

HOW NOT TO GET FIRED

PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

What is Professional Etiquette?

Professional etiquette is a set of expected behaviors for individual actions in a given setting. Within a place of business, it involves presenting oneself in a professional manner, as well as treating coworkers and clients with respect and courtesy. Professional etiquette creates a pleasant work environment for everyone.

Why is it Important?

Professional etiquette provides a set of expected behaviors within which people can operate as they work, collaborate and communicate with others. As you engage with professionals, you build a trusted reputation of excellence by consistently showing others that you are respectful, credible and responsible. You also express a friendly “can do” attitude. Your professional etiquette could be the deciding factor between you getting the job and it going to another candidate. So make your first impressions count!

Boundaries

Do...

- Establish work relationships.
- Be mindful of your role at work events and parties.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Check in with your supervisor when work is slow.
- Be ethical.

Don't...

- Bring personal matters into the workplace.
- Forget that your behavior reflects on you, your co-workers and the organization.
- Expect an office maid.
- Assume that doing homework or using social media on the job is acceptable.
- Misuse work resources or take food items that belong to others.

Email

Do...

- Create a professional email address.
- Have a clear subject line.
- Include your signature and contact information.
- Leave the “To” field blank until you’ve completed your message.
- Spell check, grammar check and proofread.
- Respond to emails within 48 hours.

Don't...

- Use TXT Language.
- Use emoticons/emojis.
- Use “Reply All,” “CC” and “BCC” haphazardly.
- Write in ALL CAPS.
- Vent your frustrations or emotions.
- Send personal emails.

Phone and Voicemail

Do...

- Speak clearly, audibly and use the person’s name throughout the call.
- Have a clear idea/purpose for the call.
- Leave a message with your name, email and phone number (repeated twice).
- Cover one topic per voicemail message.
- Follow up with an email after your phone call.
- Maintain your voicemail inbox to avoid a full inbox.

Don't...

- Use slang/text words.
- Take calls in a noisy environment.
- Keep the person on hold for long periods of time.
- Use your cell phone during work hours.
- Leave long voice messages.
- Forget to return calls within 24 hours.

CONTINUED ON THE BACK 

Social Media

Do...

- Remain professional. (If you would not say it in person, do not say it on social networking sites.)
- Use proper grammar.
- Keep track of your digital footprint by maintaining/updating your accounts.
- Promote yourself by sharing articles, videos, blog posts and other content.
- Use LinkedIn and other professional sites when reaching out to employers.

Don't...

- Share too much information (TMI).
- Post inappropriate comments or photos.
- Neglect to proofread social media posts.
- Forget that people may have a different sense of humor than you.
- Badmouth competitors.

In-Person Meetings

Do...

- Show up on time.
- Prepare projects and possible problem-solving solutions.
- Listen actively.
- Contribute by asking questions and offering ideas.
- Have a learning attitude.
- Follow up with any agenda items quickly.

Don't...

- Play with your mobile device or answer calls/texts.
- Doodle.
- Act like a know-it-all.
- Keep yawning or fall asleep.
- Have side conversations.
- Be disruptive.
- Talk over others.

Sick and Vacation Days

Sick Day Do's...

- Ask supervisors what they prefer regarding emails, voice messages and direct calls.
- Consider those who need to know, including team members and appointment organizers.
- Avoid the Monday/Friday sick day pattern.

Vacation Do's...

- Plan ahead and remind your supervisor a week in advance.
- Know your work cycle.
- Follow workplace procedures, and add all vacation days to your work calendar.

This information is accurate and reliable as of the date of publication, but may change without notice. Please contact the Career Center for the most up-to-date information. (09/18)