

BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

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You'll find that business associates are much less forgiving about etiquette faux pas than your friends and family. Be sure you know what's expected and follow the guidelines here:

INTRODUCING YOURSELF AND SHAKING HANDS

- If you remember one thing about introductions, remember this: whoever has the most gold—whether it's a financial, social, or political fortune—is deemed to be the most honored. Introductions in the business world are determined by power and hierarchy; the person who has the greatest honor takes precedence. Therefore, the person of lesser honor is always introduced to the person of greater honor. Let this distinction distinguish you, not extinguish you!
- Introductions usually call for a handshake in most cultures.
- Shake hands with clients of business colleagues when you first meet with them to have a discussion and when you part.

GIVING PRESENTATIONS

- When you're giving a presentation, drink warm water (not cold) with lemon to relax the vocal cords.
- Because dairy products produce phlegm, avoid partaking in items like milk and yogurt for 24 hours before your presentation.
- Don't hold anything in your hands unless you are using it. Otherwise, you could end up playing with it, which is distracting for your audience.
- At the end of your presentation, promptly go to the exit door and shake hands with attendees as they leave. Don't get trapped on the podium or behind the lectern.
- Always thank participants for attending. They will appreciate your acknowledgments when you do that.

KNOWING THE DRESS CODE

- Casual Friday—For men, Casual Friday means wearing casual slacks and shirts or sweaters. For women, crop pants and culottes are acceptable. It's not acceptable to wear jeans, shorts, and running shoes unless your industry has adopted that style.
- Informal—For men, Informal means wearing casual pants and a shirt. For women, it's a well-pressed pair of pants and a blouse, shirt, or sweater, or a casual dress.

- Semi-formal—For men, Semi-formal requires a suit, a shirt and tie. For women, it can be a short cocktail-length dress or a long skirt with a blouse. A dress pantsuit is also suitable for women.
- Black Tie Formal—For men, Black Tie means wearing a tuxedo. For women, Formal means floor-length gowns or cocktail-length dresses.
- Especially at a business event, women should never wear anything too revealing or too short.
- Always graciously accept compliments about how you are dressed. It's not appropriate to ask others where they purchased an item of clothing and/or how much it cost.
- Reminder: Combing one's hair or applying lipstick

GIVING GIFTS

- Both men and women love to receive flowers when they're in the hospital, but first check with the hospital staff before bringing them into a room. Many people suffer from allergies that can be aggravated by flowers.
- As long as someone isn't under food restrictions, giving a fruit basket can be a wise gift choice.
- Journalists aren't allowed to accept gifts in the capacity of their employment.
- A gift certificate is considered an acceptable gift for members of your staff during the holidays.
- If you receive a gift from your boss during the holidays, you're not expected to reciprocate.
- Always write "thank you" notes by hand and mention the gift giver as well as the specific gift. Acknowledge the person for the effort that went into selecting and/or wrapping the gift. Even mention how and when you will use this gift to indicate your appreciation.

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