



Creative Business Consulting Business Tips



Business Etiquette

Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others. If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter which fork you use” *Emily Post*

Good manners are the foundation of positive and rewarding business relationships. The way in which you meet and greet people can greatly enhance your professional reputation.

A good introduction puts people at ease and goes a long way towards making a lasting, favorable impression. I suggest that you always smile, make eye contact, and extend your hand when meeting someone for the first time. It’s good to state both your first and last name along with a brief bit of information about yourself that is appropriate to the situation. To help yourself commit a new name into your memory, it is always useful to repeat the person’s name during your conversation.

Business introductions are usually based on the company’s hierarchy, where persons of lesser authority are introduced to persons of higher authority. This shows respect for the

chain of command within your organization. The chain of command assigns responsibility to everyone within your company and assures accountability for work performance. To support the chain of command, I suggest that you respect your boss’s input and direction. When you disagree with your boss speak to him/her directly about the issue. Don’t make the mistake of going over your boss’s head until you’ve talked with him/her first. It’s important not to criticize your boss to others at work, even if you disagree with his/her final decision.

Men and women are to be treated equally in business settings, so it is very important that you practice gender-neutral etiquette. This means that you treat everyone with courtesy and respect regardless of their gender. Make it a habit to stand and greet anyone who comes to your office. Be sure to shake hands with both men and women. It’s never a good idea to use terms of endearment such as “honey” or “sweetie”, as this implies a lack of respect for your co-worker or customer and exhibits a level of intimacy that is not appropriate in the workplace.

Working in an open environment, a cubicle, or in a space with others, requires a level of consideration and tact that is not required in offices with doors. Workplace conflicts can cause everyone a lot of stress, but the following suggestions should help you to keep these conflicts to a minimum. Always treat someone else’s workspace with privacy and respect. Be sure to never borrow anything, or enter a co-worker’s cubicle/desk without first asking their permission. When conversing with others, either on the phone or in person, it’s good to keep your voice low so that your conversations are not overheard by fellow employees. This is especially important when dealing with confidential information. If you enjoy music at work, be sure to use headphones and don’t sing or hum aloud to your tunes. If you eat at your desk, be mindful of eating overly pungent foods that may be offensive to others.

Buffing up your business etiquette may require some effort on your behalf, but the rewards are well worth it!

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