

Business and Social Etiquette

(Part II)

In new social or business situations, first impressions are formed within the first few minutes. People decide whether they want to get to know you better or hire you for a job. A positive visual and social image, good manners, kindness and sensitivity toward others, and appropriate and correct language are great determinants for further consideration. Too much talking, especially about self, with no consideration toward the other person, is a relationship breaker. Vulgar language or poor written communication can impair social and business relations. Knowledge is power!

Etiquette is designed to help you practice these life skills and principles of behavior that help you handle most social and business situations.

Helpful Etiquette Tips:

- **Telephone:** When answering the phone of another person who is unavailable, you may say, “Ms. Blackmond is unavailable. May I take your name and number and have her return your call? What is the best time for her to call?” It is never necessary to divulge private information. Never ask who it is...and *then* come back and say that she is unavailable. It may seem that she is only available to some people.
- **Business Cards:** Showing respect for others, it is important to create a rapport before exchanging business cards. Only offer a senior executive a business card when he/she asks for it.
- **Drinking and Socializing:** At a business or social function, heavy drinking can be a deadly combination. Employee and professional liability is threatened. If alcohol is served, limit it to two drinks. This also applies to social events. Drinking sparkling water with a lime is currently savvy.
- **Shaking Hands:** Keep your drink in the left hand so that your right hand is free to shake hands. Shake hands firmly, web to web, and with good eye contact. You may also use anti-perspirant on your hands to keep your hands from perspiring.
- **Networking or Social Event:** Extend yourself to someone who is alone. Expand your comfort zone. Avoid approaching groups of two because they may be having a private conversation. Groups of three are better.

People don't care until you care first. Be interested and interesting!

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