

# ***BUSINESS ETIQUETTE***

## ***CAREER PLANNING SERIES***

## **-BUSINESS ETIQUETTE-**

This handout focuses primarily on the etiquette associated with the job search — introductions, table manners, and travel etiquette. Resources listed at the end of the handout will provide additional information about etiquette needed on the job.

### **INTRODUCTIONS AND HANDSHAKES**

#### ***Introductions***

According to some authorities, the most important thing about introductions is that they be done. Almost any error you make will be forgiven; what may not be forgiven is failing to introduce someone at all.

Introductions in business are based on rank. The lower ranking person is introduced to the higher-ranking person. Perhaps easier to remember is that you say the name of the higher-ranking person first. Clients, senior executives or distinguished guests would be in this category. You introduce people to them. “Ms. Wilson (senior executive) I would like you to meet our new associate engineer, Tom Hill. Tom this is Ms. Wilson, our CEO.”

Everyone in the organization is introduced to a client or customer—the name of the customer is said first. “Robert Jones (your client) this is John Douglas, (your boss), senior vice president of Systems Industries. John, this is Robert Jones, Purchasing Agent, Silverstone Company.”

The name of an official or dignitary is said first, as, “Mayor Lee Brown I would like you to meet Mary McKinney, flood victim.

A peer in your company is introduced to a peer from another company. Say the name of the person from outside your company first.

A younger person is typically introduced to an older person. Say the older person’s name first.

Introduce your spouse to your boss. The boss’s name is said first. “Mr. Broderick, I would like to you to meet my husband, Martin Hammond. Martin, this is Mr. Broderick, my boss.”

All guests, unless they are dignitaries or elderly, are introduced to the guest of honor.

If you take the initiative and introduce yourself to someone, give your first and last name. Do not include a title, such as Dr. or Mr. It will help others to remember your name if you first give some information about yourself.

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If you and your spouse do not have the same last name, take great care to introduce your spouse with the correct last name. If James Olson were to introduce his wife to a colleague, he would say, "Roger Smith, This is my wife, Susan Collins. Susan, this is Roger Smith."

Once again, the basis of business introductions is rank and then age, not gender.

### ***Responses***

The accepted response to an introduction is, "How do you do" and "I'm pleased to meet you." Avoid "Pleased to know you" as you cannot with sincerity be pleased to know someone you have just met.

Always stand when being introduced. It shows respect. Only if you are elderly, ill or physically unable to stand is it acceptable for you to remain seated while being introduced.

When introducing two people, include some information about each of them. Including extra information, such as their occupation, who their family is, mutual interests or how you know each other provides a base from which two people can start a conversation. If the gathering is a business function, the information you include usually something you know the other two will have in common, an occupational title, or something else that is work related.

### ***Mistakes***

If you are not sure if two people know each other, ask: "Do you know each other?" You may let them introduce themselves.

If someone hesitates even for a second when introducing you, jump in quickly and introduce yourself. Everyone can forget a name; even of someone they know very well. Often it is difficult to remember a person's name until we know something about them. When introducing yourself, add some information about yourself.

If you are not sure of names it is okay to suggest to people that they introduce themselves.

If you forget someone's name as you are introducing him or her, it is okay to admit that you have forgotten. It is better for him/her to say their name than for you to introduce him/her by another name or fail to introduce him/her at all. Be calm and straightforward and say something like, "I'm having trouble recalling your name" or "I remember meeting you but I am not recalling your name."

### ***Handshakes***

A handshake should be a **handshake**. Either party may initiate it. Shake hands so that the 'web' between your thumb and first finger meets firmly with the other person's-- one squeeze only; one or two pumps of the hands—firm but not aggressive. Make eye contact as you shake hands. The handshake should last only as long as it takes to greet the other person.

You should wait for the elderly and the disabled to initiate a handshake, as they may not be able to do so.

When meeting a business colleague – man or woman – at a mall, social event, etc., a handshake is in order – even if you are in jeans or other casual attire.

### **MEN AND WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER**

In business, men and women treat each other as colleagues. It is not necessary for men to help women with their coats, carry packages, step aside for women to enter elevators first or pay for the lunch. Traditional manners are reserved for social situations. In business whoever gets to the door first opens it. If either a man or a woman has their arms full as they approach a door, simple politeness would dictate that a person be given assistance.

#### ***Some rules still exist:***

- When accompanying a woman, a man should walk on the outside, closer to the curb.
- When ascending an escalator with a woman, a man should allow the woman to precede him.
- When descending an escalator with a woman, a man should go first.
- When going through a revolving door, the man should precede the woman.
- At a business luncheon with a woman, a man should offer to seat her by holding her chair.
- If a woman excuses herself from a business meal, the man who is seated closest to her should acknowledge her departure/return by standing.
- Unless elderly or disabled, men and women rise to be introduced to anyone. If you are meeting someone in your office, stand, walk around your desk and initiate a handshake. The desk should never come between you and a guest.
- Either a man or a woman may initiate a handshake.

## **TABLE MANNERS**

There is no getting away from the need for good table manners. Knowing how to act at a dinner table is going to make your job a lot easier and more enjoyable. The most important thing to remember is simply to follow the host's lead. After she takes the first bite of her food, you may begin eating...unless she tells you to go ahead and eat so that your food doesn't get cold.

### ***Top 20 Unmannerly Manners...***

1. Don't put too much food into your mouth.
2. Don't talk with your mouth full.
3. Don't pile too much food on your plate; it will probably make you eat faster, which can lead to talking with your mouth full.
4. Don't drink alcohol unless your host orders a drink first. Do not drink more than one or two drinks. It is always acceptable to refuse.
5. Sit up straight, but not stiffly.
6. Men should make sure all of the women are seated before they sit.
7. When you're not eating, keep your hands in your lap. Don't fidget.
8. Elbows may rest gently on the edge of the table between courses, but not while you're eating.
9. Don't take up more elbowroom than you need while eating; be considerate of your neighbors.
10. Never chew with your mouth open or make loud noises when you eat.
11. When cutting food (meat, salad, etc.), cut enough for two or three mouthfuls and eat those before cutting more. Don't cut your whole steak at once.
12. Place a used teabag beside your cup on your saucer.
13. Don't leave the spoon in your coffee cup or soup bowl.
14. Do not break crackers into your soup. When crackers are served, break off a bite-sized portion and place the remaining cracker on the under plate.
15. The salad fork and knife are those closest to the plate, but if the entrée and the salad are served at the same time, go ahead and use the entrée fork for both.
16. If someone asks for the salt, pass both the salt and pepper together. Taste your food first before adding salt.
17. Women shouldn't leave a lipstick mark on their glass.
18. Don't order one of the most expensive things on the menu, and don't order more than two courses unless your host suggests that it's all right. Also, don't order a first course if no one else does.
19. Don't offer to pay if you are an invited guest.
20. Don't ask for a "doggy bag," and try not to order more than you are going to eat.

### ***Napkin Sense...***

When the host starts to unfold her napkin, it is a signal for you to do the same. Typically, you should put your napkin on your lap within the first ten seconds after sitting down at

the table, and don't remove it until you are ready to leave the table. However, follow your host's lead. Unfold the napkin if it is small; partially unfold it if it is large. A napkin is not a bib, nor is it a handkerchief. Never use your napkin as a handkerchief unless it is an absolute emergency, especially if the napkins are made of cloth. Women should try not to get lipstick on cloth napkins. Use your napkin to blot, not wipe, your mouth. If you leave the table during the meal, place your napkin on your chair. The host will signal the end of the meal by placing her napkin on the table. Don't crumple your napkin or leave it on your plate. Fold it loosely and leave it beside your plate.

### ***I'm Finished Signal...***

Don't push your plate away from you when you are done with your meal. Just leave it where it is. Lay your fork and knife side by side diagonally across your plate to show that you've finished with your meal. The fork and knife should be pointing to 10, with the handles on the 4, the blade of the knife facing inward (towards you). If you are merely letting your food settle or need to leave the table, cross your fork and knife on your plate, making an X.

### ***Solutions to "Sticky" Situations...***

Don't cry over spilt milk! If you do spill something on your lap, tie, or shirt, use a clean knife or wet a small corner of your napkin in your water glass to remove or absorb the spill. If you spill on the tablecloth, wipe up the spill with your napkin, and tell the host or server so he or she can take whatever action is necessary to prevent a stain. If food falls off of your plate onto the table, you may pick it up with a piece of your silverware and place it on the edge of your plate.

### ***Removing Unwanted Food...***

If your food is too hot to eat, try taking a drink of water or another cold beverage instead of removing the food from your mouth. If you discover a bone, fruit pit, or piece of gristle while chewing, remove it the same way it went in. In other words, if you are eating with your fork, remove it by placing it on your fork and then onto the side of your plate. Objects such as fish bones are more easily removed with your thumb and forefinger. Use whichever method will draw the least attention to yourself. Don't spit it into your napkin, especially if it is a cloth napkin. If you take a bite of something you don't like, swallow it as quickly as possible. However, if you take a bite of something that is spoiled, by all means remove it as described above. To remove food stuck in your teeth, excuse yourself and remove it in the rest room.

### ***Soiled Silverware...***

If you get a piece of soiled silverware, simply ask the server for a clean utensil. If you drop a piece of silverware, pick it up if you can reach it, and ask the server for a clean one. If it is out of your reach, let the server know you dropped it.

***What if I have to SNEEZE???***

If you have to sneeze, turn your head away from the table and away from all others if possible and put your handkerchief or hand over your mouth and nose when you sneeze. If you must blow your nose, excuse yourself from the table. If you cannot be excused, turn your head away and do it quickly and quietly.

***Toothpicks and Braces...***

If someone else has food stuck in their teeth, you should tell them quietly and discretely. If you are on the receiving end of such a message, thank the person for telling you, excuse yourself, and go the rest room to remove the food from your teeth, or use your napkin to remove it if it is on your face. You should never use toothpicks at the table, or try to remove food from your teeth with your tongue or fingers.

If you wear braces, keep them clean and watch what you eat so you don't have food caught in them. Women should try to keep lipstick off their braces.

***Smoking...***

Is this even a question? Don't smoke.

**MENU ORDERING*****Questions About the Menu...***

If, after looking at the menu, there are any items you are uncertain of – whether you're wondering about what they are, how they're prepared, or how to pronounce their names – feel free to ask your server any questions you may have. In order to get your server's attention, say "Excuse me" when he is nearby, wave your hand slightly when he is looking toward you, or ask a nearby employee to notify him that you request his assistance. To show that you are ready to order, close your menu and place it on the table.

***Ordering Sequence...***

The host's order is generally taken last. The guest's order is placed first. When dining in a group, the server may decide how the ordering will proceed by selecting the method that is the most efficient. Normally, the women's orders are taken first, with each woman individually giving her order to the server. The men's orders follow. The host's order is taken last.

## MENU TERMS

**A la Carte** – in the style of the menu. Each part of a meal or dish, such as soup, salad, extra cheese on a sandwich, and so on is individually priced. A la carte meals usually cost more than meals that are listed under one price.

**A la Maison** – “according to the house.” Describes how items will be prepared at a particular restaurant. Restaurants all have different styles, so the same item may be prepared differently at different restaurants.

**Amandine** – “with almonds,” often used in Chinese and fish dishes.

**Antipasto** – Italian for “appetizer.”

**Au gratin** – served with bread crumbs and/or cheese on top.

**Au jus** – in its own natural juices.

**Aupoivre** – French, “with pepper.”

**Béarnaise** – French, a heavy sauce consisting of egg yolks, butter, wine vinegar, tarragon, thyme, and shallots served over eggs or meat.

**Bisque** – French, a thick cream soup consisting of shellfish and spices.

**Bordelaise** – French, a red wine sauce consisting of shallots, butter, tomatoes, onions, and beef marrow.

**Bouillabaisse** – a Mediterranean fish stew.

**Bouillon** – clear broth.

**Boursin** – French, a creamy cheese often flavored with garlic, herbs, fruit, or seeds.

**Brie** – semi soft cheese.

**Brochette** – French for “skewer.”

**Caesar Salad** – a salad made of Romaine lettuce, Parmesan cheese, olive oil, egg, lemon, spices, and sometimes anchovies that is usually tossed at your table.

**Camembert** – a pungently flavored semi soft cheese.

**Canapés** – French, an appetizer consisting of small pieces of bread topped with various spreads.

**Cappuccino** – an Italian coffee made of hot milk and strong black coffee.

**Champignons** – French for “mushrooms.”

**Chateaubriand** – French, a thick cut of grilled sirloin or Porterhouse steak served with vegetables and sauce.

**Consommé** – clear, seasoned broth.

**Cordon Bleu** – Swiss for “blue ribbon.” Items stuffed or served with Swiss cheese.

**Croissant** – crescent-shaped French roll.

**Crudités** – French, an appetizer of raw vegetables and dip.

**Du jour** – French for “of the day,” such as “soup du jour.”

**En croute** – French for “in a crust.”

**Entrée** – French for “main course.”

**Escargots** – French for “snails.”

**Fettuccine** – Italian ribbon noodles.

**Filet mignon** – French for a small, thick steak from the beef tenderloin.

**Flambé** – French for “flamed.”

**Florentine** – a French cooking style in which food is served on spinach and topped with a cream sauce and grated cheese.



**Fondue** – Swiss style of dipping food into a hot pot of oil or cheese with special forks.  
**Fromage** – French for “cheese.”  
**Half-shell** – raw shellfish served with a sauce.  
**Hollandaise** – a rich sauce of egg yolks, butter, lemon, and vinegar.  
**Hors d’oeuvres** – appetizers.  
**Julienne** – meat or vegetables cut into sticks or shreds.  
**Lait** – French for “milk.”  
**Legumes** – French for “vegetables.”  
**Mornay** – French, a sauce made of butter, flour, broth, cream, and cheese.  
**Mousse** – a French dish with a smooth, whipped texture, as in “chocolate mousse.”  
**Nicoise** – French, with tomatoes and garlic and possibly black olives, onions, and peppers.  
**Nouilles** – French for “noodles.”  
**Pain** – French for “bread.”  
**Patisserie** – French for “pastry.”  
**Petits-fours** – French for “little cakes.”  
**Poisson** – French for “fish.”  
**Pomme de terre** – French, “potato.”  
**Potage** – French soup.  
**Poulet** – French, “chicken.”  
**Prawn** – large shrimp.  
**Prosciutto** – Italian, salted but not smoked ham.  
**Provencale** – French, cooked with tomatoes, garlic, and olive oil.  
**Quiche Lorraine** – French, a tart consisting of cream, eggs, cheese, and bacon.  
**Rix** – French for “rice.”  
**Roquefort** – blue cheese.  
**Roti** – French for “roasted.”  
**Salisbury steak** – a patty of ground beef.  
**Saumon** – French for “salmon.”  
**Sauté** – to cook quickly in fat.  
**Sorbet** – French for “sherbet.” A tart ice.  
**Soufflé** – French for “puffed up.” A baked dish of whipped eggs and flavorings.  
**Steak Diane** – thin steak sautéed or flamed in butter and sherry sauce at your table.  
**Steak Tartare** – raw ground beef that has been ground twice, had seasonings added, and is topped with a raw egg yolk.  
**Terrine** – French, a pate-like dish.  
**Veau** – French for “veal.”  
**Viande** – French for “meat.”  
**Vichyssoise** – a cold cream, chicken stock, leek, and potato soup.  
**Vinaigrette** – an oil and vinegar dressing.  
**Vin** – French for “wine.”  
**Vin blanc** – French for “white wine.”  
**Vin rouge** – French for “red wine.”

## TABLE CONVERSATION

### ***Small Talk Subjects...***

When establishing rapport with someone, you should begin with “small talk.”

Appropriate small talk subjects include current best-selling books, news events, famous people, fitness crazed, medical and technological advances, the weather, travel, sports, and the like. You may also ask other people about themselves, their family, work, or hobbies.

### ***Conversation Stoppers...***

Asking a person generally about himself is acceptable. However, asking someone very personal or intimate questions, such as inquiries into his religious beliefs, financial situation, etc., are strictly off limits. Neither should one ask about someone’s weight, height, shoe size, or age. Never tell racial, ethnic or sexually oriented jokes, and try to avoid strongly debatable and controversial issues such as abortion, religion, women’s rights, the rights of homosexuals, and so forth.

### ***When NOT to Talk...***

If you know nothing about a topic, be silent. You can still participate, even if you are not talking. Be an active listener. Use “body language” to convey your interest in the conversation. Smile, nod, maintain eye contact, listen, and ask follow up questions based on what you heard.

## COPING WITH TABLEWARE

How do you choose from the variety of silverware in front of you? It’s not as difficult as it may look. There should be no more than three of each type of utensil beside your plate. You simply start from the outside and work your way in, using one utensil per course. Your salad fork is on your outermost left, followed by your dinner fork. Your soup spoon is on your outermost right, followed by your salad knife and dinner knife. Your dessert spoon and fork are above your plate.

If you’re still unsure, follow the lead of your host, since she will be the first to eat. You should always wait for your host to begin eating before you do, unless she instructs you to go ahead and eat so your food doesn’t get cold.

Rest your utensils across the edge of a plate, tines up, not on the tablecloth, when you are not using them or when finished eating.

### ***Forks...***

Forks are properly held delicately, at a slight angle and between the thumb, forefinger, and middle finger, with the tines up. Your dinner fork is the largest fork by your plate.

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Where the salad fork is placed on the table depends upon how it will be used. If salad is to be served before the entrée, it is placed to the left of the dinner fork. If the salad fork is above the plate or to the right of the dinner fork, or to the right of another salad fork, use it as a dessert fork.

### ***Knives...***

Knives are properly held gently but firmly. They are held in the hand with the thumb, middle, ring, and pinky fingers surrounding the handle. The forefinger is placed on the top edge of the blade, near the handle, not toward the tip, to provide pressure and stabilize the knife. All knives except the butter knife need to be placed on the edge of your plate, with the cutting edge facing you when not in use. If you have a butter knife, it rests on the edge of the butter plate.

The dinner knife is the largest knife by your plate. The dinner knife may also be used to cut your salad if the leaves are too large to fit into your mouth. If you do not have a butter knife, use the dinner knife while it is still clean as your butter knife.

The steak knife, as well as the fish knife, if you have either of these, will be located to the right of the dinner knife. The steak knife has a serrated edge and a pointed tip, whereas the fish knife has an unusual shape and a smooth edge.

You will sometimes find a butter knife both on the butter plate and alongside your plate. The butter knife resting on the butter plate is used to place a pat of butter on your bread and butter plate, if you have one, or on your dinner plate if you don't have a bread and butter plate. The butter knife by your plate is then used to butter your bread. Don't butter the whole piece of bread or roll all at once; break off and butter a few mouthfuls before eating them.

There are two ways to use a dinner or steak knife with a fork to cut and eat meat. One is the American style. Cut the meat by holding the knife in your right hand while holding the meat to your plate by having your fork, tines in the meat, in your left hand. Cut two or three bite-sized pieces of meat, then lay your knife across the top edge of your plate with the sharp side of the blade facing in. Put your fork in your right hand to eat.

The other style of cutting and eating meat is the European or Continental style. Cut your meat by holding your knife in your right hand while securing your food with your fork in your left hand. Instead of placing the knife along the top of the plate and switching your fork to your right hand, simply eat the cut pieces of food by picking them up with your fork still in your left hand. Hold your knife in your right hand throughout the meal.

With either style, you can use your knife to push small pieces of food such as peas or corn onto your fork. Both styles are acceptable; choose the one that is most natural and comfortable for you.

### ***Spoons...***

Spoons are correctly held between the thumb and forefinger at the midpoint of the handle. Although there are many different spoons, you probably won't have to deal with more than three spoons at one place setting.

If your place setting includes a dinner spoon, it is found on the right side of your knife. It is convenient to eat foods such as cereals, soups, and desserts because it is bigger than a teaspoon. If there isn't a dinner spoon, there will be a teaspoon to the right of your knife. This spoon is used to eat a variety of foods, including cereal and to stir coffee and tea. You will usually find a teaspoon next to your plate even if you don't need it.

There are two different-sized soup spoons. If you are having a thick soup that will be served in a bowl, you'll use a larger soup spoon than you would if you ordered consommé. Regardless of the spoon you use, place a used spoon either on the plate under the bowl or in the bowl or cup if there is not plate underneath. It is not acceptable to place it on the tablecloth or on your dinner plate.

You will find your dessert spoon above your dinner plate, alongside the plate next to your knife, or presented with your dessert. It often has a longer and narrower bowl than the other spoons. After eating your dessert, place your dessert spoon on your dessert plate.

You may receive an iced teaspoon if you order iced tea. Similarly, a demitasse spoon will probably be served with your espresso, if you order one. It is a tiny spoon made expressly for stirring espresso. Rest it on the plate underneath the cup when you are finished.

### ***Plates and Place Settings...***

You will find your salad plate in one of two places, either to the left of your napkin or on top of your dinner plate in the middle of the place setting. The salad plate is smaller than the dinner plate but larger than the bread and butter plate. To save space at large pre-set banquet tables you will often find your salad plate above your forks. If you are dining in a restaurant and your salad plate is on top of your dinner plate, you may place the salad plate to the left of the dinner plate if you want to eat your salad with or after your entrée.

The bread and butter plate is placed to the left of the dinner plate above the forks. It is the smallest plate in the setting. Today it is rare for restaurants to provide a butter knife, but if they do, it will be lying across the top of the bread and butter plate. It is acceptable to place other small finger foods, such as raw vegetables or olives on the bread and butter plate. If there isn't a bread and butter plate at your setting, place your bread on your dinner plate.

Other plates include the dinner/luncheon plate, the service plate, the dessert plate, and the cup and saucer. The dinner/luncheon plate is the largest plate in the setting and is found in the middle of the place setting. Dinner plates are larger than luncheon plates, and the

one in your place setting is determined by whether you are eating dinner or lunch. Your place setting will have one or the other, not both. The entrée, vegetables, and salad, if a salad plate isn't provided, are all eaten from this plate.

The service plate often serves as a salad or luncheon plate as well. You will most often find the service plate on top of your dinner plate. It is used to hold appetizers and soup bowls and is removed after these courses. If appetizers and soup aren't included in the meal, the service plate is removed before the entrée is served. If a salad plate isn't in the place setting, it is acceptable to use the service plate. If this plate is used as a luncheon plate, it will be the main plate in the center of the place setting.

Upon completion of the entrée, the dinner plate is removed and replaced by the dessert plate. This plate is placed in the center of the place setting before dessert is served or at the time the dessert is served if it's served directly on the dessert plate. Like the dinner plate, the dessert plate remains in the center of the place setting when you are finished.

The cup and saucer are found to the far right of the place setting. They are placed in line horizontally with the salad plate on the far left and the dinner plate in the center of the place setting. Only when you are dining casually and only after the table has been cleared is it acceptable to move your cup and saucer to the center of the place setting.

The correct way to hold a cup is to grasp the handle with your thumb and index finger, and to rest your next finger under the handle. There is no need to put your thumb or finger through the hole.

### ***Left-Handers***

A table for left-handed people is set the same way as a table for right-handed people. Unfortunately for left-handers, they can't rearrange the place setting. They can use their silverware in the way that is most comfortable for them, however. Because the server will be removing the plate from the right, left-handed people should leave their silverware on the right-hand side of their plate, just as right-handed people do, so it doesn't fall off. If you or someone you are dining with is left-handed, it is best for the left-handed person to sit at left end of the table or at the head of the table. This arrangement helps ensure that everyone has adequate elbowroom to eat comfortably.

## FORMAL DINNER PLACE SETTING



1. Napkin
2. Fish Fork
3. Dinner or Main Course Fork
4. Salad Fork
5. Soup Bowl & Plate
6. Dinner Plate
7. Dinner Knife
8. Fish Knife
9. Soup Spoon
10. Bread & Butter Plate
11. Butter Knife
12. Dessert Spoon and Cake Fork
13. Sterling Water Goblet
14. Red Wine Goblet
15. White Wine Goblet

### *Informal Dinner Place Setting...*

Same as above except remove the fish fork, fish knife, dessert spoon and cake fork, and either the red wine goblet or the white wine goblet, depending on the type of food being served.

## EATING FOOD GRACEFULLY

You know how you'd eat lobster, corn on the cob, and spaghetti at home, but is it okay to use the same techniques when you're eating these foods in a restaurant? Some of them, yes, others probably not. The key is to carefully choose what to order when you are dining out for business. You probably won't want to order a whole lobster. Instead, consider ordering things that are easy to eat. Follow these tips when eating some of your favorite foods out:

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***Bottled drinks and carbonated beverages:*** The best way to consume these beverages is to drink them from a glass. Your second option is to drink them from a bottle with a straw. Avoid drinking from the bottle.

***Bread and Butter:*** Place a piece of bread and butter on your bread plate, and then pass the breadbasket to your right. Tear off a small piece of bread or break the roll in half, butter it, and eat. Bread shouldn't be eaten in whole slices unless it's toast or garlic bread.

***Cheese:*** The way cheese is served determines how it is to be eaten. Use your knife to spread it on crackers if it is served as hors d'oeuvres or if it's a soft cheese. If served as a dessert with fruit, use your fork to cut and eat it.

***French fries:*** When having French fries with finger foods such as hot dogs and sandwiches, eat them with our fingers. When eating French fries with other foods, cut and eat them with a fork.

***Fried or barbecued chicken:*** Picking it up and eating it with your fingers is okay on only three occasions: if you are eating it at home, if it is served in a basket, or if it is served at a barbecue. If dining at a restaurant or at a dinner party, use your knife and fork. If others start using their fingers or if you get the host's approval, then you may eat it with your fingers.

***Garnishes:*** Carrots, cherry tomatoes, parsley, watercress, radishes, pickles, and olives are all finger foods.

***Lemons:*** Use caution when squeezing lemons; you don't want to squirt yourself or anyone else. Hold your hand over and around the lemon as you squeeze or shield the lemon with your spoon to prevent the juice from hitting someone.

***Pie:*** When served a la mode, eat a pie with a spoon and a fork. Eat all other varieties with a fork. Start from the point and work toward the crust.

***Pizza:*** The only time you might not want to eat pizza with your fingers is in a restaurant. Even then, all you really need to do is use your fork for the first few bites.

***Potato chips:*** Eat with you fingers.

***Salad:*** Lettuce leaves, vegetable pieces, and chunks of meat must be cut if they are too big to fit into your mouth. Cutting your entire salad at once is not recommended, though.

***Sandwiches:*** Using a knife and fork is the safest way to eat a sandwich if it is very big or messy. Otherwise, use your hands.

***Shrimp:*** If shrimp is in the shell, carefully remove the shell by holding the legs in your fingers and peeling the shell around and off. Hold the shrimp by the tail and dip it in the sauce. However, it is acceptable to use your fork, spear a shrimp, dip it into the sauce and eat it. This is the method you may prefer when the shrimp has already been cleaned and shelled before serving. Shells are to be left in the cocktail bowl or on your bread and butter plate.

***Soup:*** Spoon soup away from you. Lean forward, but don't hunch over when bringing the soup to your mouth. Quietly sip soup from the side of the spoon, not from the tip. Between sips the spoon is put on the under plate. You may drink only thin soup from a bowl, and only if the bowl has handles. Still, take a few spoonfuls first. Thick soups or soups containing pieces of vegetables or meat are always to be eaten with a spoon. When tipping a bowl to get the last few drops of soup, tip the bowl away from you. Soup au gratin can be very difficult to eat because the cheese is often stringy or clumps together. Order this only if you're sure you can eat it gracefully. When you are finished, your soup spoon is to be placed on the right side of the under plate or as a last resort, leave the spoon in the soup bowl if there is no under plate.

***Spaghetti:*** Twirling spaghetti around your fork and then putting it in your mouth is the best method. You also can twirl the spaghetti into a spoon if one is provided. It is not acceptable to put one end of a noodle in your mouth and suck the rest in.

## **TRAVEL ETIQUETTE**

### ***When Traveling by Car or Taxi***

Be respectful of your companions. If you are driving, open the door(s) for your passenger(s). Once you and your passenger(s) are in the car, be aware of their preferences when turning on the radio, heater, air conditioner etc. If you are traveling long distance, car etiquette also dictates that you offer regular stretch breaks.

As for smoking protocol, even if only one passenger is a nonsmoker, it is given that smoking should not take place. As a courtesy to smokers, make a point to them that you would be happy to stop for a "smoke break."

### ***When Traveling by Taxi***

If you are leaving from a hotel, be sure to tip the person who hails the cab for you. Once you are inside the cab, acknowledge the driver with a pleasant greeting. Taxi drivers can be great sources for learning about a city. If you do prefer not to talk, you should still be cordial with your greeting and farewell.



When others are traveling with you by cab, seating etiquette dictates that those of seniority be offered the back seat. If three individuals are traveling together, the lowest ranking person should offer to sit in the front, unless a senior member prefers that seat.

Tip 15% of the fare, and get in the habit of requesting a receipt at the end of each trip.

### ***When Traveling by Aircraft***

Give yourself plenty of time to make the journey to the airport. Check and recheck that you have not forgotten anything before you leave, i.e. airline ticket, credit card, money, and if traveling internationally, your passport. Arrive at your flight gate in plenty of time to check in and relax a moment before boarding.

Once you are seated, leaving your seat should be the exception rather than the rule. If you usually have the urge to excuse yourself from your seat during flight, you should request an aisle seat. If you are not able to get an aisle seat, keep your movements to a minimum. The individual(s) sitting next to you will appreciate your consideration.

During flights, some people like to converse with the people sitting near them, other do not. Before trying to strike up a conversation, tune in to your fellow passenger's body language. Look for nonverbal clues as to whether the person seated next to you is interested in chatting, and respect his or her wishes. If you strike up a conversation and your fellow passenger's response is brief and not followed by a question or commentary, take a hint.

Flight attendants should also be treated with respect. Try to make your requests when the attendant is passing or serving you, as opposed to ringing the call bell. If you would like something, ask with a polite "When you have a minute, may I have..." And don't forget a smile and a good – bye, or even a "thank you" as you are exiting the plane.

If you are traveling during the workday, wear business attire. If you are traveling after 6 p.m. "business casual" is acceptable. Many business people agree that weekend travel dress code is even more casual.

### ***The Importance of Tracking Travel Expense for Reimbursement Purposes***

Keep accurate travel expense records, i.e. lodging receipts, meal receipts, taxi receipts, and even mileage records if you have traveled by car. The easiest way to maintain records is to request a receipt each time that a service is rendered, and then place that receipt in a safe place. You may want to use the same credit card for each service that you require.

### ***The Importance of Business Ethics When Preparing Business Reports***

Many people think that they have reinvented the wheel by "padding" their expense report. Whether it is adding a few dollars to a business meal or a few miles to a trip, keep one thing in mind: it is not worth the few dollars that you will be gaining to damage your

personal code of ethics or the respect that your superiors have for you. Sooner or later, unethical behavior will catch up with you

### ***Tiping Etiquette***

What is proper etiquette? How much should you tip and to whom?

#### ***Airport:***

1. *Baggage Handler* - When you first get to the airport, you may ask the help of a baggage handler to help check you in. They should get \$1 - \$1.50 for every bag that they help you with.
2. *Transportation Service* - If you hire a limo driver or another type of driver to take you from place to place, proper etiquette is to tip 15% of the bill. In many cases, the gratuity is automatically included in the price that you are paying.
3. *Hotel Courtesy Fan* - You should automatically tip the driver \$1 per person. If the driver helps you with your bags, tip him \$2.

#### ***Hotel:***

1. *Bellhop* - For every bag that the bellhop takes to your room, you should tip \$1 - \$2. For every package or delivery to your room, you should tip \$1 - \$2.
2. *Housekeeper* - Each day you should tip the housekeeper \$1 - \$2. If your housekeeper has to perform any type of special service, you should tip an additional \$1 - \$2.
3. *Room Service Wait Staff* - If someone brings a meal to your room, you should tip just as you would in a restaurant, 15 – 20%. Even if the gratuity is included in the bill, you should tip \$1.

#### ***Restaurant:***

1. *Hat and Coat Check* - If someone helps you with your coat when you enter a restaurant, you should tip that person \$1.
2. *Bartender* - Tip this person 15% of the liquor bill.
3. *Maitre d'* - If you ask this person to get you a good table, tip him or her \$5 if there are two people in party and \$10 for a table of four or more. You should double these amounts if you are in a five star restaurant.
4. *Waiter* - You should tip this person 15 – 20% of the total bill.

#### ***Other:***

1. *Taxi Driver* - If you hire a taxi driver to take you from place to place, tip him 10 – 15% of your total bill.
2. *Parking Valet* - If you use a valet service at your hotel or at a restaurant, tip that person \$1 - \$2 each time he or she retrieves your car.

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## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### ***Voicemail and Answering Machines***

If you will be away from your phone for extended period of time, it is professional to let callers know this information and when you are expected to return. If this information changes for some reason, so should your outgoing message. For example, it is unprofessional for someone to listen to your message that states you will be out of the office until November 5<sup>th</sup> and the call is occurring on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

It is best to keep your outgoing message simple and professional. The message should be between 10 to 15 seconds in length.

When you are leaving a message on a person's voicemail or answering machine, state your name, a number you can be reached at, the time and date of your call, whether you plan to call back, and a brief explanation of your call.

### ***Speakerphones***

Speakerphones are a great way to bring groups of people together for a brainstorming session, conference calls, and group meetings. If you choose to use a speakerphone to communicate with others, let the people on the other end of the phone know they are on a speakerphone.

It would be best to ask the person on the other end of the phone if they mind being placed on a speakerphone to communicate. Many people think you are doing other things besides listening to them and can be offended.

### ***Pagers and Cell Phones***

For many students it is important to stay connected with people through the use of cell phones and pagers. Courtesy and respect for the people around you should be a top priority. These devices can be distracting to yourself and an interviewer when they start beeping and/or ringing. Your audiences' attention is diverted from the matter at hand and onto the device when this occurs.

If it is critical that you be contacted during an interview switch the pager or cell phone to the vibrate mode so you know when others are trying to contact you, yet the people around you will not be disturbed. In the event that the incoming call must be returned immediately, excuse yourself and complete the call elsewhere.

The best option available to you would be to turn the phone or pager off and retrieve any incoming messages at a more convenient time.

### ***E-mail***

E-mail is an informal way to send messages as long as you retain the same boundaries of propriety you would use if dealing with the person face-to-face. For example, if you address the CEO of the company by surname in person, do not switch to the first name when sending e-mail. There are a few general guidelines to keep in mind when communicating online:

1. *All messages should be as short and concise as possible.* If the message is more than a few lines long, divide the text into paragraph-sized “chunks” so it is easier to read.
2. *Use a meaningful subject line.* If a busy professional cannot figure out what an e-mail is about from the subject line, the message usually gets ignored or deleted.
3. *Keep messages relevant.* Make sure all messages posted are relevant to the subject at hand. When replying to someone, quote the parts of the original message that pertain to your reply.
4. *Stick to plain text.* It is great to send out beautifully formatted messages with special italics, bold type, or heavily formatted HTML, unfortunately some mail systems will not deliver the message in the same format as it was sent. A plain text message may not look as pretty as you want, but it will not look worse than it did when you sent it.
5. *Pay attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation.* Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation make the message more easily understood, not to mention professional. Virtually every e-mail program today has a spelling and grammar check feature, so there is no reason not to use it. Another option would be to type your message in Microsoft Word, check for any spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors, then cut and paste the message into the body of the e-mail.
6. *Avoid jokes and punctuation faces.* In a business setting, it is best to avoid sending jokes and punctuation faces. If your statement needs an explanation in parentheses like [joke] or [haha], rephrase or eliminate it.
7. *Avoid attachments. Include your message in the body of the e-mail.* With viruses being rampant today, many people will not open attachments, no matter what size. Large attachments can take a long time to open and many busy professionals do not have time to wait.
8. *Remember you are communicating with other people.* Sending e-mail does not give you the benefit of facial expressions and gestures that normally give additional meaning to a conversation. Without these nonverbal cues, you have to take care in what you are saying so the meaning is not misconstrued. Do not post your entire message in all capitals. This can be interpreted as screaming or shouting on the Internet.
9. *Taking too long to respond.* Everyone knows how busy some people can get. That is not an excuse to ignore e-mail or not respond in a timely manner. It is disrespectful not to reply quickly to potential employer. Not responding quickly implies a lack of interest on your part. Check your e-mail a minimum of once a day if you are actively searching for employment.

10. *Copying everyone in the world.* Copying (CC) is a way to keep people in the loop without asking those individuals to take any direct action. Business e-mails should be copied to anyone who is concerned with the matter at hand.
11. *Deleting E-mail.* Remember e-mail is not gone when it is deleted. Deleted e-mail is permanently stored on the magnetic tape in the hard drive of your computer. An employees' e-mail is a company asset and can be reviewed at any time by the employer.

## **DISABILITY ETIQUETTE**

### ***How to interact with people who have disabilities...***

Fear of the unknown and lack of knowledge about how to act can lead to uneasiness when meeting a person who has a disability. Treat a person with a disability as you would want to be treated, and just be yourself.

### ***When Meeting and Talking with a Person who has a Disability:***

1. A handshake may not be appropriate for everyone. When in doubt, ASK the person whether he or she would like to shake hands with you. A smile along with a spoken greeting is always appropriate.
2. Speak directly to the person with the disability and not just to the persons accompanying him or her.
3. Don't mention the person's disability unless he or she talks about it or it is relevant to the conversation.
4. Treat adults as adults. Don't patronize or talk down to people with disabilities.
5. Be patient and give your undivided attention, especially with someone who speaks slowly or with great effort.
6. When talking to a person who is in a wheelchair, try to put yourself at eye level with them by sitting or kneeling in front of them.
7. Never pretend to understand what a person is saying. Ask the person to repeat or rephrase, or offer him or her a pen and paper.
8. Do not pet or distract a guide dog. The dog is responsible for the owner's safety.
9. It is okay to use common expressions like "see you soon" or "I'd better be running along."
10. Be polite and patient when offering assistance, and wait until your offer is accepted. Listen or ask for specific instructions.
11. Relax. Anyone can make mistakes. Offer an apology if you forget some courtesy. Keep a sense of humor and a willingness to communicate.

## RESOURCES

Several books and videos on the subject of business etiquette are available in the University Career Services (UCS) Career Resource Library. See the receptionist for details. We recommend:

### Books:

Don't Slurp Your Soup, A Basic Guide to Business Etiquette, Elizabeth Craig, Brighton Publications 1996.

### Videos:

“How to Conduct Yourself More Professionally During a Business Meal”

“Avoiding the 10 Most Commonly Made Business Etiquette Faux Pas”

“Better Business Grammar”

### Internet Sites:

<http://www.workforce.com>. This site will send you etiquette updates if you register

<http://www.cnn.com>

Type “business etiquette” into your favorite search engine.

7/02