

Working Smart

“Loyalty, honesty, and integrity...call these ‘good manners’...help shape a good, healthy business climate in which people respect each other.” –Letitia Baldrige, *New Manners for New Times*

Common Sense Business Behavior

- Whatever your position, treat everyone the same—from the janitor to your boss
- Be loyal to your boss and company, in and out of the office
- Don’t be a company snitch unless someone is committing a serious offense
- Unless you are a person’s supervisor, don’t criticize them directly or behind their back—he may be your boss someday
- Help newcomers; give them a feel for the politics (work culture)
- Always keep your promises—they are linked to your reputation
- Put things in their proper perspective by using your sense of humor
- Be forgiving; don’t spend your time in judgment of others

When You are New at the Office

- Ask intelligent questions of intelligent people, and remember, timing is everything
- Go through company files and communication to see how company letters and memos are written; find out what the communication climate is
- Most important—listen!
- Be nice to everyone
- Be modest about previous successes, jobs, special skills, etc.—you’ll attract more people

To be a Well-liked, Successful Manager/Executive

- Do not gossip or put down people in front of others
- Always give credit where credit is due
- Always make reference to the “team” effort—“We” vs. “I”
- Return phone calls and e-mails within 24 hours
- Be punctual for all appointments
- Keep everyone involved in a project informed
- Find a mentor or be a mentor
- Promptly return anything borrowed from a colleague with a spoken or written word of thanks
- Be rigorous about repaying hospitality and acknowledging favors
- Be quick to congratulate others when they do well
- Know how to dress on business or social occasions
- Show respect to people who are senior—treat them as such
- Don’t boast about your past—or present
- Be compassionate to colleagues who receive bad news
- Don’t waste company time with idle chitchat or personal telephone calls
- Write a personal letter to thank someone for a meal, gift, or favor; encourage a colleague who needs a lift

Meeting Manners

- Arrive on time, even a few minutes early
- Introduce yourself to anyone new before the meeting starts
- Take good notes
- Turn off your cell phone completely
- Bring all the necessary materials associated with the meeting—do your homework
- Do not interrupt—ever. Wait your turn
- Sit up straight and act attentive—no doodling, no dozing off, no sidebars with your neighbor
- Do not belittle the speaker, either in what you say or in what your expression and posture convey when someone is speaking
- Don’t be afraid to ask for clarification of something you don’t understand (just don’t do it too often)