

Traveling For Business: 10 Essential Etiquette Tips

You are an **ambassador** of your country or place of work and need to convey a good impression of the place that you come from. Using your best Travel Etiquette is the best way to do it.

If you haven't already realized it, there's a huge difference between traveling for business and traveling for pleasure; with the most important difference being that business comes first during all aspects of the business trip. With goals to be met, clients to impress, and missions to achieve, the world of business travel requires a completely different set of social rules. Here are 10 essential business travel etiquette tips to help you make the grade.

Follow the boss' lead

When traveling with your boss, it's essential to follow his or her lead. Don't assume that what works in the office, is necessarily the process while traveling. Business travel is completely different environment, and each trip can vary as well. Be alert and pay attention to any clues you are given by the boss. If you're flying together, be prepared to work on the flight, just in case he or she decides to. Keep your laptop, and a notebook and pen handy, just in case, and note that if your boss picks up a book, chances are, you'll probably be fine doing the same.

Be over-prepared

Travel gets stress-full when people are not prepared for the changes and un-familiarity that comes with it. Weather flying with the boss or not, do not assume that things will be taken care of for you. Make sure you know when your flight leaves, where you're staying, and what time the meetings are. Keep an itinerary of important times and places, and do your best to know the names of everyone you're meeting, and how to get around. Not only could being over-prepared save you time and money, but it'll definitely show that you can handle business while away.

Dress appropriately

For business meetings, luncheons, etc., formal attire should be a given.

For other times during the business trip, you should consider that even while in the air, you never know who you might bump in to. As a business traveler, leave sweatpants, shorts, and flip-flops at home, even when flying. Dressing down should go as far as business casual as while on this trip, you are representing the business at all times.

Know who will be paying the bill

There's nothing worse than ending a business lunch with either too many or too few offers to pick up the tab. For the most part, business lunch and dinner etiquette calls for the host to pay the bill; if you initiated the lunch, you pick up the check. That said, even if you don't expect to be paying, be sure to always be prepared to do so, just in case. Basic etiquette also calls for the host – or whoever is paying – to order the wine or specialty drinks for the table. If the host doesn't order wine for the table, then you'd simply take their lead in the ordering or drinks; if they and your boss order a drink, then you'll be just fine doing the same.

Be a generous tipper

Knowing local tipping habits is especially important when traveling outside of the country. You'll not only avoid embarrassment by tipping correctly, but is a sign of respect and sincere interest toward the cultural difference. Here in the United States, that generally means tipping 20% for servers and bartenders, 10% for taxi drivers, and at least \$5 for concierge and housekeeping staff at your hotel. Many international destinations have very different tipping protocols, so be sure to do your research before leaving the country. As a business traveler, you'll likely be returning to same restaurants and hotels, time and time again – whether alone, with business associates or prospective business partners, you'll want to be sure that staff remember you in a positive light.

Keep packing to a minimum

As a business traveler, there's rarely any need to take more than what will fit in a carry-on bag. If you're traveling for just a few days, your clothing should easily fit in a carry-on, and if your tip is expected to be

longer, consider taking clothing that will work in more than one outfit and remember that more often than not, your hotel will likely be able to assist in laundering clothing. Packing less will save you – and any travel associates – time and money at the airport. Plus, the smaller your bag, the easier it is to carry around with you and find space for in the overhead compartments.

Be appropriately social

Business travel is all about making connections. As a representative of your company, you'll be expected to get out there as much as possible to establish relationships, in and out of the office setting. As a business traveler, you are an investment in the relationships you are creating, so no matter how well you are connecting or how much fun you're having always keep in mind the business aspect. Being social – but not too social, is a delicate balance. Know when to call it a night, and follow the lead of your host or boss whenever possible; and if ever in doubt, call it a night.

Carry cash

Sure, the company credit card is useful and easy, but let's face it – cash is king. You never know when you'll be put in a situation that requires cash. Keep some on hand at all times, at least for emergencies, and to save face if that company card is ever declined. Make sure to pick up a receipt anytime you are forced to use cash, and you'll likely not have any problems getting your company to reimburse you.

Continue to separate business and personal business

Obviously if you're traveling with your boss or your coworkers, you're going to have a harder time separating yourself from the group to take care of personal matters. While you'll be getting to know your travel associates a little better, you should still continue to keep your personal life separate from your business life. With personal calls, for instance, make those calls only when you're alone – no matter how close, business partners and associates don't need to hear you making up with your wife or yelling at your kids to finish their homework.

Show gratitude

A note of thanks goes a long way, especially in today's technological world. Always be sure to thank your host and all of your trip connections as soon as you get back to the office. Showing gratitude in person, while on the trip is of course necessary, but that after-trip note really adds a special touch.

With all the stress that can come with business travel, putting your best foot forward every time you embark on a business trip, can be cumbersome. Keep these tips in mind to maintain a professional, friendly etiquette, and not only will you make a great first impression, but you'll also prove that you're an indispensable asset to your company.

Office Party Etiquette

Office Party Etiquette is about **how to conduct yourself** at office or workplace social gatherings such as parties, luncheons, dinners, cocktail parties and the like

View your office party as an **opportunity** to improve relationships with co-workers and management.

You will create a **good impression** by showing respect and courtesy to everyone.

Always attend. It is disrespectful and shows indifference if you do not.

Dress suitably for the occasion. No sloppy dress please

Be on time for the office party

Turn your cell phone off.

Cell phones no longer impress anyone and their **intrusion** is a source of annoyance, so never use them beside or within earshot of other guests.

Be aware that despite the social occasion, **you are being observed** by your employer (employees if you are the employer) and co-workers, so conduct yourself with dignity and respect

Make room to **include** anyone who approaches to join the gathering

Introduce yourself to new arrivals to make them feel **welcome**

Introduce **them** to others in the group if they appear to not know them

Tactfully assist an **intoxicated** co-worker to switch to something non-intoxicating if they are clearly showing signs of **embarrassing themselves** before the boss or others

At the Table

Office party etiquette does not mean getting **hung-up** on table etiquette

The important points to remember at the table are to **not wolf down** your food, eat or drink to **excess**, slurp, chomp or burp at the table

Cutlery is used from the outside in

Your **glass** is the one on your right

Your **side plate** is the one on your left

If the table is not too congested what's yours will be obvious otherwise **observe the above**

Do not **reach past** anybody.

Ask for what you want to be passed to you

Look for opportunities to **attend** to those on either side of you

Try **not to be** the first to leave the table

Do not leave the table without excusing yourself to the host or hostess

Better still wait for **your host** to rise from the table first

Read The Invitation For Clues:

A lot of the time, the easiest way to know the type of party you're attending is what's written on the invitation, Blais Comeau says.

"Besides the basics, including date, location and time, an invitation should also note if you can bring a guest."

Dress To Impress:

The location and time of the party should indicate the dress code, Blais Comeau says. "You don't want to show too much skin or be blinged like a Christmas tree -- find some[thing] in between." If you want to get in the holiday mode, she suggests red suspenders or ties for men and sparkly red belts or pumps for women.

Prepare Ahead:

Think of conversation topics before the party starts. Blais Comeau suggests taking note of your colleagues' loved ones or congratulating employees who won awards that year. "The safest question to ask is about their holiday plans," she says.

Respect The Privacy Of Your Colleagues:

In our tech-savvy world, almost every phone is equipped with at least a camera, if not a video camera. Blais Comeau says in her experience, some companies have banned employees from bringing their phones to the holiday party. She says you should always respect the privacy of your fellow employees and ask before you even take pictures of them.

Drink, Dance And Sing In Moderation:

We still need to remember we are at an office party, Blais Comeau says, and everything should be done in moderation, especially if you are a manager or a new employee.

Remember Your "Thank You's":

Take the time to write a thank you note, not only to employers but whoever organized the celebration.

Don't Contemplate Attending:

Attendance should be mandatory, says Blais Comeau. "Your employer is putting together a celebration for recognizing employees," she says. If

you are a new employee, talk to other colleagues or your HR department to see what you can expect from holiday office parties.

No Whispering Allowed:

Blais Comeau only has only one rule for gossip: "Don't partake in gossip, it will come back and haunt you."

Be Safe:

When it comes to alcohol, all employers and employees should be aware of their safety. Blais Comeau says setting up taxi services with HR or the venue are good ways to ensure everyone gets home safely.

Spread Gifts Around:

If you want to give a gift to your boss or employees, Blais Comeau recommends having an office-wide Secret Santa or buying your boss a gift as a group. "Don't get too personal with presents," she says.

GUEST ETIQUETTE

Ways to make any office guest feel welcome

Visitors can base their perceptions of you and your company on your actions, words and workspace. Just like guests in your home, office guests should be treated cordially and with respect.

The following 13 tips will help you make a favorable and professional impression with office guests.

1. Be ready for the meeting on time. Don't act surprised when they walk in. That can give the impression that the meeting is not important to you.
2. Clear your desk. Put away confidential information. Do so in advance, it can be awkward watching you frantically hiding stuff.
3. Have the necessary information, material, etc. ready; plan and prepare.
4. Minimize your computer screen. Avoid flashy screensavers or "shuffle" mode. You don't want your guest to be distracted by the photo of your belly flop as it dashes past.
5. Turn off your cell phone. Allow voicemail to pick up calls on the office phone.
6. Stand up to greet your guest.
7. Ask your guest to sit down.
8. Have extra pens and note paper handy.
9. Put away food and empty garbage can if your half-eaten breakfast is in there. A pungent aroma is one way to speed up and end a meeting early.
10. Have a glass or bottle of water available. Or offer your office guest something to drink; get up and get it.
11. If the topic of conversation is confidential, close the door. If you happen to be in a cubicle, take the meeting into a conference room.
12. End the meeting on time. This demonstrates respect for the guest's schedule.

Choose to impress, not disappoint, your office guest. A few simple and thoughtful gestures can set the tone for a comfortable and positive interaction. Your guest will walk away feeling great, all because of you and your courteous attitude.

Cubicle Etiquette

Working in a cubicle can be a tough endeavor. From a lack of privacy to noisy neighbors, getting your work accomplished in such cramped confines can sometimes be a difficult chore. But, cubicle etiquette is part of good business etiquette and office etiquette.

The cubicle evolved from the Action Office furniture system, invented by Robert Propst of Herman Miller in the 1960s, with the intention of giving employees flexible space and saving companies money. A 2010 study by the International Facility Management Association found that the typical cubicle size for office employees has shrunk by almost 20 percent over the past 17 years — from an average of 90 square feet in 1994 to about 75 square feet now.

Some say today's younger, tech-savvy employees aren't as concerned with having their own office and instead prefer an open environment of creativity and collaboration — as long as they have reliable wireless infrastructure and lighter laptops (or iPads). This may be true for some, but in other places, workers may need more privacy or quiet time for thinking and reflection.

I conducted an informal survey asking people what most annoys them regarding their workspace. What I found may sound familiar. With an eye toward your organization's corporate culture, here are some rules of thumb for coexisting in a cubicle culture.

- ***Be respectful.** Knock (on their cubicle wall) and ask first if your neighbor has time before you start talking. I know they may not "look busy," but sometimes they could just be thinking. Your interruption could set them back in their work.
- ***Don't "take" or "borrow" things** from a co-worker's desk just because the area is open (unless they have already told you it is OK). Staff who have desks in a common area often run into the problem of people taking their staplers, tape dispensers, scissors or rifling through their desks in search of paper and pens, etc.
- ***Avoid trying to talk to someone who is on the phone** or sending an e-mail. By waving your hands, using sign language, or talking louder, you are interrupting them.
- *If someone is out, **don't hang out at their cubicle** reading what's on their desk (e.g., memos, faxes, letters).
- ***Don't yell across the room.** Walk over to someone to have a conversation.

* **Don't peep** over the top of your cubicle wall (called prairie dogging) to see what the next person is doing. Respect their privacy.

* **Avoid speakerphone** and don't discuss personal or confidential issues at your desk, even on the phone. Remember, your conversations travel.

* **Make sure your cell phone is set on "silent,"** or at least set to a low volume ring tone that won't disturb others.

* **Watch out for strong smells.** Don't leave "old food" in your space or bring in food with really strong odors. Avoid wearing strong perfume or cologne, which impacts the breathing of those near them, especially those with allergies.

* **Speaking of food, eat in the lunchroom.** Eating at the desk is one area that seems to highly upset co-workers — all the sounds people make when chewing ice or gum or eating seeds, carrots, nuts and other loud and crunchy foods.

* **Your cubicle is a place of work. Don't use it as a dressing room** or a place to put on makeup, floss your teeth, cut your nails, etc. The restroom can't be that far away.

* **Avoid loud music.** Use headphones and make sure you are not singing or humming out loud.

Keep your cubicle clean, neat and organized — it sends a message about your professional brand. You can personalize it, but be careful not to decorate with so much stuff that no one can find any of your work.

* **Watch out for offensive pictures, posters, slogans, etc.** Check out your company's code and use common sense so that your workspace is not a place that others might find offensive.

* **When in doubt** about what to have in your cubicle, think about whether you would be comfortable having the president of the company see in your cubicle.

Keep in mind that your primary objective in the office is work. Sure, you should have fun while you are working, but your cubicle is part of the office, and others around you still need to get their work done. Respect for your co-workers and enhancing the harmony of the workplace will go a long way to making sure you succeed in your career.

Business Card Etiquette

Business cards are the staple of business success. Nevertheless, I am constantly amazed by how few professionals pay attention to the etiquette of exchanging cards. These are the very same people who seek information about the rules of networking, making positive first impressions and dressing for success. You can work the crowd with ease, offer an impressive handshake and dress with finesse, but if you don't know the fine points of giving and receiving business cards, all the rest can be a waste of time and effort.

Here are ten basic rules to follow for the profitable and productive exchange of business cards.

1. Never leave your home or office without your cards and plenty of them. There is nothing more unprofessional than the business person who has to say, "Oh, I'm sorry. I just gave out my last card." or "I'm sorry. I didn't bring any with me."
2. Keep your cards in a business card case or in something that protects them from wear and tear. A crumpled business card makes a poor first impression.
3. Know where your business cards are at all times. The person who has to go through every jacket and pants pocket or every nook and cranny of a briefcase to find those business cards loses credibility immediately.
4. Hand them out with discretion. Those people who believe in doling them out in multiples of 12 send a message that their cards aren't worth much.
5. Give and receive cards with your right hand—the hand of discretion. This can make a big difference when doing business internationally.
6. Give the card so the person who is receiving it can read it without having to turn it around.
7. Always make a comment about a card when you receive it. Note the logo, the business name or some other piece of information. This places value on the card.
8. Keep your business cards up to date. When any of your contact information changes; run, don't walk, to your nearest printer for new cards. It is substandard business etiquette to hand out cards on which you have crossed off an old phone number and written in the new one.
9. Don't write notes to yourself on someone else's business card during the exchange unless they appear relevant. For example, if someone asks me to send a copy of my book, *Manners That Sell*, it makes perfect sense to write "Send book" on the back of that card. However, that would not be the time to write "good lead to ABC organization" on the card. I do that later and out of sight.
10. Avoid appearing aggressive with business cards. Wait to be asked for yours. If that isn't happening, ask the other person for a card. Reciprocity generally follows.

Knowing the rules of business card etiquette is just one more way to add the polish that builds profits.

Dining Etiquette

Whether you're grabbing a quick lunch with colleagues or need to impress a client at a formal dinner, maintaining a professional image is important. However, dining in a business setting can sometimes be tricky. Never fear! Here's a refresher of business dining etiquette tips to help you mind your manners and make a good impression at your next business meal:

- 1) Before the meal, shake hands with anyone already sitting at the table. If necessary, introduce yourself. Be sure to remain standing until your host sits. Once you sit down, place your napkin on your lap *only* after everyone else is seated and your host has moved his or her napkin. If someone arrives to the table after you do, it's polite to stand up to greet them.
- 2) When the waiter approaches the table, don't ask him to explain everything on the menu (one or two items are okay, especially if you have a food allergy or a dietary restriction such as a gluten intolerance and need clarification on a dish). If you appear too picky or indecisive, your peers may become annoyed.
- 3) Follow your host's lead – if they're first in line to order, choose something similar to what they order. For example, if they opt for a salad, try not to go for the prime rib. If the host isn't first in line to order, then ask for his/her recommendation. And of course, *don't* order the most expensive thing on the menu.
Pro Tip: Order foods that are easy to eat, such as chicken, fish or salads. Avoid dishes with a messy reputation such as spaghetti or a greasy burger (as hard as that may be to resist!).
- 4) As mentioned above, it's best to follow your host's lead when it comes to ordering an Alcoholic beverage. If you choose to drink, limit yourself to one beer or glass of wine.
- 5) Drink from your own water glass and don't make the mistake of taking from your colleague or client's bread plate. Remember that your beverage will always be placed on the right side, above your knife and soup spoon, and your bread plate will always be placed on the left side, above your fork(s).
- 6) Try a little of everything on your plate unless you have a food allergy. You could come across as unsophisticated (and juvenile) if you eat only your steak and potatoes and ignore your veggies. If the food served is not to your liking, it is polite to at least attempt to eat a small amount of it. Additionally, don't over indulge or ask to finish anyone else's food.
- 7) Cut only enough food for the next mouthful (cut no more than a few bites of food at a time). Eat in small bites and slowly. Do not "play with" your food or utensils. Never wave or point silverware, and do not hold food on your fork or spoon while talking.
- 8) Avoid talking about religion, politics and other controversial topics. If someone else brings up an issue you're uncomfortable with during the meal, politely try to change the subject as subtly as possible.

9) If you need to leave the table during the meal, place your napkin on your chair and push the chair back under the table. There is no need to announce where you are going, or what you will be doing when you get there.

10) A cough or a sneeze should be directed into your left shoulder, shielded by your left hand, keeping your right hand germ free. Avoid using your napkin as a tissue. Speaking of germs: if you drop your fork on the floor, *leave it there!* It's not necessary to dive under the table to fetch it. Simply ask your server for a new utensil and encourage the rest of your group to continue eating.

~~11) Your mother's request when you were a kid works here, too: keep your elbows off the table! It's also courteous to never talk with food in your mouth.~~

12) Once you have finished your meal, signal your server to clear your place setting by resting your fork (tines up) and knife blade inward, with the handles resting at five o'clock and the tips pointing to ten o'clock on your plate. If you're unable to finish your meal, it's considered unprofessional to take home leftovers.

13) Don't argue over the check or offer to pay the tip; the host who invited you must take care of both. Be sure to kindly thank your host for the meal; shake hands before you leave and maintain good eye contact. Helpful hint: If you're hosting the dinner and a guest offers to pay the bill, politely decline.

A business lunch or dinner is a great opportunity to let your professionalism shine – whether you're going to a local steakhouse or dining abroad. While business dining etiquette rules can vary country to country, the general guidelines remain the same: practice good manners and use common sense

Proper Greetings

We all want to be treated with respect, and it starts with the very first greeting. The following are the guidelines to greeting someone the appropriate way. Meeting Someone For The First Time:

- Stand when someone new comes into the room (whether you are a man or woman).
- Do make eye contact and smile!
- Offer your right hand out-stretched with palm facing left to shake hands.
- Your grip should be firm, but not a bone crusher.
- A handshake should last as long as it takes you and the other person to say your names.
- Introduce yourself by making direct eye contact and saying your first and last name.
- If you didn't catch their name the first time, ask them politely to repeat it.
- At the end of the meeting, shake hands again and say how nice it was to meet them. Use their first name.
- Follow up if you promised to send them something, call them, or anything else. Follow up is a key to success!

Introducing Someone Else:

- Generally, you introduce the younger to the older; the junior executive to the senior executive; and a colleague to a client.
- If you have forgotten someone's name, politely tell them you have forgotten their name and they will repeat it for you.
- Always try to include a fact about each person in your introduction.

Here are some easy ways to respond to a greeting:

- "It's so nice to see you again. Give your family my regards."
- "Hi! I haven't seen you in a while. You look fabulous!"
- "Good morning! I wish I had more time to chat, but I have an appointment in fifteen minutes."
- "It's great seeing you. I hope you're doing well."
- "I'm doing well! Thanks for asking. And how about you?"
- "Wow! It's been ages since we saw each other. Let's get together soon when we both have more time to talk."

What Not to Say

One thing you don't want to do is say something negative or anything that can be misconstrued. Keep your initial greeting brief to prevent having to take time to explain something. Don't ask any rude questions that might make the other person uncomfortable.

Here are some things not to say in a brief greeting:

- "Have you lost weight?"
- "Did you and that guy you were engaged to ever get married?"
- "Whatever happened to (fill in the blank)?"

Resist the Urge

You might be tempted to say something that will require a long explanation or answer, but you're better off saving that for later. Even if you feel terrible, unless your eyes are red and your nose is running, there is no need to share that information during a brief greeting.

Here are some risky things to say in during the initial greeting:

- "Things haven't been so good for me lately."
- "Did you hear about (fill in the blank)?"
- "It's a lousy day."

Things to Remember

When you see someone on the street or at the mall, you don't have to feel obligated to stop and chat for a long time. Chances are, you're on the way somewhere, and so is the other person. If you'd like to spend more time with her, ask if you can call later to set up a coffee or lunch get-together later. If you have a card, give it to her. Otherwise, you can jot down your name and number for her to call later.

THANK YOU NOTES

How to say thank you at work: a guide to showing gratitude to peers, managers, and employees

Does anyone else out there freeze like a deer in the headlights when the issue of how to say “thank you” at work comes up? I have, probably every single year of my entire career, googled each of these phrases:

- how to say thank you at work
- how to say thank you to your boss
- should you give gifts at work?
- how to say thank you to coworkers
- what are the best ways to show gratitude or say thank you at work?

Showing gratitude at work is weirdly complicated. There are so many social dynamics at work that aren’t really around in any other areas of our lives. And so, for most people, it is only by an uncomfortable series of trial and error interactions that we figure out exactly how to say thank you at work and make it count.

And some of us never get there.

It tends to be really easy to see when you’ve done “saying thank you at work” wrong (because the other person is uncomfortable, offended, or just doesn’t know how to react), but hard to know when you’re doing it right.

In this post, I want to create a guide for how to say thank you at work based on the best widely accepted rules and smart strategies for forming trust and stronger relationships with your peers and coworkers.

Why saying thank you matters

At work, it’s often easier to say nothing than to risk saying “thanks” in the wrong way. And as such, a lot of us go about our days feeling under-appreciated or not realizing the impact our work has on other people.

People thrive at work when they know their contributions have meaning. Letting people know the ways in which their work matters — to you, to the company, to their team — helps you to keep the people around you engaged and excited about their work. Especially if you are a manager, this is an important part of your job.

Saying thank you helps to build trust and stronger relationships with the people you work with too. When people know you value them, they are more likely to

value you in return and want to work with you (since you make them feel great about their contributions).

Plus, expressing gratitude isn't just good for the people you're thanking — it's actually good for you too! People who say thank you are happier (it makes sense right? It feels good to help other people feel good) and are more well-liked. It's like a self-perpetuating cycle; the more positivity you spread, the more is out there to come back to you.

How to say thank you to your boss

This is where a lot of us get the most flustered when it comes to saying thank you at work. And with good reason — it's your manager's job to help you accomplish your work, do amazing things, and grow as an individual so if they are a good boss, they are doing things that are worthy of a "thank you" a lot.

But no one wants to be a suck up. People who lay it on too thick with, "Thank you so much, you are such a great boss, I just love working for you" usually come off insincere and their praise is less meaningful.

But how much praise and thanking is appropriate for a person whose job it is to help you? After all, they're not doing it just to be nice; they are doing it because your success is their success, and they want the team to do well.

As a result of this conflict, bosses actually hear "thank you" really rarely — so when they do hear it and it is sincere, concrete, and meaningful, it can be very powerful.

So how can you say thanks to your boss in a way that means something to them and helps bring you closer?

The best way to praise or say thank you to your boss:

- only do it when it really matters, not just because you're hoping to score a few points with them
- be direct, truthful, and concise
- keep it simple and sincere; you should be able to express yourself in 1-2 sentences tops (it's not your job to pump up your boss or shower them with your praise)

- show them their value in an appropriate context, such as how they are helping you learn or an opportunity they facilitated
- make it specific and show the connection between what they did and what you got from it

For example, you can thank your boss for letting you accompany them to a board meeting by saying: "Thank you so much for letting me sit in on that board meeting. I learned so much from the way you _____."

It shows that you understand the value of what they gave you (it wasn't just a nice thing, but you actually learned something) and it has the added benefit of giving them a clue as to new opportunities that are valuable to you. So if you let them know you valued what they taught you about presenting to a board, they now know you're interested in that and that you'd like more opportunities in that area.

And as a final note on bosses: in general, you should never buy something for your boss or treat them to a meal or coffee as a thank you. It is widely accepted that the more senior person in a relationship always pays, and so breaking with those norms can make people uncomfortable; it is better to focus on words than gifts.

How to say thank you to a peer

Our peers are the people we work most closely with, and yet our relationships at work are some of the least defined. As a result, saying thank you can feel like dicey territory.

Some people see their peers as competitors (and some company cultures actually encourage that) and saying thank you to the competition can feel wrong. Other times, it can feel uncomfortable to say thank you to a peer simply because, well, you're on the same team so aren't you *supposed* to just help each other without expecting gratitude?

Much like with your boss, saying thank you to a peer should be reserved for when you really mean it and you have a solid, concrete thing to thank them for. And since peer-to-peer appreciation is less common, it too can be a great way to build trust and connections.

However, unlike the manager thank you, the peer thank you should be a bit more personal. With peers, there are no 1:1 meetings or performance reviews where it's

easy to give feedback, so it is best to catch someone at their desk or send an email letting them know you appreciated something they did.

And when you say thanks, tie it to your own feelings (rather than speaking about how they helped the company, the team, etc).

The best way to thank a peer:

- be casual, sincere, and concise
- thank them for something concrete that they helped you get done or accomplish
- don't speak for the whole team or other people (ie. "we all really appreciate ___"; instead make it about you and say something like, "I really appreciated ___" or "I thought ___ was so awesome")
- don't be self-deprecating or go over-the-top in your thanks; this makes people uncomfortable and can also make you seem like you're on less equal footing
- offer to return the favor
- bonus points: return the favor proactively, rather than waiting for them to ask you to help; seek out ways to add value back to them

Saying thanks helps to show that person that you value them; returning the favor shows that you value investing in this relationship. It positions you as an ally and helps them to see you as someone who is "on their team" in the office.

You want to be someone your peers can always get value from, and who shows that the value they give back to you is appreciated.

After all, these are the people who are going to rise on the career ladder along with you, so when you are all executives, entrepreneurs, and leaders, you'll have a supportive, valuable network of people who you can count on for trust and support.

How to say thank you to employees

This is the most prescribed "thank you" that happens at work, but it is still incredibly valuable when done right. Every employee needs to hear that they are

appreciated by their manager, and the more effectively you can do that, the better results you'll achieve from the people on your team.

Saying thank you to the people on your team is all about tailoring it to the person, their accomplishments, and helping them to use those accomplishments to grow in their career.

With that in mind, here are the best ways to say thank you to an employee:

- as always, keep it sincere and direct
- tie your thanks to a specific accomplishment — even if you want to thank the person for “always being on top of details”, you should follow it up with a specific time they were really on top of things and why that was so helpful
- let them know how much *you* appreciate it; most people are motivated by the personal approval of their leaders
- let them know the value of their work on the big picture things too — especially with junior employees, this can be a great learning opportunity to see how their great work moves big things forward
- tailor the thanks to the person and the desired effect; for example, you can take the person out for lunch if you want to show you really value and trust them, or you can thank them publicly in a team meeting to help them shine among the group, depending on what you you hope to accomplish with the thanks

Saying thank you to employees is one of the easiest and most effective ways to improve employee engagement. We all want to feel like our work is valued by our employer, and we all expect most of that praise and value to come down via our managers.

The more you can make saying thank you a part of your routine, the more engaged your team will be and the more effective you'll be as a leader. You'll build trust and appreciation into your team culture, which is a powerful foundation to be working from.

In general, gift giving at work is better not done. Rather than giving gifts to your boss, peers, or team to say thank you, it is more effective and more acceptable to reward them with sincere kind words or a favor that is helpful to them in a work context.

Giving gifts should generally be reserved for clients, customers, and outside teams. For example, to say thank you to the PR team who helped you organize a recent meetup at your office, it would be appropriate to send over a box of cupcakes from a local bakery with a note thanking them for all their hard work. Similarly, if a few early customers helped you sort out bugs in the first version of your software, you could send them Amazon gift cards to say thank you.

However, if you want to thank your team for helping you meet a big deadline, it's not appropriate to send a box of goodies. Instead, you are better off using words and gestures to express thanks.

This is especially true with your manager — you should never give gifts to your boss. At most, a card works for a holiday or birthday or other special event, but praise and gifts in general should almost always flow down, not up.

And for your teammates and employees, a sincere thank you is often more appreciated than an object. Say thanks, do favors, and look for meaningful ways to show your gratitude. Building up trust and gratitude over time is more valuable than paying money or giving gifts to show thanks.

How to make thank you's a part of your success strategy

The best way to say thank you at work is to do it consistently. Be direct, keep it simple, and always be sincere. Saying thank you shouldn't be a big production; it should feel natural and appropriate. When someone adds value to you, thank them and let them know you appreciate their help. Say thanks.

And as always, continue to work hard and produce amazing results for other people too — be the person who not only appreciates the value others add, but who adds incredible value to others too. Create more positivity in your environment and you'll get more back.

WORKPLACE AND BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Office Etiquette or Office Manners is about conducting yourself **respectfully and courteously** in the office or workplace

First impressions are important! *You are the ambassador/s of the business*

Always act with honesty and **dignity**

Chewing **gum** and popping bubble gum in the presence of co-workers is neither cool nor dignified

Never do it whilst attending customers

Wear appropriate office **attire**, for example correct footwear, not thongs (flip flops) - they are strictly casual or beachwear

No exposed midriff to **display tattoos and body piercing**.

Be neat, clean and as **conservative** as the business requires you to be

We are put off by **smelly people**. So, be sure to shower regularly and use a suitable deodorant

Do not **cough or sneeze** in anyone's direction. Use a tissue, if possible, to contain the germs and then say "Excuse me"

The **essence** of good manners and etiquette is to be respectful and courteous at all times and with everybody

Therefore, treat your co-workers, cleaners, maintenance people and others with **respect and courtesy**

Good office etiquette is **easily achieved** by using common courtesy as a matter of course

Keep your **interruptions** of others to a minimum and always apologise if your intrusion is an interruption of a discussion, someone's concentration or other activity

Show respect for each other's workspace. **Knock** before entering

Show **appreciation** for the slightest courtesies extended to you

Be **helpful and co-operative** with each other

Brush up on your computer skills so that you can help others

Your employer would gladly invest \$24.99 (Aust) to add this magnificent 500 page manual of **Step-by-Step Computer Lessons** to its reference library to improve staff efficiency

Aim to **improve** your other workplace skills and attributes too

You will find **help** from some of the sponsors listed at the top or right side of this page. Check them out as well

Speak clearly without shouting. **Loud** people are a vexation

Say, "Please; Thank you; You're welcome", as part of your everyday courtesy

Be discreet and compassionate in your **criticism** of a co-worker

Don't **gossip** about any co-worker's private life

Do not try to **sell things** to your colleagues

Don't **hover around** while waiting for a co-worker to get off the phone. Leave a note for them to call you or return later

It's not a good idea to take your **iPod** to your office. It hinders communication

Avoid **sexist** comments about a co-worker's dress or appearance

Surveys show that the office **know-it-all** proved to be the biggest gripe amongst co-workers. Don't be a know-all

Take **responsibility** for your mistakes, apologise and go about correcting the mistakes

Apologise if you are clearly in the wrong. If in doubt, apologise anyway. It's no big deal

Never **blame** someone else if it is your mistake

If your boss criticises your work, enquire about what precisely is wrong with it. Consider the comments, discuss them amiably if you disagree with the comments but **defer** to the boss's opinion if he/she is adamant

The **boss** always gets the benefit of the doubt. Don't argue with the boss

Make new employees feel **welcome** and comfortable around you. Don't be a busy-body

Office etiquette means being **thoughtful** when interacting with your peers

Keep your work area **tidy**. Try not to be messy

Show consideration for other people's **feelings**

If there is **conflict**, do not get personal in your remarks

It is extremely rude to arrive **late** for a meeting

It is ruder still to **not attend** at all. Having a good excuse does not exonerate you

Do not **dominate** the meeting. All communication must take place through the **chairperson**

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Do not **dominate** the meeting. All communication must take place through the **chairperson**

Do not interrupt another speaker

Pay attention to the proceedings quietly. Don't shuffle your papers

Do not leave the meeting until it is closed by the chairperson

Never be petty or small minded in your behaviour

Always be particularly respectful to those older than yourself even if they are junior to you in position

Your elders are generally more mature in judgement and life's experiences and this deserves your respect even in the workplace

'Mute' your cell phone in the office. No fancy ring tones

The Importance of Getting Your Appearance In Order

Putting more thought into your appearance is one of the easiest ways to improve your social prospects and the way people see you. It falls under the broader category of non-verbal communication. It's not that your social life will be a lost cause if you don't look perfect, but if you slack off with your appearance then you're making things harder than they have to be.

Most people are pretty superficial and mentally lazy when they size others up. If you look like you have your act together, they can't help but assume you really do. The opposite is true too, if you don't look all that great, people will be quicker to assume you have other negative traits. But clean up your look, and suddenly you don't seem so bad, and everyone's more willing to give you a chance, even though you're the same person deep down.

Getting outside feedback on your style and grooming

It's possible your current style is absolutely fine, and any worries you have about it are just insecurities. It's also possible you think you look presentable, but you've got some blind spots in your grooming and fashion sense. The best way to know where you stand is to get an outside opinion on how you present yourself. You could ask a supportive friend or family member for feedback. There are also fashion-related forums where you can post photos of yourself and get a critique.

A few basic tips for guys on looking better:

Below is a list of some basic tips and things to avoid

Basic grooming

- Groom your facial hair: Avoid the patchy beard, long black mustache hairs, or chin. Tame your eyebrows if they're really thick and bushy.
- Brush and floss your teeth regularly.
- Always be conscious of your breath. Using a tongue scraper after brushing your teeth works well.
- Wash your hair regularly enough that if it doesn't look super greasy.
- Take care of your skin.
- Trim your fingernails and toenails on a regular basis, and clean the dirt out from under them.
- Always wear deodorant.
- Shower or bathe often enough that you aren't noticeably dirty or smelly.
- Pay attention to little details like keeping your ears clean, or your nose hair trimmed, or not having a mole with a single distracting long hair growing out of it.

Basic dressing

Again, a list of stereotypical mistakes:

- Don't wear the same outfit two days or more in a row.
- Don't wear a similar, uninspired outfit every day (i.e., a dull black t-shirt with jeans.)
- Don't keep wearing your clothes after they've become ratty or faded.
- Don't wear clothes that are overly wrinkled.
- Don't keep wearing an item if you've dirtied or stained it.

Basic Appearance

- Find the best looking haircut for your face. That might involve growing it out or cutting it much shorter. Good looking hair can be the cornerstone of an attractive appearance.
- If you have glasses, consider getting contacts. They're not as expensive or high-maintenance as you may think. At the very least, if you do wear glasses, make sure to get some frames that look stylish on you. Glasses suit some people, but just as many would be better off without them.
- If you don't have great teeth, see what you can do about getting them whitened or straightened. Get in shape, but don't feel you absolutely have to get huge, shredded muscles. If someone is fit for their natural frame people subconsciously pick up on it and think they look better. Subtle differences in things like the size of your chest muscles, the width of your shoulders, or the V-shape in your torso show through. Don't think your only options are lifting weights or running on a treadmill either. There are tons of activities you can do that will make you fitter. Take up rock climbing, or kick boxing, or dancing, or Ultimate Frisbee. Pick something you enjoy doing and that isn't an unnecessary hassle to take part in. If you truly don't like doing something, or it's just a pain in ass to do it, you'll quit before long.
- Tanning is controversial because of the increased risk of skin cancer, so it's your call whether you want to do it.

Some advice on getting better clothes

Having decent clothes is one of the biggest factors in looking better. It's also a bit more complicated than vowing to take good care of your skin. This site's readers are too diverse for me to try to recommend any specific styles, or stores, or labels. Here are just some more general pointers:

- For many people who are only semi-motivated, the hardest part about getting new clothes is getting themselves out the door and to the store. After they've picked up some nice new outfits they're usually happy about it, but it seemed like such a hassle beforehand to take a few hours to go shopping.
 - You may think you don't know much about fashion, but you likely have an idea deep down about what looks good. A rigid self-image can make it hard to admit to yourself that you can wear these attractive clothes yourself.
 - Go to a store that sells good clothes and start trying items on. You can use the staff's knowledge and style to your advantage by asking them to help pick out some good outfits for you (of course, trust your gut and don't let them push or falsely flatter you into buying something you're not keen about).
 - Don't judge anything until you try it on and see if it looks good on you. Many clothes look a lot better than you'd think from just seeing them hanging on the rack or sitting folded up on a table.
 - Your self-image or a sense of discomfort with change may pop up here and make you think things like, "That's not me, I'm not the type of person who wears this stuff" in response to styles that truly would look good on you. Try to ignore these thoughts and push out of your comfort zone. You may be surprised at how within a few days you're totally comfortable in outfits you initially dismissed as "not me".
 - You may have some emotional baggage around certain styles, even though you think deep down that they look good. If you don't like the people who wear certain styles (e.g., jocks, preps, hipsters) the idea of dressing like one of 'them' may seem traitorous to you.
-
- Like anything there's a learning curve involved in picking out your own clothes. You get better at it with practice.
 - If in doubt lean, towards (relatively) plain and conservative clothes over flashier ones. Flashy clothes can backfire and make you look gaudy and like you're trying too hard if you don't pull them off properly.

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- Don't forget about accessories like a fun pair of sunglasses, a stylish watch, or a necklace. None of them have to be disgustingly expensive. As a general rule though, you want to lean towards wearing fewer accessories rather than overdoing it.
 - Get some nice shoes. The standard advice for dressier shoes is to have a good pair each of black and brown ones.

Your external looks are influenced by your internal state

If you took two outwardly identical guys, but one was insecure and had a lot of other issues, and the other was self-assured, happy and confident, they would come across as quite different from each other. They would carry themselves differently and wear different expressions on their faces. One would literally be better looking than the other. As you invest in the inner you, your outer appearance will benefit.

Small talk is more important than you might think. We award it a low status, but make use of it every day. It is the foundation of many people's everyday welfare, both in private life and in their careers. We often fail to realize that we are using small talk when we create a good atmosphere at the start of a meeting by asking a colleague if the morning traffic was slow, or when we ask a colleague about his health, or smile at the checkout operator in the local supermarket.

Small talk is a technique of talking, a way to make contact with people, and the glue that creates and maintains contact with friends, colleagues, and business partners.

When you use and refine the things you say in the small-talk category, you realize that the technique is a very useful and effective tool for the task of extending your networks.

Some safe and evergreen small talk topics could be:

- What brings you here
- The weather
- Culture
- Movies
- Books
- Headlines in the media

When you use small talk constructively alongside consciously-managed body language, you can make everyday life easier and more success-oriented.

When we make a new acquaintance, we activate a structure of interests and communication.

Small talk also gives us space to see the potential in a conversation, and at the same time gives us the opportunity either to accept or to decline a relationship.

The anatomy of conversation has three stages of communication, with small talk as the first stage.

- At the small-talk stage you aim to create a good atmosphere for the person you want to make contact with. It is all about being precise in your communication through your body language and your voice, and leading the potential conversational partner to want to progress to the next stage.
- If you reach the second stage, you are probably talking in professional terms or talking about a common reference topic. Most people feel comfortable in this domain. You have found something in common, and you are committed to a real conversation with substance.
- The highest stage is intense and personal conversation. Here we talk to each other as good colleagues, friends, and close family.

You should also keep in mind, that it is important for you to be able to take the initiative to generate small talk and get a conversation going. But once talking is under way, it is even

more important that you are able to keep silent and listen. The best way to get your conversational partner to relax is to listen to him. People will often be very happy and feel honored to have you demonstrate real interest in them.

In summary, the essential elements to use small talk successfully are: listening, and asking the speaker relevant questions.

Building rapport:

Social workers expect a great deal of service users and carers. We enter their lives often at moments of great crisis. Their situation may be making them feel frightened, sad, humiliated, angry. Even if they have requested to see a social worker, they almost certainly wish they were not in a position to need to do so. Many will not have chosen to do so at all, and may be resistant or hostile. They may not know what to expect, or expect only the worst. If they have requested help or support, they are likely to be anxious that the support will not be forthcoming.

We come into this highly arousing situation, and usually, within a few minutes, are expecting them to be prepared to tell us, complete strangers though we are, intimate and even painful details of their lives. The judgements that we base on that information may change their lives for ever. These judgements cannot be better than the quality of the information, so it is part of our professional responsibility to enable service users to give us the best possible information, despite the pressure on time and the procedures we may be required to complete. This means that we must be able to establish rapport from the outset. This is, essentially, an unnatural thing to do, and so we need to adopt specific techniques to enable it to happen.

Research, especially in NLP ^{Neuro Linguistic Programme}, has established a number of behaviours which characterise situations where people have established rapport. One of these is matching body language - eg both participants leaning forward, or both leaning back with hands behind head. If we are faced with someone whose body language is conspicuously different from our own (such as someone who sits very still, when we are prone to gesture enthusiastically) we tend to feel less comfortable in their presence. This is true both when body language is habitual, and when it is an expression of emotion. To take an extreme example - if you were sitting hunched tightly, and sobbing into a handkerchief, you would be unlikely to feel you had established any rapport with someone sitting sprawled opposite you with a smile on their face. Even a very calm demeanour and expression might seem to you like lack of recognition or connection with your distress, whereas someone who is sitting forward, with a concerned look, would seem to you like someone who fully appreciates how you feel.

Conscious body matching is, therefore, a quick and powerful way of establishing rapport. It takes some practice to consciously note how someone is sitting or standing, and mirror that in your own behaviour, but it can quickly become automatic. However, people in natural

1. Match body language
2. Match rate & level of speech

Rapport do not mirror every aspect of each other's behaviour, and if this is done it easily tips over into mimicry, and becomes highly noticeable, thus breaking rapport.

Rapport can also be established by mirroring the other person's rate and level of speech, and by using similar language.

"Small talk" is a universal way of establishing rapport, but one which is often overlooked in a professional relationship. The weather, and the state of traffic, are universal topics of conversation, because they are shared experiences which do not rely on the personal histories of the people involved. If your small talk has a positive note to it, you will be setting up a more positive atmosphere, so any favourable or positive comment you can make will help to establish rapport. "Yes-sets" are a variant of this positive small talk - a series of short statements designed to get the answer "Yes" - eg "You found it all right then"; "It's suddenly turned a lot colder, hasn't it"; "You obviously got my letter".

Finally, ³ smiling is an extremely effective way of establishing rapport, particularly on first meeting. If the other person is very angry, or very upset, a smile will be inappropriate, but in most other cases a warm smile will usually elicit a smile in response, and with it a sense of connection. If you have ever smiled at a complete stranger in a crowd, you will know how powerful this is.

You may feel concerned that this deliberate use of language and self is either manipulative or inauthentic, or both. Bear in mind that your language and use of self will be influencing the other person's perception of you, and of the situation, whether or not you choose to do so. Furthermore, you need to establish a relationship of trust as rapidly as possible if you are to give a good service, with someone whom you do not know, and who may not be someone with whom you would instinctively have a good level of rapport. It is preferable, therefore, to seek consciously to use your own words and body in a way that supports that relationship, rather than leaving it to chance.

In any case, these techniques are only effective in establishing initial rapport. In the longer run, rapport will not be sustained if the service user does not feel you are genuine in your respect and your readiness to listen and to seek solutions.

Develop Public Relations:

Public Relations experts ought to possess the following skills for a highly successful and rewarding career.

1. Excellent Writing Skills

A Public Relations expert needs to write well. He ought to be creative and should master the art of putting thoughts into meaningful words. Your words need to create the desired impact and influence the customers. Make sure whatever you write is relevant and puts your organization in the best light.

2. Creative

A public relations expert needs to be extremely creative and should be able to think out of the box. He/She should be able to come out with innovative ideas to promote the organization and its products among the target audience. In today's world of fierce competition, it is really essential for marketers and public relations experts to experiment with new ideas /concepts and develop something which would benefit the end-users.

3. Good Communication Skills

Public Relations experts must master the art of effective communication skills. It is really essential to speak well. Don't just speak for the sake of it. Public relations experts must ensure the recipients have understood what they intend to communicate. Two way communication is the essence of effective public relations. Whatever you communicate ought to make sense and well understood by target customers.

4. Focussed

Stay focussed and take care of even the minutest details. Do not ignore even the slightest doubt. Even a single detail left unattended can become a major cause of concern in the future. Crosscheck every single detail and observation before jumping to the final conclusion.

5. Study a lot

Public relations experts ought to study a lot and do extensive research before designing public relations activities.

6. Proactive

A public relation professional ought to be proactive and on his toes always. He needs to have a strong grasping power with an eagerness to learn. Lazy individuals generally do not make good public relations professionals.

7. Competitors research

Keep your eyes and ears open. Find out what your competitors are upto. It is really important to keep a close watch on competitor's activities and initiatives. You may draw inspiration from them but following them blindly would do no benefit and in turn tarnish your organization's image.

8. Be Friendly

A Public relations expert needs to have strong networking skills. As a Public relations representative one needs to have a strong association with people from media industry(TV, Radio, Print - Newspapers/Magazines), employees, investors, shareholders, partners etc. Sometimes it really becomes essential to flash your smile and get your work done. Never ever spoil your relationship with anyone. Don't fight with anyone. If you do not like someone, the best way is to ignore. You never know when you might need the other person.

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9. Loyal towards your Job

Be loyal towards your job. Remember a public relations job is not only a nine to six job. You need to stay back sometimes even at odd hours and you can't just complain. At times you need to meet lots of people in a single day but one can't crib. One needs to be a little flexible. Make that little extra effort to satisfy your clients.

10. Pleasing Personality

Public Relations Professionals need to have a pleasing personality. Make sure you dress smartly. Public relations experts need to be extroverts.

11. Tech savvy

Be a little techsavvy. Depend on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter to spread awareness and promote your organization.

Informal Communication:

Meaning of grapevine or informal communication: When an organization does not follow any prescribed or official rules or procedures of the organization is called informal communication. The basis of informal communication is spontaneous relationship among the participants.

Informal communication system is the opposite system of formal communication. In this system the communication is made without following any predetermined rules of policy. Informal communication plays a vital role to operate the organization's activities. When the employees cannot understand the subject matter of the communication, they can discuss with their authority anywhere about the matter as like in the dining table or in the play ground or in the club. Some definitions of informal communication are as follows:

According to Bartol and Martin, Informal communication is the takes place without regard to hierarchical or task requirements.

According to Bovee and his associates, "Informal communication is the flow of information without regard for the formal organizational structure, hierarchical or reporting relationship."

So, grapevine or informal communication is the process of spontaneous exchange of information between two or more person at different status without following any prescribed or official rules, formalities and chain of command in the organizational structure.

Characteristics of grapevine or informal communication: The important features or characteristics of grapevine or informal communication are as follows:

① Un-official channel of communication: Since an informal communication network does not follow any rules or formalities. So, it is an unofficial channel of communication.

3) Not controlled by management: The grapevine is not controlled by management. The grapevine is mainly controlled by the employees themselves. As employees control the grapevine information, sometimes the information may be accurate and sometimes the information may be inaccurate.

4) More reliable information: Most employees perceive and believe that the grapevine contains more reliable information than the information received from upper management. What employees may or may not realize is that many times the grapevine contains false information.

5) Flexibility: Informal communication is more flexible than formal communication because it is free from all type of formalities.

6) Oral way of communication: Informal communication technique more uses oral way of communication rather than written communication.

7) Rapid communication: Informal communication transmits very fast. Especially miss-inflation or rumor spread rapidly to others is the organization.

8) Distortion of meaning: Something the meaning and the subject matter of the information is distorted in this system.

9) Influential: Informal communication is very much influential type of communication is distorted in this system.

10) Free form accountability: The exchange of message in informal communication is free from accountability to the authority or top executives of the organization.

11) Spontaneous: Informal communication is the process of spontaneous exchange of information between two or more person at different status within the organizational structure.

12) Multidirectional: Informal communication is multidirectional in nature. The grapevine may be largely available to simply serve the interests of the people it involves. Many times, employees use the grapevine to begin rumors that serve their own interests, with little regard to the people they affect.

Others:

13) Incomplete messages.

14) penetration capacity,

15) no record.

Social Communication in Workplace environment

When you are at work or in a workplace, how do you meet the needs of others, identify ways in which improvement can be made, or determine how a specific job needs to be done? All of these answers can be achieved with successful communication skills in the workplace.

Communication skills are essential no matter where or who you are. However, successful communication within a workplace can determine whether a business, company, or individual is successful or not. If communication should break down, things such as efficiency, requirements, and morale can easily fail. To stress its importance, we are going to go over some of the most basic communication skills that you should be using in the workplace, how to communicate those skills clearly, and how you can help improve employee communication.

Effective Communication Skills for the Workplace

Listening: Sure it helps to be a great talker, but being a good listener is essential for proper communication. In the workplace, you need to be able to listen to another person's needs so that you can help them meet their goals and standards. Listening will help you become aware of what others are thinking. If you want to show someone that you are truly listening to their words, consider taking notes or asking them follow up questions to their statements.

Empathy: In the workplace, you are going to be working as a team with other people, so it is important to be open to others' thoughts and opinion no matter how much you may or may not agree with them. If you are having trouble understanding someone else's point of view, consider putting yourself in their shoes and see why they might have acted the way they did. Also, asking questions is a good way to improve workplace communication.

Patience: Patience can be tricky, and when you are dealing with other people, it can be easy to feel frustrated or overwhelmed if you cannot seem to get your point across. In the workplace, it is important to practice patience with yourself and with others. For instance, make sure that you are patient with your boss, coworkers, or employees so that you can really hear what other people are saying. Not everyone is going to be able to understand you either right off the bat, so be methodical and take your time when explaining things that need to be done a certain way.

Clarity: When you are dealing with people in the workplace, it is not efficient or polite to beat around the bush or prolong things. No matter if you are talking to your coworkers, a secretary, or your boss, it is important to be direct and to the point with them. If you spend too long getting your point across, they are less likely to listen to you or take your credibility for things down the road. A great way to practice communicating clearly is to practice before hand. For instance, consider making an outline or jotting down some notes that detail the points you hope to get across. Go as far as to create support evidence to and reference the points if you need to. Being clear in the workplace is going to ensure that things get done in a timely manner and in the way that they should.

Positive Attitude: There are going to be some days where you dread going to work – we all have them (and it does not mean you hate your job). The key here is to always keep a positive attitude no matter how tired, angry, bitter, or exhausted you might feel. You should never mix your outside feelings with work, because this can create misunderstandings or conflicts. If you have any problems or issues at work, talk them out with the people who are involved and find ways that you can overcome them. If you suppress and challenges you are facing, they will only grow larger and burden you.

Be Honest and Open: If you are feeling overly pressured at work or experiencing certain challenges concerning your job, it is important to speak with a manager or someone in the human resources department as soon as possible to help you alleviate your problems.

Self-Improvement: It is true that you cannot necessarily communicate self improvement, but the two still go hand in hand. Communication requires time and practice both verbally and in written form. As such, it is helpful to always work on the skills that you need for communication, because they are going to help you improve as a person overall. If you are aware of the essential communication skills needed in the workplace, you can make a conscious effort to listen, practice patience, clarify, and remain positive during your daily work routine.

How to Improve Communication in the Workplace:

Communication skills in the workplace Communication skills are an essential part of any productive workplace. Here are some things that you can do, whether you are an employee or a manager, to help improve communication in the workplace.

Employee Training Programs: Not all employees at a workplace are going to be social and interactive right off bat. A great way to get everyone feeling social and comfortable with communicating amongst each other is to set up some employee training programs. These programs can teach employees how to practice effective communication skills that will help them increase their effectiveness in what they do. For instance, consider: listening skills, encoding, communication fundamentals, and online communication in your training program.

Model: Sometimes the best type of learning is through example. Modeling good and effective communication skills for new employees can be a useful way to leverage the social learning theory. Especially with small business, owners and managers can have a large impact on their employees if they work alongside with them or communicate face to face on a regular basis. This can help them model their own behavior after the communication style of their bosses or managers. If you are in a large company, pair your newer employees up with older ones who already practice effective communication skills so that they can learn from each other.

Promote: As mentioned above, if you are a large business owner, it can be helpful to promote certain individuals with strong communication skills into more supervisory positions. This will help you set the bar for newer employees or those who are working on their own communication skills.

Performance Appraisals: A good way to get your employees excited and invested in sharpening their communication skills is to include communication skills and efficiency in performance reports or appraisals. This is a way to help motivate employees to achieve their goals. If communication seems to be an issue, set goals for employees and give them an incentive to reach those goals by offering rewards or setting up a reward program for employees who are to meet communication goals.

Team Building Exercises: Team building exercises are fun, and they are not just a way to kill time at summer camp. Team building exercises for workplace employees can help strengthen office dynamics and communication. Have your in-office teams engage in out of the office exercises that force them to work cohesively to strengthen their communication with each other.

Social Networking:

How Social Media Has Changed How We Communicate?

As communication and information travel faster and faster, the world seems to get smaller and smaller. As a result, this changes how the world communicates, especially with today's obsession with social media networks.

Before social media, we were extremely limited in our means to interact with others and we were limited largely to the people that we knew in-person. There were things we (those my age and older) had to deal with that millennials do not have to – your significant other's parent answering the phone when you called, waiting for a letter in the mail, waiting a week to get your pictures that you sent off to be developed, and so on.

The internet and social media has drastically changed the way people all over the world interact and communicate.

How, you may ask?

One of the biggest changes in the way that we interact, due to social media networks, is the sheer number of people that we can interact with.

Because of social media networks, we are now able to interact with thousands of people all over the world – this is why we see people who have thousands of Facebook friends or tens of thousands of Twitter followers. Without social media, that would be impossible. Social media networks allow us the opportunity to share opinions with a far wider audience.

Another big change that has occurred is that there is now no filter on the way we speak.

In the past, unless you spoke to people directly, you had no way to get your message across regardless of your freedom of speech. Now we can use social media to get our messages out to thousands or even millions of people uncensored.

Two Examples:

#JeSuisCharlie & Betty White hosting Saturday Night Live, which came as a result of a social media campaign.

Social media has also changed the way that we interact, mainly the way we have lost some of our social skills. Some people are completely incapable of carrying on a normal conversation or interacting with people in person because of the dependency of social media.

Social networks are becoming one of the dominant ways we communicate. Snapchat or Instagram, anyone?? People are more obsessed with checking their smartphone every 2 minutes than engaging in meaningful conversation with their child or spouse. Social media and technology are double-edged swords. It's awesome to have and can really help us, but it also distracts us to the point of being blind and deaf to everything else going on.

Next time you are out, count how many people you see walking and staring down at their smartphone.

It can also be argued that social networks have affected our communication by the way we converse and in our writing techniques. The social web has changed the written word in a couple of crucial ways:

Writing is more summarized: When Twitter and its 140 character limit were introduced, most of us questioned how we could get anything meaningful across in 25 to 30 words. As we have adapted to Twitter and other social media networks, we have realized that the 140 character limit has actually pushed us to get to the core of what we are conveying. However, this has allowed for shorter sentences or paragraphs and made way for neglecting correct grammar use.

Abbreviations are more prevalent: People who communicate via social media or text message aren't necessarily spelling things incorrectly, they are speaking a new language entirely. "TTYL" is commonly used to let someone know you will talk to them later. In today's world, abbreviations are now so common that we do not even have to think twice about what they stand for. Example: "FB is the best way 2 use sm. U have lots of chances 2 advertise ur biz."

There is not a right or wrong way to communicate and/or adapt social language into our lives. However, we are all becoming engulfed in this new world of communication due to technology—and if we haven't done so already, will be forced to learn this new form of language, especially if you are a parent of a tween (I am) or a teen.

Visual Code and Social Etiquettes

Visual code and social etiquettes are integral for a first impression in a professional environment as well as social circle. These define a particular behaviour according to which one is expected to act. These are on the same lines of the conventional norms set up by society, social class or group.

Power dressing, Dining etiquettes and Business and travel etiquettes are major components which have to be followed.

Power dressing is a style of clothing and hair intended to make wearers appear authoritative and competent, especially in professional settings in business, law and government. It helps the wearer in conveying authority, power, distinction, self-confidence, trustworthiness, sincerity to colleagues and customers, and makes good first impressions.

There are two levels of business attire. One is the business professional attire that constitutes the most conservative corporate dress, and the other is the business casual attire which is a more relaxed version of the business professional look. For women, the business professional look includes a conservative suit with a knee-length (or longer) skirt or pants in a solid or pinstriped pattern. Preferred colours are navy, dark brown, gray and black. White and pastel-coloured long or short sleeve blouses are acceptable. Pumps with a closed heel and toe accessorize the suit. The casual professional look incorporates pressed khakis/slacks or knee-length or longer dresses/skirts with long or short sleeve blouses or sweater sets. Women should not wear shoes with heels more than 1 to 2 inches. Jewellery should be simple but trendy or classic jewellery. The perfume or cologne should be mild. Makeup should be minimal and must match the natural skin tone. There should be no visible body piercing (other than in ears). Nails must be short and well-manicured in one tone. Hair should be clean and neatly shaped. Conspicuous hair accessories are unacceptable. Men's business professional look consists of a conservative suit or blazer/sport coat with pressed dress/khaki slacks and white long-sleeved, button-down, collared shirt. A conservative silk tie is optional. Preferred colours are navy, dark brown, black and gray. Dark polished lace-up shoes with matching belt and socks completes the attire. Pocket squares are not allowed. The business casuals comprise of pressed khakis with a polo-style shirt or dress slacks with long-sleeved, button-down, collared shirt. The tie should not be too wide or too narrow. Men could accessorize their clothing using cufflinks, tiepins and an elegant watch. Hair must be neat and trimmed hair and face clean shaven. There should be no visible body piercing or tattoo.

Travelling for business isn't the same as going on vacation. While there are some similarities, it's important to remember that you're not only representing yourself while travelling for work; you're also sending out important signals about your company — its culture, brand and products.

Whether you're travelling to meet with current or prospective clients, attend a seminar, or scout a new meeting location, presenting yourself in a professional and friendly manner can send positive messages about the company you represent.

Here are some critical aspects of business travel to consider:

ATTIRE-Your attire is the first key to successful business travel. If your schedule allows, travel in comfortable clothes and change when you get to your destination. This will keep your stress level down and help keep you focused on your mission.

floral
designs
attractive
gifs

Business
Travel

Telephone etiquette means **being respectful** to the person you are talking with, **showing consideration** for the other person's limitations, allowing that person time to speak, **communicating clearly** and much, much more.

Your voice must create a pleasant **visual impression** over the telephone.

Good phone etiquette is important because we **cannot see** the facial expressions and body language of the other person and they cannot see us.

We must compensate by choosing our words carefully and using much more **tone inflection** to convey our message than if we were face to face.

Whether at work, at home, or on your mobile phone, here are 8 solid telephone etiquette tips everyone should be displaying at all times.

1. Always identify yourself at the beginning of all calls.

A) When in the office, always answer a telephone by saying: "Hello/Good Morning, Accounting Department, Syndi Seid speaking."

B) From a cell phone, either simply say Hello, or state your name, Hello, Syndi Seid here. Do not answer by using words such as "yeah" or "yes."

C) When placing a call, always state your name along with the name of the person you are calling. Example: "Hello, my name is John Doe from XYZ Corporation. May I please speak with Ms. Jane Smith?"

2. Be sensitive to the tone of your voice. Do not sound overly anxious, aggressive or pushy. It is important your tone conveys authority and confidence. Do not lean back in your chair when speaking on the telephone.

Tip: Sit up in your chair or stand during the conversation. When at home, use a personal tape recorder to privately record your own conversations. You will then hear how your sound to others.

3. Think through exactly what you plan to say and discuss BEFORE you place a call.

Tip: Jot down the items you want to discuss and questions you want answered. In other words, anticipate and expect you will be placed into a voicemail system; plan your message to be as direct and specific as possible, asking the person to respond to specific alternatives or questions. Do not say, "Hello, it's Syndi, call me back." At least state the subject about which you want the person to call you back about.

4. Do not allow interruptions to occur during conversations. Do not carry on side conversations with other people around you. The person on the telephone takes precedence over someone who happens to walk in your office or passes by while you are on the phone.

Tip: If you must interrupt the conversation, say to the person, "Please excuse me for a moment I'll be right back." And when you return, say, "Thank you for holding."

5. Especially when leaving messages, speak clearly and slowly. Do not use broken phrases, slang or idioms. Always, always leave your return telephone number as part of your message, including the area code . . . and S-L-O-W-L-Y, including REPEATING your telephone number at the end of your message.

Tip: Practice leaving your number by saying it aloud to yourself as slow as you have heard an informational operator say it.

6. **Build the habit of always turning off your cell phone ringer when entering a meeting, restaurant, theater, training class, or other place where the purpose of your visit would be interrupted or others would be disturbed by hearing your cell phone ring.**

Tip: If you are expecting an important call, inform the caller you will be in a meeting during certain times and state you will monitor your message indicator for when it illuminates you will excuse yourself to leave the meeting and return the call.

7. **Always speak into the telephone receiver with an even and low tone of voice.** Especially when speaking on a cell phone out in public, be sure to monitor how loud you may be.

Tip: Move the phone ear piece just slightly away from your ear and listen to yourself speaking. Discover whether you are speaking too loudly or too quietly for the other person to hear you.

8. **Do not allow yourself to be distracted by other activities while speaking on the telephone, such as rustling papers, chewing and eating, working on the computer, or speaking with someone else.** Most importantly, do not use a hand held cell phone while driving. Get a headset or speaker phone for the car.

Tip: Always treat every caller with the utmost courtesy and respect by giving him/her your undivided attention.