

Business and Social Etiquette

Written by Diana Olson for LA Times

While I am only introducing some ideas in my column, I would like to share some principles of protocol that may be used in all business or social situations. Knowing these principles may be considerations in receiving a promotion or may mean the difference in being hired or not being hired. This new form of professional polish can give one an “Extra Edge” in life. Present yourself with authority and confidence.

Name Tags—are always on the right shoulder so that when shaking hands, the other person can quickly see your name. It is for the benefit of others.

Introductions—Always stand for any introductions. Remain standing while the other person is standing, or asks you to be seated.

Business Introductions—There is no gender in business. The most important person’s name, honoring rank and title, is always said first. Example, “Mr. President, may I introduce Mr. Vice President. One should always introduce himself to others. With clients, the client’s name is most important

Social Introductions—Honor elders and women. In order of importance: Elders... Women or Girls...Newcomers.

1. If an older and a younger person are being introduced, “Grandpa, may I introduce my schoolmate, Johnny Sanchez” The elder’s name is always said first. If an elder woman and elder man are being introduced, the elder woman would be honored first.
2. If a man and a woman are being introduced, “Sally Smith, may I introduce Warren Chan.” The woman’s name is mentioned first before the man’s name because she is being honored in social situations.
3. Newcomer: If a newcomer comes into the room with many people, the newcomer’s name is mentioned, “Group, may I introduce Judy Wilson. She is new to La Canada. May I ask you to introduce yourselves and make her feel welcome.”

In introductions, always tell something about the people that are being introduced so that they will feel comfortable and find some connections with the other person.

Shaking Hands—Extend your hand in two ways while walking toward them: First, with your right hand upside down. Second web-to-web (where the thumb and forefinger joins), your hand and their hand connect. Good eye contact and a smile are important. Your elbows are close to the body, and two firm pumps are good. When you first meet someone and when you leave, you may shake hands. When leaving, slide off to the left or right of the person and then you may turn your back. Go the opposite way from which they move.

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