the sauce once. Eat it in one bite if it is not too large, otherwise, eat it in two. Then discard the tail as you would olive pits or toothpicks.
- Crudites are dipped into the accompanying sauce only once. Never, ever dip something from which you've already taken a bite back into the sauce. Hold your cocktail napkin beneath the vegetable to catch any drops of sauce that may fall.
- Bite carefully into cherry tomatoes or puff pastry to avoid spraying yourself and everyone within arm's length.
- Always exercise caution to avoid burning yourself when biting into hot hors d'oeuvres. Test the temperature unobtrusively with the tip of your tongue, and remember that the inside is usually quite a bit hotter.
- When an hors d'oeuvre tastes unpleasant, don't just spit it out. Turn your back to the others before transferring it from your mouth to the cocktail napkin. Find a wastebasket to dispose of it immediately yourself.

Enjoy!

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## **Dining Etiquette**

Table manners play an important part in making a favorable impression. They are visible signals of the state of our manners and therefore are essential to professional success. Regardless of whether we are having lunch with a prospective employer or dinner with a business associate, our manners can speak volumes about us as professionals.

### **Napkin Use**

The meal begins when the host unfolds his or her napkin. This is your signal to do the same. Place your napkin on your lap, completely unfolded if it is a small luncheon napkin or in half, lengthwise, if it is a large dinner napkin. Typically, you want to put your napkin on your lap soon after sitting down at the table (but follow your host's lead). The napkin remains on your lap throughout the entire meal and should be used to gently blot your mouth when needed. If you need to leave the table during the meal, place your napkin on your chair as a signal to your server that you will be returning. The host will signal the end of the meal by placing his or her napkin on the table. Once the meal is over, you too should place your napkin neatly on the table to the right of your dinner plate. (Do not refold your napkin, but don't wad it up, either.)

### **Ordering**

If, after looking over the menu, there are items you are uncertain about, ask your server any questions you may have. Answering your questions is part of the server's job. It is better to find out before you order that a dish is prepared with something you do not like or are allergic to than to spend the entire meal picking tentatively at your food.

An employer will generally suggest that your order be taken first; his or her order will be taken last. Sometimes, however, the server will decide how the ordering will proceed. Often, women's orders are taken before men's.

As a guest, you should not order one of the most expensive items on the menu or more than two courses unless your host indicates that it is all right. If the host says, "I'm going to try this delicious sounding cheesecake; why don't you try dessert too," or "The prime rib is the specialty here; I think you'd enjoy it," then it is all right to order that item if you would like.

### **"Reading" the Table Setting**

Should you be attending a formal dinner or banquet with pre-set place settings, it is possible to gain clues about what may be served by "reading" the place setting. Start by drawing an imaginary line through the center of the serving plate (the plate will be placed in the center of your dining space). To the right of this imaginary line all of the following will be placed; glassware, cup and saucer, knives, and spoons, as well as a seafood fork if the meal includes seafood. It is important to place the glassware or cup back in the same position after its use in order to maintain the visual presence of the table. To the left of this imaginary line all of the following will be placed; bread and butter plate (including small butter knife placed horizontally across the top of the plate), salad plate, napkin, and forks. Remembering the rule of "liquids on your right" and "solids on your left" will help you to quickly become familiar with the place setting.

### **Use of Silverware**

Choosing the correct silverware from the variety in front of you is not as difficult as it may first appear. Starting with the knife, fork, or spoon that is farthest from your plate, work

your way in, using one utensil for each course. The salad fork is on your outermost left, followed by your dinner fork. Your soup spoon is on your outermost right, followed by your beverage spoon, salad knife and dinner knife. Your dessert spoon and fork are above your plate or brought out with dessert. If you remember the rule to work from the outside in, you'll be fine.

There are two ways to use a knife and fork to cut and eat your food. They are the American style and the European or Continental style. Either style is considered appropriate. In the American style, one cuts the food by holding the knife in the right hand and the fork in the left hand with the fork tines piercing the food to secure it on the plate. Cut a few bite-size pieces of food, then lay your knife across the top edge of your plate with the sharp edge of the blade facing in. Change your fork from your left to your right hand to eat, fork tines facing up. (If you are left-handed, keep your fork in your left hand, tines facing up.) The European or Continental style is the same as the American style in that you cut your meat by holding your knife in your right hand while securing your food with your fork in your left hand. The difference is your fork remains in your left hand, tines facing down, and the knife in your right hand. Simply eat the cut pieces of food by picking them up with your fork still in your left hand.

### **When You Have Finished**

Do not push your plate away from you when you have finished eating. Leave your plate where it is in the place setting. The common way to show that you have finished your meal is to lay your fork and knife diagonally across your plate. Place your knife and fork side by side, with the sharp side of the knife blade facing inward and the fork, tines down, to the left of the knife. The knife and fork should be placed as if they are pointing to the numbers 10 and 4 on a clock face. Make sure they are placed in such a way that they do not slide off the plate as it is being removed. Once you have used a piece of silverware, never place it back on the table. Do not leave a used spoon in a cup, either; place it on the saucer. You can leave a soup spoon in a soup plate. Any unused silverware is simply left on the table.

### **Basic Table Manners**

- It is inappropriate to ask for a doggy bag when you are a guest. Save the doggy bag for informal dining situations.
- It is best to order foods that can be eaten with a knife and fork. Finger foods can be messy and are best left for informal dining.
- Do not order alcoholic beverages. Drinking too much when dining out is one of the most disliked behaviors.
- Do not smoke while dining out.
- Sit up straight at the table. It makes a good impression.
- When you are not eating, keep your hands on your lap or resting on the table (with wrists on the edge of the table). Elbows on the table are acceptable only between courses, not while you are eating.
- Do not season your food before you have tasted it.
- Never chew with your mouth open or make loud noises when you eat. Although it is possible to talk with a small piece of food in your mouth, do not talk with your mouth full.
- Do not slurp soup from a spoon. Spoon the soup away from you when you take it out of the bowl and sip it from the side of the spoon. If your soup is too hot to eat, let it sit until it cools; do not blow on it.

- If food gets caught between your teeth and you can't remove it with your tongue, leave the table and go to a mirror where you can remove the food from your teeth in private.
- Eat rolls or bread by tearing off small bite size pieces and buttering only the piece you are preparing to eat. When ready for another piece, repeat the same process.
- Engage in table conversation that is pleasant but entirely free of controversial subjects.
- 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 the host by saying that you didn't feel well.
- If you need something that you cannot reach easily, politely ask the person closest to the item you need to pass it to you. For example, "After you have used them yourself, would you please pass me the salt and pepper?"
- 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.
- 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 elbow room to eat comfortably.
- If food spills off your plate, you may pick it up with a piece of your silverware and place it on the edge of your plate.
- 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.

The information presented here is drawn from a number of sources, including the following books and video recordings:

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4. Sabath, Ann Marie. *Business Etiquette in Brief: The Competitive Edge for Today's Professional*. Holbrook, Massachusetts: Bob Adams, 1993.
5. *Gaining the Competitive Edge with Business Etiquette: How to Avoid the Ten Most Common Faux Pas*. Cincinnati, Ohio: At Ease, Inc., 1989. (Videorecording)
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## The Art of Conversation

The **purpose of small-talk** is to find something in common and create a bond. The best way to do this is to ask people questions. Trying to be witty is less important than being observant and asking good questions.

When you meet someone **say your name slowly and distinctly**.

Use clarity of speech on your voice-mail message too. Add a tag-line to help the other person remember you.

Five words that help create and maintain small talk are:

**Who, What, When, Where and Why**. These form open-ended questions.

It can be intimidating to walk into a professional association meeting or business reception by yourself for the first time. Try this the next time you go:

Go up to the registration desk and say something like:

*“This is my first time here. Is there someone who can introduce me to some members and show me around?”*

There is usually someone in charge of membership who will love to do this. You can then use your 30-second introduction in telling something about yourself.

- ✓ If you find yourself alone with no one to talk to, look for someone who is also alone, or who appears to want to break into a conversation group.
- ✓ You can comment out loud at the food table about the food or event to try to start a conversation with the person next to you.
- ✓ You can ask where people are from, or what their association is with the host or company. Nametags are a great help to start a conversation.
- ✓ With company employees, try talking about something that has changed since they were here. Get them to talk about themselves by asking open-ended questions, e.g. “What brought you to [company name?] What do you like best about it or the company?” “What are some good things happening in your department?” “Bring me up to date on \_\_\_\_.”

**Safe topics** are weather, current events, sports and entertainment and industry issues. **Avoid** religion, politics, your health, personal issues, gossip and very controversial subjects. Never bring up **sex** in any context. **Never swear**. Don't let your guard down. People are often perceived as less intelligent if they swear to make a point. Do not use jargon or slang.

- ✓ Don't monopolize someone's time. Introductory conversations last 7-10 minutes. *Always* close a conversation by shaking hands and saying you both should move around to mingle. Indicate that you enjoyed the opportunity of talking together.
- ✓ You may exchange business cards at the end of the conversation.

## **Effective Networking**

Connections with people are essential for success in business and for career advancement.

- **Pause at the entrance to the room.** Scan the room before you enter, look for people you might want to meet.
- **Walk in with a sincere smile.** A smile is always welcoming, and helps put you and others at ease.
- **Come prepared with a few topics for “small-talk”.** Comfortable, non-controversial items include the local sports teams, stories carefully chosen from the entertainment section of the local newspaper, the weather. Remember that an “ice-breaker” conversation need not be some heavy, substantive discussion.
- **Prepare your thirty-second introduction.** You’ll more likely be remembered.
- **Keep conversation professional.** Avoid discussing personal issues, sex, religion or politics. Profanity has no role whatever in business conversations.
- **Never think age, gender or rank.** Think professional.
- **Place your nametag on your right lapel.** As you shake hands, the eye automatically goes there.
- **Avoid parking at the bar or at the food table.** Get what you need there, then move out into the crowd.
- **Remember, food and drink in the left hand.** Keep right hand free for handshakes.
- **Approach an individual with a smile and “Hi [or Hello], I’m [first name] [last name]...”** Then you can add a comment like “I’m the forensic accountant for the San Francisco division”. Most people like to talk about what they do, so they will likely reply in kind.
- **Approach a group gradually.** Listen, make eye contact with someone in the group, and wait for an opportunity to join in. Avoid joining two people who are talking; you may be interrupting a private conversation.
- **At conversation’s end, offer a handshake and say “It was nice talking with you, Joe [or Ms Jones].”** If the conversation seems to have “clicked”, ask for the other person’s business card. If the conversation seemed a dud, just say your goodbye and move on.
- **Follow up with an email or a short note, if you felt a connection (or purpose).** “It was a pleasure to talk with you at yesterday’s conference on forensic accounting...”
- **Stay in touch with your contacts** with occasional notes, cards or emails. My father sent birthday cards, with brief personal notes, to everyone on his contacts list; over the years, that simple gesture yielded immense amounts of good will—and business opportunities. Send congratulatory notes; forward articles on topics you know will be of interest to a contact.

## **Saying Thank You & Following Up**

The point of saying thank you is to do it and doing it in a timely manner is what matters and makes lasting impressions.

**Interviews:** After every interview a thank you letter must be sent to everyone who interviews you. You may email the letter, although the traditional forms are also acceptable and always appropriate. Be sure to spell their names correctly.

**After meals, or receptions:** Yes, send a thank you letter.

**After all other events (career fairs, meet the firms, networking events etc.)** you may send a letter thanking them, and then add something else you want them to know. You may request an informational interview, or an opportunity to visit the company or ask for advice. You may indicate your interest in interviewing with them.

**Again, the point is TIMELINESS! All notes must be sent within 24 hours.**

### **Phone follow-up:**

It is expected that you follow up; this shows your initiative and interest. If you do not hear back from a recruiter, it is acceptable and expected that you call and enquire as to where they are in the process of interviewing. You can then re-affirm your interest in them.

Note: Whenever you are accepting or declining a job offer, always try to reach the person on the phone, and then follow up with a letter.

### **Campus recruiting:**

They see up to 13 students a day. They will greet you with a handshake and will introduce themselves. You will do the same. There will be initial small-talk. Do not disclose anything negative, e.g. how rushed you were to get there, how you got lost, etc.

### **Networking events:**

- Know who will be there
- Know something about them
- Get three business cards
- Practice your 30-second introduction
- Bring resumes, just in case
- Don't dominate the conversation
- Ask questions
- Exchange cards
- Exit the conversation gracefully and considerately

## Email Etiquette

Staying current with e-mail etiquette and diplomacy takes a little finesse. We extol the virtues of reputation, responsiveness, and cooperation in business. We become passionate apostles about what the "customer" wants and how to increase sales, productivity, and profitability through better communication. But with sloppy or lazy e-mail habits, you risk undermining your expensive campaigns and you invite snickering among employees and outbursts from customers.

***Here are the latest e-mail tips and a review of e-mail diplomacy***

- ◆ **Make the subject line specific.** Think of the many messages you've received with the generic subject line, "Hi" or "Just for you."
- ◆ When replying to or forwarding an e-mail, **clean up the document** including the names of previous recipients. You don't need to see that it had been forwarded to 12 others.
- ◆ **Use the "bcc"** (blind copy) command more often than the "cc" (carbon copy) command. In the message you forward, delete the extraneous information such as the entire Memo to, subject, addresses, and date lines.
- ◆ When replying to a question, **copy only the question into your e-mail**, and then provide your response. You needn't hit reply automatically, but don't send a bare message that only reads, "Yes." It's too blunt and confuses the reader.
- ◆ **Address and sign your e-mails.** Yes, the To: and From: say who's corresponding, but beginning the message with the person's name "Mo," or "Dear Mo," helps customize it.
- ◆ **Sign your name**, "Sincerely, Tom" or provide a signature line for people to know who you are and where they can reach you.
- ◆ **Make your business email addresses professional.** Avoid addresses like "screwloose.com" or "tequilagirl.com"
- ◆ **DON'T TYPE IN ALL CAPS. TOO INTENSE**, and you appear too lazy to type properly. This is still a written medium. Follow standard writing guidelines as a professional courtesy.
- ◆ **Don't type entirely in lower-case** as it makes you look lazy and uneducated.
- ◆ **Never forward the e-mail of another person without permission.**
- ◆ **Don't send anything in an e-mail you wouldn't want to see posted on the office bulletin board.**
- ◆ Remember, legally some employers **own** and **have the right to read all employee e-mail** on the company system.
- ◆ Deleting e-mail does not make it "go away." **It can be recovered and traced.**

## **Business Meeting Guidelines**

Meetings are essential for getting business done. Good meeting etiquette requires that all show courtesy, respect and professionalism.

### **Guidelines for Setting Up & Conducting a Business Meeting**

- **Write down the goal(s) of the meeting.** Is it to share information? Solicit ideas? When you invite the attendees, make certain they know what the meeting is about.
- **Publish the Agenda.** Try to send the agenda to attendees a few days before the meeting; if appropriate, solicit changes / additions when you send it out.
- **Set the beginning and ending times** for the meeting, and publish them in advance. Start the meeting on time. End the meeting on time, or earlier, if the all agenda items have been covered.
- **Establish roles.** Will you be the meeting chair? If not, name a person to do this. Choose a recorder. You may want a time-keeper.
- **Set Rules.** Is it OK to answer the cell phone? Will there be scheduled breaks?
- **Be firm about limiting "commentary" by attendees.** Keep to the agenda, and diplomatically cut off discussion when it becomes repetitive, argumentative or circular. A time-keeper can help with this task, if experience shows that it's needed.
- **Try to use good oral and written information formats.** Remember that there are "verbal" and "visual" learners.
- **Set up a "TBDL" list.** Once a topic is written there, the group will be more able to move on to the next item on the agenda.
- **Record items that have been resolved by the meeting.** That builds the sense of accomplishment for the group.
- **Solicit comment from all members.** A "go around the table" will often bring out the good ideas of quieter members. Announce right at the beginning that you'll be doing this.
- **At meeting's end:** summarize; make assignments / deadlines for work on the TBDL list; if appropriate, set time for the next meeting.

## Guidelines for Attending a Business Meeting

- **RSVP.** If you are unable to attend, offer to send a representative (if appropriate); suggest alternative times and dates of your availability.
- **Show up a little early.** Do this out of respect for the time of the others.
- **Do your homework.** Know what's on the agenda. Be prepared to discuss issues and contribute to a successful meeting outcome.
- **Speak in turn.** Don't interrupt discussion, but seek permission from the meeting Chair by subtle hand gesture, eye contact, etc, before speaking. Avoid private side conversations.
- **Keep questions or comments brief.** Ask one question and wait to hear the answer; give others a chance to ask their questions. Make comment(s) once, concisely, and stop talking.
- **Be attentive.** Don't read your emails, repeatedly click your pen, trim your fingernails or lean your chair back on its back legs.
- **Turn your cell phone off.** Remember that voice-mail works just fine. If you must receive an urgently expected call, remove yourself from the immediate meeting site to answer the phone and speak in hushed tones. Return to the meeting promptly.
- **Stay for the whole meeting.** Leave early only in the event of a national emergency.
- **Bring your calendar with you.** Another meeting may be scheduled. You may have to schedule TBDL working sessions with others.
- **Do your assigned TBDL task(s).** Complete the work before deadline and under budget.

## **Etiquette Resources**

Business Etiquette for Dummies	Sue Fox & Perrin Cunningham
The Complete Idiot's Guide to Business Etiquette	Mary Mitchell with John Corr
The Etiquette Advantage in Business	Peggy Post and Peter Post
The Complete Idiot's Guide to Cultural Etiquette: How to master etiquette in other countries and how to understand other traditions	Carol Turkington
Don't Slurp Your Soup: a Basic Guide to Business Etiquette	Betty Craig

### **Business Etiquette Links**

Annotated collection of links to sites covering various aspects of business etiquette, including international considerations.

#### **BusinessCulture.com**

Excellent resource for country-specific reports on international business practices, customs and protocol, cross-cultural communication, and international etiquette. Free and premium services.

#### **culturalsavvy.com**

Articles and tips about cross-cultural communications. Includes country-specific advice for doing business in Japan, China, Korea, and the U.S.

#### **Etiquette International**

Full-service business etiquette firm provides advice on American and international protocol, including gift-giving, negotiating tactics, appointments, business entertaining, and cross-cultural communication.

#### **ExecutivePlanet.com**

Guide to business etiquette and culture in U.S. top trading-partner nations. Covers numerous aspects of business protocol, including gift-giving, negotiating tactics, appointments, business entertaining, and cross-cultural communication.

#### **Gestures Around the World**

Do you know never to smoke while dining with a Swiss person? No? Then visit this Web site with helpful information from Roger Axtell's book, "Gestures: The Do's and Taboos of Body Language Around the World"

#### **Getting Through Customs**

Book excerpts, articles and cultural I.Q. tests provide helpful information for business travelers.

#### **Lett Group**

International protocol and business etiquette training for executives and professionals. aTake their etiquette quiz online or find helpful literature and training materials.a Newsletter "Apropos" keeps you informed on what's happening in etiquette.

#### **Manners 2000: Business Protocol**

Description and online ordering of instructional video.

#### **ONLearning.net Speaker's Platform**

Need someone to speak to your company about business etiquette? Here are experts you can contact.

#### **Social-Graces.com**

Shawna Schuh will help you put your best foot forward in business with articles, pamphlets and tips on etiquette. Download her new e-book, "How to Out Finesse the Competition: 324 Get Ahead Ideas and Business Skills"