

Email Etiquette 101

Before You Click “Send” Email Checklist

Most misunderstandings can be avoided by one side or the other not rushing through their e-mail activities and ensuring your e-mail will be received, read and perceived with the desired meaning by the intended recipient.

Here's a checklist of the items I have found are the biggest trouble makers that need to be checked before clicking Send:

1. Make sure your e-mail includes a courteous greeting and closing. Helps to make your e-mail not seem demanding or terse.
2. Address your contact with the appropriate level of formality and make sure you spelled their name correctly.
3. Spell check so that you reflect your level of education. E-mails with typos are simply not taken as seriously.
4. Read your e-mail out loud to ensure the tone is that which you desire. Try to avoid relying on formatting for emphasis; rather choose the words that reflect your meaning instead. A few additions of the words “please” and “thank you” go a long way!
5. Be sure you are including all relevant details or information necessary to understand your request or point of view. Generalities can many times cause confusion and unnecessary back and forths.
6. Are you using proper sentence structure? First word capitalized with appropriate punctuation? Multiple instances of !!! or ??? are perceived as rude or condescending.
7. If your e-mail is emotionally charged, walk away from the computer and wait to reply. Review the Sender's e-mail again so that you are sure you are not reading anything into the e-mail that simply isn't there.
8. If sending attachments, did you ask first when would be the best time to send? Did you check file size to make sure you don't fill the other side's inbox causing all subsequent e-mail to bounce?
9. Refrain from using the Reply to All feature to CYA or give your opinion to those who may not be interested. In most cases replying to the sender alone is your best course of action.
10. Make one last check that the address or addresses in the To: field are those you wish to send your reply to.

If the above issues are considered in your e-mail activities, misunderstandings will be avoided and you will be known as a pleasure to communicate with. It's a win-win!

5 Essential Elements of Every Email

With every email you have the opportunity to communicate with clarity. The onus is on you as the author to ensure that the intent and tone you wish to relay is what comes across to those you email. And, with every email you also run the risk of being misunderstood or giving a less than positive impression by not paying attention to detail.

Remember; in email you lose the benefit of eye-contact, body language, a firm handshake or a smile. By taking the time to create emails that have these 5 Essential Elements firmly in place, you ensure your meaning is not detracted from while minimizing possible negative perceptions and misunderstandings.

Every email you write should have these 5 Essential Elements covered:

1. The From Field: Your name needs to be displayed properly. John F. Doe. Not john f doe, or john doe, j. doe or no name at all and only your email address. Proper capitalization is very important here. When your name is in all lower case you open the door to being perceived a spammer or worse yet – lacking education or tech savvy.
2. The Subject Line: A short, sweet and well thought out Subject is crucial and in some cases can help to ensure your email gets opened. Keeping your Subject to 5-7 words that accurately identify the topic and context of your email is imperative. Feel free to modify the Subject field in ongoing conversations to reflect when the direction or topic of the conversation has changed.
3. The Greeting: Without a greeting at the beginning of your email you risk being viewed as bossy or terse. Take the time to include a Hello, or Hi and the recipient's name. How you type your contact's name (John, Mr. Doe, etc.) is indicative of the level of formality your email will portray. Be careful to not take the liberty of being overly informal too quickly. Let the other side dictate the level of formality and follow their lead. After all, formality is just another form of courtesy. You can usually get an indication of how those you communicate with prefer to be addressed by how they sign-off their emails.

4. **The Body:** Taking the time to communicate with clarity is time well spent. Complete, correctly structured and capitalized sentences that reflect proper grammar and punctuation are crucial to your message. Typing in all lower case or all caps does not lend to easy communications and gives the impression you are either lazy or illiterate. Review and spell-check every message before clicking Send.
5. **The Closing:** Whether it be "Thank you for your time!", "Sincerely", "Look forward to hearing from you!" or "Warm regards," use what is consistent with the tone and objective of your message. By not having a proper closing you increase the possibility that your email will be perceived as demanding or curt. Without exception close by including your name to put that final considerate touch to your emails.

Make the effort to integrate these 5 essential elements in every email you send and you will contribute to the perception that you are tech savvy, courteous and a pleasure to communicate with. When it comes to email its all about communicating with knowledge, understanding and courtesy!

www.netmanners.com

32 most important email etiquette tips:

1. Be concise and to the point. Do not make an e-mail longer than it needs to be. Remember that reading an e-mail is harder than reading printed communications and a long e-mail can be very discouraging to read.

2. Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions. An email reply must answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions – If you do not answer all the questions in the original email, you will receive further e-mails regarding the unanswered questions, which will not only waste your time and your customer's time but also cause considerable frustration. Moreover, if you are able to pre-empt relevant questions, your customer will be grateful and impressed with your efficient and thoughtful customer service. Imagine for instance that a customer sends you an email asking which credit cards you accept. Instead of just listing the credit card types, you can guess that their next question will be about how they can order, so you also include some order information and a URL to your order page. Customers will definitely appreciate this.

3. Use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation. This is not only important because improper spelling, grammar and punctuation give a bad impression of your company, it is also important for conveying the message properly. E-mails with no full stops or commas are difficult to read and can sometimes even change the meaning of the text. And, if your program has a spell checking option, why not use it?

4. Make it personal. Not only should the e-mail be personally addressed, it should also include personal i.e. customized content. For this reason auto replies are usually not very effective. However, templates can be used effectively in this way, see next tip.

5. Use templates for frequently used responses. Some questions you get over and over again, such as directions to your office or how to subscribe to your newsletter. Save these texts as response templates and paste these into your message when you need them. You can save your templates in a Word document, or use pre-formatted emails. Even better is a tool such as [ReplyMate for Outlook](#) (allows you to use 10 templates for free).

6. Answer swiftly. Customers send an e-mail because they wish to receive a quick response. If they did not want a quick response they would send a letter or a fax. Therefore, each e-mail should be replied to within at least 24 hours, and preferably within the same working day. If the email is complicated, just send an email back saying that you have received it and that you will get back to them. This will put the customer's mind at rest and usually customers will then be very patient!

7. Do not attach unnecessary files. By sending large attachments you can annoy customers and even bring down their e-mail system. Wherever possible try to compress attachments and only send attachments when they are productive. Moreover, you need to have a good virus scanner in place since your customers will not be very happy if you send them documents full of viruses!

8. Use proper structure & layout. Since reading from a screen is more difficult than reading from paper, the structure and lay out is very important for e-mail messages. Use short paragraphs and blank lines between each paragraph. When making points, number them or mark each point as separate to keep the overview.

9. Do not overuse the high priority option. We all know the story of the boy who cried wolf. If you overuse the high priority option, it will lose its function when you really need it. Moreover, even if a mail has high priority, your message will come across as slightly aggressive if you flag it as 'high priority'.

10. Do not write in CAPITALS. IF YOU WRITE IN CAPITALS IT SEEMS AS IF YOU ARE SHOUTING. This can be highly annoying and might trigger an unwanted response in the form of a flame mail. Therefore, try not to send any email text in capitals.

11. Don't leave out the message thread. When you reply to an email, you must include the original mail in your reply, in other words click 'Reply', instead of 'New Mail'. Some people say that you must remove the previous message since this has already been sent and is therefore unnecessary. However, I could not agree less. If you receive many emails you obviously cannot remember each individual email. This means that a 'threadless email' will not provide enough information and you will have to spend a frustratingly long time to find out the context of the email in order to deal with it. Leaving the thread might take a fraction longer in download time, but it will save the recipient much more time and frustration in looking for the related emails in their inbox!

12. Add disclaimers to your emails. It is important to add disclaimers to your internal and external mails, since this can help protect your company from liability. Consider the following scenario: an employee accidentally forwards a virus to a customer by email. The customer decides to sue your company for damages. If you add a disclaimer at the bottom of every external mail, saying that the recipient must check each email for viruses and that it cannot be held liable for any transmitted viruses, this will surely be of help to you in court (read more about [email disclaimers](#)). Another example: an employee sues the company for allowing a racist email to circulate the office. If your company has an [email policy](#) in place and adds an email disclaimer to every mail that states that employees are expressly required not to make defamatory statements, you have a good case of proving that the company did everything it could to prevent offensive emails.

13. Read the email before you send it. A lot of people don't bother to read an email before they send it out, as can be seen from the many spelling and grammar mistakes contained in emails. Apart from this, reading your email through the eyes of the recipient will help you send a more effective message and avoid misunderstandings and inappropriate comments.

14. Do not overuse Reply to All. Only use Reply to All if you really need your message to be seen by each person who received the original message.

15. Mailings > use the Bcc: field or do a mail merge. When sending an email mailing, some people place all the email addresses in the To: field. There are two drawbacks to this practice: (1) the recipient knows that you have sent the same message to a large number of recipients, and (2) you are publicizing someone else's email address without their permission. One way to get round this is to place all addresses in the Bcc: field. However, the recipient will only see the address from the To: field in their email, so if this was empty, the To: field will be blank and this might look like spamming. You could include the mailing list email address in the To: field, or even better, if you have Microsoft Outlook and Word you can do a mail merge and create one message for each recipient. A mail merge also allows you to use fields in the message so that you can for instance address each recipient personally. For more information on how to do a Word mail merge, consult the Help in Word.

16. Take care with abbreviations and emoticons. In business emails, try not to use abbreviations such as BTW (by the way) and LOL (laugh out loud). The recipient might not be aware of the meanings of the abbreviations and in business emails these are generally not appropriate. The same goes for emoticons, such as the smiley :-). If you are not sure whether your recipient knows what it means, it is better not to use it.

17. Be careful with formatting. Remember that when you use formatting in your emails, the sender might not be able to view formatting, or might see different fonts than you had intended. When using colors, use a color that is easy to read on the background.

18. Take care with rich text and HTML messages. Be aware that when you send an email in rich text or HTML format, the sender might only be able to receive plain text emails. If this is the case, the recipient will receive your message as a .txt attachment. Most email clients however, including Microsoft Outlook, are able to receive HTML and rich text messages.

19. Do not forward chain letters. Do not forward chain letters. We can safely say that all of them are hoaxes. Just delete the letters as soon as you receive them.

20. Do not request delivery and read receipts. This will almost always annoy your recipient before he or she has even read your message. Besides, it usually does not work anyway since the recipient could have blocked that function, or his/her software might not support it, so what is the use of using it? If you want to know whether an email was received it is better to ask the recipient to let you know if it was received.

21. Do not ask to recall a message. Biggest chances are that your message has already been delivered and read. A recall request would look very silly in that case wouldn't it? It is better just to send an email to say that you have made a mistake. This will look much more honest than trying to recall a message.

22. Do not copy a message or attachment without permission. Do not copy a message or attachment belonging to another user without permission of the originator. If you do not ask permission first, you might be infringing on copyright laws.

23. Do not use email to discuss confidential information. Sending an email is like sending a postcard. If you don't want your email to be displayed on a bulletin board, don't send it. Moreover, never make any libelous, sexist or racially discriminating comments in emails, even if they are meant to be a joke.

24. Use a meaningful subject. Try to use a subject that is meaningful to the recipient as well as yourself. For instance, when you send an email to a company requesting information about a product, it is better to mention the actual name of the product, e.g. 'Product A information' than to just say 'product information' or the company's name in the subject.

25. Use active instead of passive. Try to use the active voice of a verb wherever possible. For instance, 'We will process your order today', sounds better than 'Your order will be processed today'. The first sounds more personal, whereas the latter, especially when used frequently, sounds unnecessarily formal.

26. Avoid using URGENT and IMPORTANT. Even more so than the high-priority option, you must at all times try to avoid these types of words in an email or subject line. Only use this if it is a really, really urgent or important message.

27. Avoid long sentences. Try to keep your sentences to a maximum of 15-20 words. Email is meant to be a quick medium and requires a different kind of writing than letters. Also take care not to send emails that are too long. If a person receives an email that looks like a dissertation, chances are that they will not even attempt to read it!

28. Don't send or forward emails containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks. By sending or even just forwarding one libelous, or offensive remark in an email, you and your company can face court cases resulting in multi-million dollar penalties.

29. Don't forward virus hoaxes and chain letters. If you receive an email message warning you of a new unstoppable virus that will immediately delete everything from your computer, this is most probably a hoax. By forwarding hoaxes you use valuable bandwidth and sometimes virus hoaxes contain viruses themselves, by attaching a so-called file that will stop the dangerous virus. The same goes for chain

letters that promise incredible riches or ask your help for a charitable cause. Even if the content seems to be bona fide, the senders are usually not. Since it is impossible to find out whether a chain letter is real or not, the best place for it is the recycle bin.

30. Keep your language gender neutral. In this day and age, avoid using sexist language such as: 'The user should add a signature by configuring his email program'. Apart from using he/she, you can also use the neutral gender: "The user should add a signature by configuring the email program".

31. Don't reply to spam. By replying to spam or by unsubscribing, you are confirming that your email address is 'live'. Confirming this will only generate even more spam. Therefore, just hit the delete button or use email software to remove spam automatically.

32. Use cc: field sparingly. Try not to use the cc: field unless the recipient in the cc: field knows why they are receiving a copy of the message. Using the cc: field can be confusing since the recipients might not know who is supposed to act on the message. Also, when responding to a cc: message, should you include the other recipient in the cc: field as well? This will depend on the situation. In general, do not include the person in the cc: field unless you have a particular reason for wanting this person to see your response. Again, make sure that this person will know why they are receiving a copy.

www.emailreplies.com

Phone Interview Etiquette

Phone Interview Etiquette Can Propel You to the Next Step in the Hiring Process by Maureen Crawford Hentz

Phone interviews are terrifying to some job seekers and absolutely painless to others. Regardless of your feelings about phone interviews, you can develop techniques and skills that will maximize your phone interview's impact on the hiring staff. Here are some phone interviewing tips to get you going:

Pre-contact

It's important to prepare for a successful phone contact even as you are applying for positions. I recommend that the last paragraph of every application letter include contact information in the event the recruiter needs to contact you with questions or offer an interview. When providing this information, it's important to list the number(s) at which you can be reached, indicating whether or not it is acceptable to be contacted at your current position. Also include your email address if you check it often. Even if your letter is on a letterhead that includes contact information, it never hurts to repeat the information in the last paragraph.

In certain circumstances it may be important to give additional contact information. For example, a college student going on spring break during the contact interval after submitting a letter and resume might choose to include a sentence such as "From March 17 to March 29, I will be out of the state/out of the country on spring break. During that time I can be reached at this number/I will be unreachable/I will be unreachable by phone but plan to check my email daily." An applicant who cannot be contacted during work hours might include information such as "Although I prefer to receive messages at my home number, I check messages frequently throughout the day and can usually return calls during breaks." Finally, if you will soon be moving, include "until" dates with your phone, email and mailing information.

Next, think about your answering machine message. A trend observed by many recruiters is voicemails/answering machines that treat incoming callers to a snippet of music from the resident's favorite band of the moment. When I was a 20-something myself, I felt that my three-minute Depeche Mode greeting was an expression of my individuality and coolness; as a recruiter, I am mildly annoyed if the concert goes on too long before I can leave a message. It's important to decide what's right for you while at the same time creating a professional impression.

It is helpful if recruiters can be sure they've called the right number. For privacy and security issues, many people do not list their first names, last names, or telephone numbers on their answering-machine/voicemail greetings. My recommendation is usually to leave *one* of these identifiers in the message: "You've reached Amy, Cathy, and Mark. Please leave a message" or "You've reached the Sizemores. Please leave a message" or "You've reached 617-973-5235 begin_of_the_skype_highlighting 617-973-5235 end_of_the_skype_highlighting. Please leave a message." Again, each job seeker must determine what is comfortable. Don't change your message if you feel uncomfortable about having this information on your outgoing greeting.

If you have roommates, housemates, a spouse, or children it's important to work out a system of message-taking. Twice this week, I have called a candidate only to be greeted by a toddler who told me, "Daddy's in the shower" before she hung up. If you anticipate a "season" of job searching, it might be a good idea to invest in individual voicemail boxes for each member of your household. You can also instruct them not to answer the phone unless they can carefully write down the entire message and remember to give it to you (this strategy works equally well for both preschoolers and roommates!).

After you mail your applications and while you are waiting for the phone to ring is a good time to create a mini-job log to have near the phone. My advice to job-searchers without photographic memory is to make a list of the companies at which they've applied and the titles of the positions applied for. Some people even list qualifications requested for each position. Thus, if you are called by hiring staff, you will have some idea of which job they're calling about. This week of phone interviewing has really sensitized our staff to this issue. Ideally, the interviewer would like to think his or her company is the only employer to which you've applied. But this hope dies quickly when you say something to the effect of "now what job is this again; I've applied for so many....?" At best, it makes you look disorganized and at worst as if you are sending out hundreds of resumes desperately.

When You Miss the Contact

If the hiring staff leaves a message for you, return the call as soon as you can. As you are returning the call, remember that the recruiter may have called 10 other people that day about the same or a different position. When you return the call, give your full first name and last name and indicate that you are returning the recruiter's call regarding the xxx position.

If the message was left for you at 1 pm, and you didn't get it until you returned home at 7:30, call and leave a voicemail *then*. In this circumstance, voicemail is your friend. Again, give your full first name, last name, specific position *and* your contact information for the next business day. Caution! Be prepared in case the recruiter is still there at 7:30 and wants to do a phone interview right then!

When You're There for the Contact

The moment comes! The phone rings, and you are there to answer! Our standard recruiting rap goes something like this "Hi Aurora, this is Bridget calling from the New England Aquarium in Boston. I'm calling regarding our water quality position and would like to spend about 10 minutes on the phone with you asking some preliminary questions. Is this a good time to talk, or could I arrange a time to call you back?" Many interviewers like to make sure that interviewing now is convenient for the candidate. Most recruiting professionals will give candidates this courtesy, particularly when calling a candidate at her current place of employment.

Where there is less universal agreement among recruiters, however, is your answer. Many recruiters want you to talk to them when they call, and may not want to call again later. They may have only one or two clarifying questions that would take just a few minutes. Or they may want to do the full 10-60 minute phone interview with you, and they *want* to have you do it extemporaneously. Other recruiters want the candidate to feel composed and settled and have a quiet place to talk and think, and may not mind making a later appointment. If you are good on the phone and quick on your feet, you may want to go ahead with the interview. If you are in the middle of something, running out the door, or can't remember what the job is, it may be best to suggest an alternate time. A good way phrase is "I'm so happy you called. I have about 10 minutes before I have to run out the door. Is that enough time, or can I call you back later this afternoon?" This way, you are expressing your interest, being clear about the time you have, and suggesting a time to connect later.

While you are talking, make sure that your cordless phone battery is not about to run out, that your roommate is not about to run the vacuum, and that you will be able to concentrate. It may help to have your notes and resume in front of you, and to have a pen in your hand to take notes. If the entire hiring committee is on the other end in a conference call, you will want to write down each person's name/role down so that you can refer to it later.

It's important that you are clear about whether or not you can hear the interviewer clearly. *Don't* say, "can you speak up?" *Do* say "I'm having trouble hearing you. Can you hear me clearly?" The latter is slightly less confrontational *and* clarifies whether the connection between you is bad or if the problem is on the recruiter's end.

As with *any* interview, be prepared to ask questions at the end. You want to have the recruiter(s) hang up with a good impression of your interest in the company.

After the Call

Immediately after the call, write a short thank-you note. Correct phraseology for a phone interview would be something like "Thank you for spending time with me on the phone today talking about the enrollment management position. I

enjoyed the conversation and have a better understanding of the job. I'd be interested in an on-site interview, and would welcome the opportunity to further discuss my candidacy."

For Individuals With Hearing Loss/Deafness

Phone interviews are not an impossibility. Many recruiters are quite accustomed to interviewing via relay service or TTY. Certainly, *all* companies should be prepared for and facile in communicating in these ways. Too often, however, they are not. For recruiters who are not, as unfair as it may be, the candidate may have to suggest alternatives to the speaking-and-hearing phone interview. A hard-of-hearing candidate may want to send a note to the recruiter before the interview indicating some basic TTY vocabulary. It is up to you whether or not you want to educate the recruiter about communicating via TTY or relay. In my opinion, the single most important vocabulary non-TTY users need to know is "GA," which is a way for both parties to indicate that they are finished with their answer/question/comment. GA means go ahead, as in go ahead it's your turn to talk.

In the computer age, another suggestion may be a real-time conversation via chat technology. Companies may have specific areas on their Web site where employees can meet in real time from different locations. Such a site would be an ideal venue in which candidates and recruiters can interview.

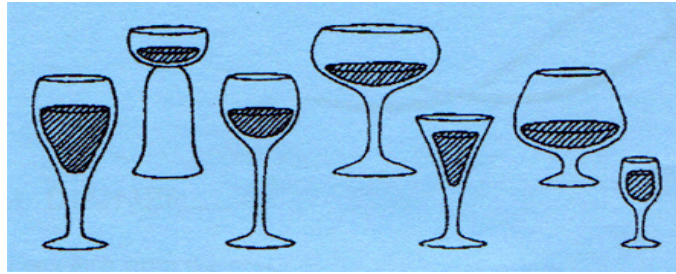
A Chance to Test the Waters

The phone interview is the second step in the process for many recruiters. During a phone interview, interviewers can check out whether you are as good as you sound on paper, if you are articulate and if you'd be a good person to have join the firm. Most importantly, a phone interview serves a way to narrow down the pool to finalists and semifinalists. Few people get hired solely on the basis of a phone interview. The phone interview is a way for both the candidate and the interviewer to test the waters. So, relax, be professional, and be yourself! Remember, the best thing about phone interviews is that you *don't* have to wear a suit!

Dining Etiquette

Knowing guidelines on what to order will help relieve dining anxiety.

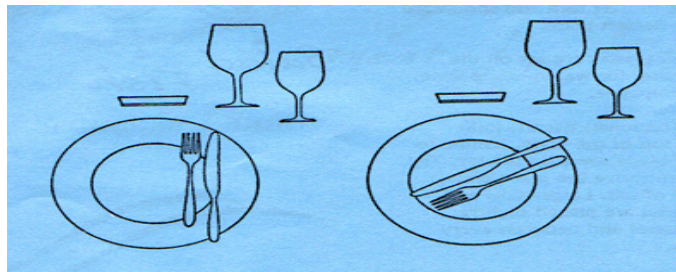
- A. When possible let the host take the lead.
 - B. Ask for suggestions/recommendations.
 - C. Don't order the most expensive or the least expensive item on the menu.
 - D. Avoid foods that are sloppy or hard to eat.
 - E. Avoid alcohol even if others are drinking.
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- Place Plate-The place plate is placed one inch from the edge of the table. If the first course is already on the place plate, the napkin is placed to the left of the forks, otherwise the napkin will be on the plate.
 - Forks/Flatware-Handles of the flatware are aligned at the bottom. The forks (no more than three) are at the left of the place plate, placed in order of use, working from the outside in. The oyster fork is the only fork on the right side with the knives, tines of the fork placed upward, across the soup spoon or parallel with the knives.
 - Often in North America the salad is served prior to the main course. In this case, the salad fork is positioned the furthest from the plate on the left. One would use this fork first. In the case of French style dining, the salad would be served after the main course. In this case, the salad fork would be positioned next to the plate.
 - Knives-Knives, no more than three, are at the right of the place plate in order of use, from the outside in, with the cutting edge toward the plate. The only spoon (for a first course) is placed to the right of the knives.
 - Dessert Silverware-The dessert fork and spoon are above the place plate, the bowl of the spoon facing left, the fork below facing right. In the most formal setting, the dessert fork and spoon are brought in on the dessert plate.
 - Glassware-No more than four glasses are set on the table, in order of use, for water, white wine, red wine and champagne, from the left to the right.



- Full Glasses-When filling glasses, note the above diagram. Don't overfill!

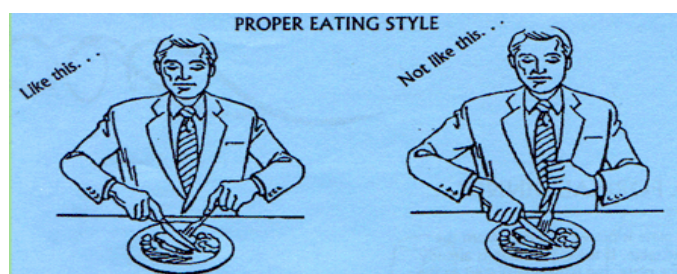


- Stemware-Note the shapes of each type of stemware. They all have a unique shape and should only be used for their respective drinks.
- Bread and Butter Dish-The butter plate (optional) has the knife placed across the top of the plate, handle to the right, edge of blade toward the user. The salt and pepper are above the place plate, pepper to the left of salt. Larger salts and peppers to be shared are placed slightly below the wine glasses and between every two place settings.



- At the end of the meal, you should place your used silverware close together on the plate, with the utensils entirely on the plate (less than an inch of the silverware over the side of the plate). This is a signal to the servers that your meal is finished and the dishes can be removed.
- For a formal dessert service, a waiter brings each guest a finger bowl filled with water. The bowl is set on a small lace or organdy doily (optional), which in turn sits on the dessert plate. The dessert fork and spoon are balanced on the plate in this case (instead of sitting at the top of the place setting throughout the meal.) A guest should dip finger tips in the finger bowl, wipe them on his or her napkin, and then remove the finger bowl and doily to the upper left of the place setting. He or she now moves the fork and spoon from the plate to the left and right of the plate respectively. The empty plate is now ready to receive a helping of dessert.

Proper Eating Style



- The correct way to cut your meat, whether eating American or continental style, is to grasp your knife and fork in a relaxed, natural manner, never with clenched fists.



- In the American style of eating, after cutting your meat, you switch the fork to your right hand, place your knife on the plate, spear a piece of meat, and then eat it.
- In the Continental eating style, you keep your fork in your left hand and convey the food to your mouth after cutting each piece. The knife remains in your hand and may be subtly used to get meat or any other food.

Everything to your right you drink. Everything to your left you eat.

When you don't know which utensil to use, watch what your host does and follow suit

When you have finished, leave your plate where it is in the place setting.

Proper table manners will increase your confidence and promote your ability to show your skills in handling social situation.

1. Napkin Etiquette

- Place the napkin in your lap immediately after the last person have been seated at your table.
- Do not shake it open.
- If the napkin is large put the fold toward your waist.
- If you must leave the table during the meal be sure to put the napkin on the back .of your chair.
- When you finished eating, place the napkin to the right of the plate.

2. Passing the Food

- Always pass to the right.
- It is ok to pass to your immediate left if you are the closest to the item requested.
- Always pass the salt and pepper together.
- Ask the person nearest to what you want "to please pass the item after they have used it themselves".

3. Eating

- Begin eating only after everyone has been served.
- Bread and rolls should be broken into small pieces. Butter only one or two bites at a time. Butter should be taken from the butter dish and placed on the bread plate, not directly on the bread.
- Bring food to your mouth, not your mouth to the food.
- Chew with your mouth closed.
- Always scoop food away from you.
- Do not leave a spoon in the cup; use the saucer or plate instead.
- Taste your food before seasoning.
- Cut food one piece at a time.
- Do not smoke while dining out.
- Do not use a toothpick, or apply makeup at the table.
- 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 food into your napkin. Remove the food from your mouth using the same utensil it went in with. Place the offending piece of food on the edge of your plate.
- Do not talk with your mouth full.
- Take small bites so you can carry on a conversation without delay of chewing and swallowing large amounts of food.

Work Etiquette

The following principles can be utilized by office employees to show proper etiquette; they include all aspects of the work environment.

- a. Be timely. Arrive to work and meetings on time. Complete work assignments on time.
- b. Be polite, pleasant and courteous
- c. Learn office politics – utilize effective listening skills to discover appropriate office behavior. Pay attention to the way things are done
- d. Understand the unwritten rules of business
 - a. The Boss is the Boss – right or wrong, the boss always has the last word
 - b. Keep the Boss informed – Good or bad, you don't want the boss to hear information mentioned from an inappropriate source
 - c. Never go over the Boss' head – without telling him/her first
 - d. Make your Boss look good – promotion and opportunities will arise when you help to reach the organizations goals
- e. Appear as professional as possible. Being well groomed and clean is essential. Dress for your next jog/promotion.
- f. Adopt a can-do attitude. Those who accept challenges and display creativity are valuable
- g. Be flexible. By remaining flexible and implementing change you gain a reputation as a cooperative employee.

Telephone Etiquette

When speaking on the telephone, proper etiquette is just as important as when you meet someone in person.

- A. How you conduct yourself on the telephone tells others as much about you as face-to-face interactions
- B. Always try to return your calls on the same day
- C. Keep business conversations to the point
- D. Do not keep someone on hold more than 30 seconds
- E. Always leave your phone number if you ask for someone to call you back
- F. Maintain a phone log to refer back to for valuable information
- G. Listening is essential whether in person or on the phone

Business Etiquette

Test Your Business Etiquette

Social and business etiquette can be tricky, and making the right moves can make a big difference. Take this quiz and see how you fare in the following business situations. The answers are at the bottom of the page.

1. Your boss, Ms. Alpha, enters the room when you're meeting with an important client, Mr. Beta. You rise and say "Ms. Alpha, I'd like you to meet Mr. Beta, our client from San Diego." Is this introduction correct?
2. At a social function, you meet the CEO of an important Japanese corporation. After a brief chat, you give him your business card. Is this correct?
3. You're entering a cab with an important client. You position yourself so the client is seated curbside. Is this correct?
4. You're hosting a dinner at a restaurant. You've pre-ordered for everyone and indicated where they should sit. Are you correct?
5. A toast has been proposed in your honor. You say "thank you" and take a sip of your drink. Are you correct?
6. You're in a restaurant and a thin soup is served in a cup with no handles. To eat it you should:
 - a. pick it up and drink it
 - b. use the spoon provided
 - c. eat half of it with a spoon and drink the remainder

7. You're at a dinner and champagne is served with the dessert. You simply can't drink champagne yet know the host will be offering a toast. Do you:
 - a. tell the waiter "no champagne"
 - b. turn over your glass
 - c. ask the waiter to pour water into your champagne glass instead
 - d. say nothing and allow the champagne to be poured
8. You're at a table in a restaurant for a business dinner. Midway through the meal, you're called to the telephone. What do you do with your napkin?
 - a. Take it with you
 - b. Fold and place it to the left of your plate
 - c. Loosely fold it and place it on the right side
 - d. Leave it on your chair
9. You're hosting a dinner party at a restaurant. Included are two other couples, and your most valuable client and his wife. You instruct the waiter to:
 - a. serve your spouse first
 - b. serve your client's spouse first
 - c. serve you and your spouse last
10. You're invited to a reception and the invitation states "7:00 to 9:00 PM." You should arrive:
 - a. at 7:00 PM
 - b. anytime between 7:00 PM and 9:00 PM
 - c. between 7:00 PM and 7:30 PM
 - d. go early and leave early
11. You're greeting or saying good-bye to someone. When's the proper time to shake their hand?
 - a. When you're introduced
 - b. At their home
 - c. At their office
 - d. On the street
 - e. When you say good-bye
12. You're talking with a group of four people. Do you make eye contact with:
 - a. just the person to whom you're speaking at the moment?
 - b. each of the four, moving your eye contact from one to another?
 - c. no one particular person (not looking directly into anyone's eyes)?
13. The waiter's coming toward you to serve wine. You don't want any. You turn your glass upside down. Are you correct?
14. When you greet a visitor in your office, do you:
 - a. say nothing and let her sit where she wishes?
 - b. tell her where to sit?
 - c. say "Just sit anywhere"
15. You're invited to dinner in a private home. When do you take your napkin from the table and place it on your lap?
 - a. Open it immediately
 - b. Wait for the host to take his napkin before taking yours?
 - c. Wait for the oldest person at the table to take his?
 - d. Wait for the acknowledged head of the table to take hers before taking yours?
16. You're scheduled to meet a business associate for working lunch and you arrive a few minutes early to find a suitable table. 30 minutes later your associate still hasn't arrived. Do you:
 - a. order your lunch and eat?
 - b. continue waiting and fuming that your associate isn't there?
 - c. tell the head waiter you're not staying and give him our card with instructions to present it to your associate to prove you were there?
 - d. after 15 minutes call your associate?
17. You've forgotten a lunch with a business associate. You feel terrible and know he's furious. Do you:
 - a. write a letter of apology?
 - b. send flowers?
 - c. keep quiet and hope he forgets about it?
 - d. call and set up another appointment?

Answers to Business Etiquette Quiz

1. No. Introduce the more important person first. You should address your client and say "Mr. Beta, I'd like you to meet our Vice President of Development, Ms. Alpha." (Alternative answer? introduce the client as the more important person!)
2. No. In Japan (unlike in the United States or the UK), business cards are taken as a serious reflection of their owner and are exchanged with great ceremony. Researching the importance of business cards in various cultures can help in avoiding embarrassing faux pas.
3. Yes. When your client steps out of the car, (s)he will be on the curbside and therefore won't have to deal with getting out in traffic or sliding across the seat.
4. Yes
5. No. If you do, then you're toasting yourself.
6. B. It's not a cup of coffee, for heaven's sake. And don't slurp, either.
7. D. It's more polite not to call attention to the fact that you can't drink champagne.
8. D. Leave it on your chair. Definitely don't put it on the table--what if you have crumbs on it?
9. B and C. Sort of a trick question, but this is important.
10. A, B, or C. It's terribly impolite to arrive early.
11. A, B, C, D, and E. In other words, it's rarely improper to shake someone's hand. Make sure you have a firm (but not painful) handshake for both men and women.
12. B. Make eye contact with all of the individuals you're talking with.
13. No. Again, don't call attention to your dislike of your host's chosen beverage.
14. B. Indicating where your guest should sit will make her feel more comfortable.
15. B, C, or D. Just don't grab it first unless you're playing one of these roles.
16. A. You've waited 30 minutes. Expect an apology later, though.
17. D. Call and set up another appointment. And don't forget to apologize for your error. Imagine how you'd feel if it was you!