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Business Etiquette: A Powerful Tool for a Successful Career

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"Knowing basic business etiquette is not a luxury. It is a necessity for career advancement."

-Roy O. and Gwen O. Cook
Guide to Business Etiquette

"Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot."

~ Clarence Thomas



Where did etiquette originate?



- Chivalry was born out of feudalism in 12th and 13th centuries
- Erasmus (Dutch humanist) wrote *On Civility in Children* in 1530
  - Translated into English 1532 and widely adopted in England and Europe
- Emily Post wrote *Etiquette: The Blue Book of Social Usage* (1922)

Is it dying?

"One survey commissioned from ORC International by Lenox…found more than one-third of 1,000 people polled rate the manners of Americans as poor. That's nearly a 50 percent jump from 2002 and a 65 percent drop from results of the same poll in 2001."

- Amanda Onion, ABC News, 12/2/14



Why should we care?

"…manners…indicate that a person is intelligent, confident, and considerate of fellow human beings. Understanding and practicing the basics of etiquette show that you care and desire to be taken seriously as a professional member of the business community."

-Roy O. and Gwen O. Cook
Guide to Business Etiquette

Freedom without rules doesn't work. And communities do not work unless they are regulated by etiquette.

- Judith Martin (Miss Manners)

Attention to etiquette is a sign of professionalism and respect for others, and it can make positive first impressions while building trust among colleagues.

-David Ingram, Demand Media

Houston Chronicle

Foundations of Etiquette

- Ethics:

"Whenever two people come together and their behavior affects one another, you have etiquette. Etiquette is not some rigid code of manners; it's simply how persons' lives touch one another." Emily Post

Foundations of Etiquette

- Actions
  - Impact the image others have of us.
- Appearance
  - Dress, hygiene, body language
- Words
  - Create perception

"The real you is what really matters in your interactions with everyone you come into contact."

Emily Post

Foundations of Etiquette

- Consideration
  - Looking at the current situation and assessing how it affects everyone who is involved
  - Thinking before you act
- Respect
  - Identifying how a possible action with affect others
  - Making choices that build relationships
- Honesty
  - Acting sincerely and being truthful, not deceitful
  - Doing it sincerely

Foundations of Etiquette

"Nowhere is the Golden Rule more important than in the workplace. By treating your coworkers with consideration, respect and honesty, whatever their title or level of responsibility, you'll gain their trust and respect—and establish yourself as a valuable and cohesive part of the team."

The Etiquette Advance in Business, Third Edition: Personal Skills for Professional Success; Peter Post with Anna Post, Lizzie Post, and Daniel Post Senning

Basics: Remember the Little Things.

- Learn names and do it quickly.
  - Use a person's name three times within your first conversation with them.
- Follow office dress code.
  - Maybe dress a notch above the standard.
- Accessories make an impression, too.
  - Understated rather than glitzy; perfume/cologne, too
- Acknowledge promotions and birthdays for people who matter to you.



Basics: Be Civil

- Treat everyone with respect, irrespective of their position with the institution; follow the “golden rule” (treat others the way you wish to be treated).
- Be pleasant under all circumstances.
- Show appreciation (boosts morale and improves work quality).
- Share credit for a job well done.
- When you make a promise, keep it.

Basics: Don't try to be perfect

- Don't expect perfection in yourself or others.
- Be willing to apologize and correct mistakes.
  - Builds trust and positive working relationships
- Don't criticize others for breaches of etiquette.
  - This is actually a breach of etiquette!
- Use these effective, powerful words/phrases
  - "Please" "Thank you" "Excuse me" "May I help you" "I'm sorry"

Basics: Change with the times

- Be aware that some rules, such as dress, appropriately change with time.
- Be observant of new rules, such as those for technology.
- Don’t cling to the past.
- Observe your corporate culture



Basics: Be ethical.

- Ethics - rules of behavior based on ideas about what is morally good and bad.
- Business ethics - a set of guiding principles that encourage individuals in an organization to make decisions based on the company's stated beliefs and attitudes toward business practices within its industry.
- State ethical requirements/university policies

Basics: Be ethical.

- Questions to determine ethical behavior in the absence of a code of ethics (from Stephen S. J. Hall):
  - Will someone be hurt in this situation?
  - Is anyone being coerced, manipulated, or deceived?
  - Is there anything illegal about the situation?
  - Does the situation feel wrong to you?
  - Is someone else telling you that there is an ethical problem?
  - Would you be ashamed to tell your best friend, your spouse, or your parents about your contemplated actions or your involvement?
  - Do the outcomes, on balance, appear to be positive or negative?
  - Do you or others have the right or duty to act in this situation?
  - Is there a chance that you are denying or avoiding some serious aspect of the situation?

Specifics: Communication

- Written:
  - Use proper grammar.
  - Don’t use multisyllabic words unnecessarily.
  - Be clear and concise, keeping your audience in mind.
  - Use appropriate tone.
  - Proofread and use spellcheck.
- Face-to-face:
  - Pay attention and make eye contact
  - Keep an open posture.
  - Don’t talk over the other person
  - Ask questions to clarify and paraphrase your understanding.
  - Respect coworkers’ time
  - Show sensitivity



Specifics: Communication

- Watch those jokes!
  - Avoid ethnic, racial religious or gender-based humor
- Remember to say Thanks!
- Pay compliments when due
- Accept compliments gracefully with a simple thank you
- Never mention a pregnancy until you've had confirmation she's really pregnant

Specifics: Meetings

- Don’t arrive more than 5 minutes early.
- Never arrive late; if unavoidable, notify someone.
- Provide explanation if you must leave the meeting.
- Don’t interrupt.
- Avoid confrontation; deal with it outside of the meeting context.



Specifics: Workspace

- Personalize your workspace tastefully.
  - Who will see it?
  - What does it say about you?
  - It is distracting?
  - Does it go overboard?
- Respect others' space; knock if it's a cubicle or an office, treat open workspaces in an open environment as each person's personal space
- Don't interrupt people on the phone.
- Limit personal calls and use cell phone appropriately.

Specifics: Watercooler Etiquette

- Tune in on the other person's receptiveness
- Don't overstay your welcome
- Ask their opinion and show genuine interest
- Include others who join you in the area
- Avoid personal subjects
  - politics, sex, personal money, religion
- Disagree politely while respecting their opinion
- Keep up on current events to have meaningful conversation
- Excuse yourself after you make a concluding statement
- If timing is bad for the conversation, politely say so



Specifics: Watercooler Gossip

- Keep personal information to yourself and don’t invite inquiries
- Confront malicious gossip only after determining the source
- Show concern rather than anger
- Don’t participate in gossip about others



Specifics: Handling Angry Clients

- Don’t take it personally – objectively consider their issue
- Listen carefully to complaint
- Let a caller rant to relieve anger – don’t interrupt
- At conclusion of rant, comment showing you listened and understand the importance
- Give them your name and call back number
- If situation doesn’t diffuse, get support
- Don’t make promises you can’t keep

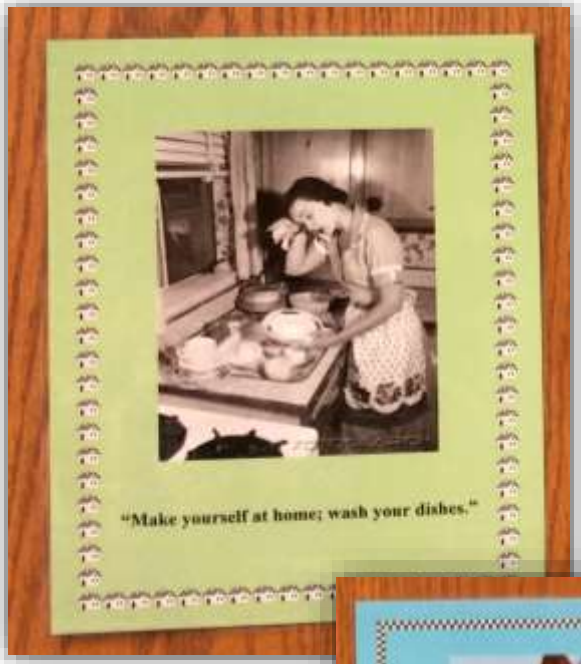
Specifics: Kitchen

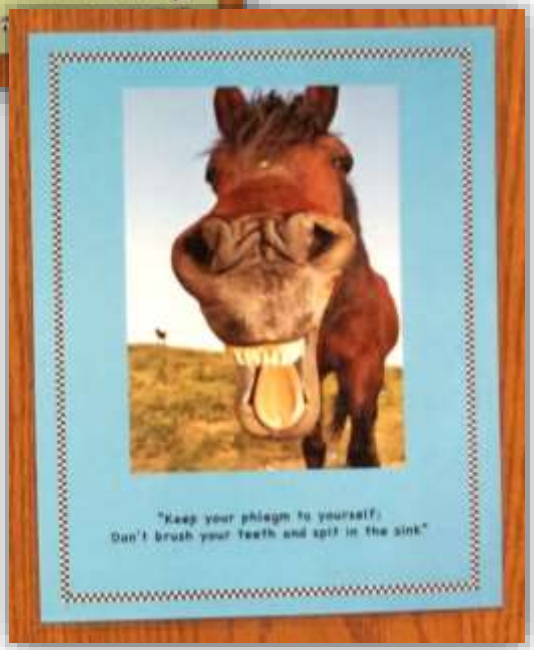
- No refrigerator raiding.
  - 98% of respondents in a survey of 2,500 U.S. employees said this is unacceptable etiquette
- Help keep the kitchen area clean.
- Keep labeling supplies for food articles handy
- Post kitchen rules after discussing them with staff




SADLY, YOUR MOTHER DOESN'T WORK HERE....
.....SO CLEAN UP YOUR OWN MESS!


Due to circumstances beyond our control, our butler and maid have resigned.
Your cooperation in helping to keep this place clean will be greatly appreciated.


"Make yourself at home; wash your dishes."


"Keep your phlegm to yourself;
Don't brush your teeth and spit in the sink"

Questions?

Go forth and practice etiquette!