



ETIQUETTE TIPS

"Good manners at the workplace are associated with competence. Likewise, sloppy manners are equated with lack of ability."

-BETTY CRAIG (Author of *Don't Slurp Your Soup*)



GOOD MANNERS

Through good etiquette and proper protocol, you can present yourself in a polished and professional manner and feel confident and comfortable. Know proper etiquette so that you won't feel awkward or embarrass yourself or others. Good manners reflect courtesy, respect, and thoughtfulness.

Initiate greetings. Introduce yourself. Be friendly and affable. Smile. Shake hands. Have a kind word. Give a compliment. Give sincere praise.

Use formal titles in addressing supervisors, clients and professional associates unless told otherwise. Among the most important phrases you'll ever use are, "Please," "Thank you," and "I apologize."

In work settings, be observant and take cues from the staff regarding dress and behavior. Learn the corporate culture. Learn the rules of the organization. Put your best self forward. Earn a favorable reputation.

Learn to use a handshake comfortably and confidently. Become accustomed to making proper introductions ("Anna Smith, I'd like to introduce Frank Jones, my business associate. Frank, this is Anna Smith, my client from Atlanta.").

Respond to RSVPs promptly. Call ahead to notify of cancellation when you can't meet an appointment. Send timely thank-you notes after interviews, social events, good deeds and gifts.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Embarrassing moments occur when proper behavior or protocol are not observed. Professional behavior is conduct that is polite, appropriate and mature. Making a good impression counts. To insure you will be taken seriously, treated with respect, and regarded as a professional, there are certain behaviors you should avoid in a work setting.

Prejudice - The marketplace is global. The workplace is diverse. To be effective in today's society means being tolerant of others' differences. Avoid disparaging comments, malicious remarks, and even jokes.

Sexism - Sexist comments, suggestive remarks, unwanted advances, flirtatious behavior, or degrading and demeaning nicknames are inappropriate in a professional setting.

Gossip - Many things in a work setting are confidential or at least private. Employees possessing privileged or sensitive information should be discreet. Don't air "dirty laundry" or pass on rumors. Don't criticize co-workers or supervisors. Don't share inappropriate details of your personal life. Don't get involved in office politics. Don't discuss controversial or debatable subjects.

Fraternization - It is smart not to date people you work with. In management positions, avoid nepotism and favoritism by not hiring family and friends.

Drugs - Don't risk your career to drug use, on or off the job. Be careful with alcohol. Don't ever come to work intoxicated. Even outside the office, don't drink excessively in front of people whose respect you need.

Profanity - Obscene language, dirty jokes, and insulting remarks can be offensive and should be avoided. Also, refrain from poor grammar and street slang.

Laxity - Image, attire and demeanor should be professional. Dress and act in a manner appropriate to the setting.

CONVERSATION TIPS

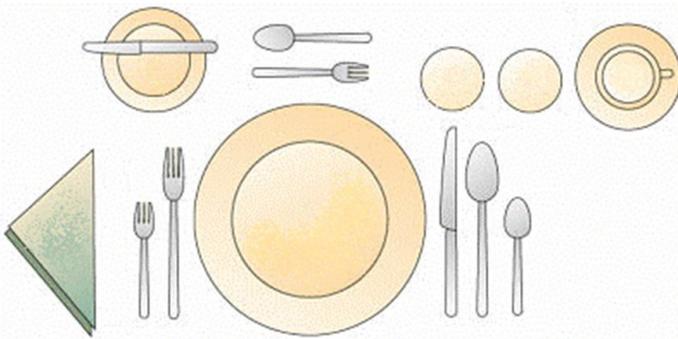
Learn people's names. Display genuine interest in the other person's activities. Ask questions. Don't be self-centered. Don't dominate the conversation. Be a good listener. Be careful with small talk. Be discreet. Keep comments neutral and generic. Be careful with jokes and humor. Avoid offensive, sensitive or provocative subjects. Don't talk about sex, politics, or religion.

DINING ETIQUETTE

Guests order first. Host orders last. Take your cue from your host regarding alcohol. Drink and appetizer orders are usually placed separately from main course orders.

Your forks are on the left. Your knives and spoons are on the right. Your salad fork is on the left. Your soup spoon is on the right. Your dessert fork and spoon are above the plate. Use the larger fork for the main course and the smaller fork for salad or dessert.

Your glassware is on the right. Your bread plate is on the left. Never leave your spoon in your coffee cup or soup bowl. Place napkin on lap once all guests are seated and host or head gives cue. Place folded napkin on table upon completion of meal.



When eating bread and rolls, break off and butter in bite-size pieces. Bring food to your mouth, not the other way around. Don't talk with food in your mouth.

Never leave a lipstick mark on your cup or glass. Taste before seasoning. Keep elbows off the table.

When you have finished your meal, do not push your plate aside; leave it in front of you, with the utensils centered on it, for the server to remove. Surrender your silverware after each course. When finished, place your silverware at an angle across your plate.

Be courteous to the wait staff. Don't complain about the meal or the service. Don't ask for seconds or substitutions. Don't ask for a doggy bag.

In restaurants, tipping is mandatory. A gratuity of 15-20% is customary.



SOCIAL ACUMEN

Companies seek to hire candidates who not only possess the proper qualifications but also fit into the culture of the corporation. Are you one of us? While competency counts, the ability to get along with people makes a great difference in the workplace. Do you fit in here? Can we work with you? The most successful people in any work setting are those who have earned a reputation for being easy to work with. Relationships are critical to success. Strong interpersonal skills, a cooperative attitude, and a collaborative spirit aid in establishing one's credibility in a professional environment.

An understanding of professional behavior, social protocol, conversation skills, and business etiquette can be as valuable to you as your credentials. Be aware of the subtle nuances that exist in the social interactions and small talk that take place at receptions, retreats, conventions, cocktail parties, and other such events.

Typically, in an effort to foster good relationships with co-workers, colleagues and clients, finding common ground or shared interests is vital. Business is oftentimes transacted over lunch or dinner or in any number of other social settings. Deals are made on the golf course. Colleagues might be talking business while drinking coffee, sharing drinks, playing cards, attending a sporting event, or engaged in some recreational or community activity.

When mixing business with leisure, you can relax and be personable, but try to maintain a professional attitude. The event is not really about eating or golfing. The focus is on business. The recreational or social activity is simply the catalyst. Be gracious and accommodating.



University of Montevallo
CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
205-665-6262 | Station 6262 | Farmer Hall 2nd Floor