

Business Etiquette Tips

Question: I'm wondering if any of my fellow admins/executive assistants know of a book on business etiquette.

For example:

- How to introduce someone to the president/CEO when you know only the person's title and first name.
- How to tell when it's OK/not OK to interrupt your boss in a meeting, and what to say when you do.
- What does that closed door mean?
- How to notify your employer (in an emergency) of very delicately personal, family-oriented matters via phone in a discreet, respectful manner when you work in a cubicle setting.
- When/when not to call your boss from your personal cell phone.
- Just how many times am I supposed to call to try and relay this message?
- It's after 5 p.m. and there's something going on at the office the boss HAS to know about. The boss is holding a party at her house and would be disturbed if I called. Now, what do I say?
- Oops! I forgot the other exec's name and he's a new business contract contact! What do I say when he comes out to chat with me?
- My boss went to a meeting and the location has changed, but I can't get through to her cell phone to let her know. This could be a disaster!
- How do I announce someone's arrival in the front office? To the boss? To other co-workers?

Sort of a "Miss Manners for the Admin Professional." Lots of books are out there on how to write professional business correspondence like this, but I haven't seen much on verbal communication. Thanks. -- *Sometimes Tongue-Tied, Rochester, N.Y.*

Editor's note: The National Institute of Business Management, publishers of *Personal Report for the Administrative Professional*, offers *Mastering Business Etiquette & Protocol*. Find out more at <http://www.nibm.net/viewitem.asp?pubcode=BMBE&cat=1>.

Also, legendary manners expert Letitia Baldrige has written several books on workplace etiquette, including *Letitia Baldrige's Complete Guide to Executive Manners* and *Letitia Baldrige's New Manners for New Times*. Find out more at www.letitia.com/.

Comments

Years ago I purchased a book called "The Secretary's Handbook", it's helped me so much through the years. For the most part, you need to know your boss just enough to answer most of your questions. Every individual is different, I should know; I've worked with plenty and multiple bosses at once. If you forget someone's name ask them for a business card to put in your address book. Meeting place changed and can't get through? Don't panic, if your boss calls you and you can explain you've tried to contact him/her. (Technology happens!) When interrupting, begin with "Excuse me or sorry to call you at home". If you have a family emergency and can't speak about the details, tell your boss you'll call him from outside the office.

Posted by: Nirma | April 21, 2006 at 08:49 AM

I agree with Nirma; many of the items you ask about come from working with your boss to find a solution. I have worked with several bosses in my 20 years as an executive assistant, and no two people were the same in their preferences.

I would suggest sitting down with your boss and asking her directly how she would like to have you handle these situations. Don't guess -- just go right to the source and ask. I do this with my boss, starting with, "I wanted to run something by you . . ." He always appreciates the fact that I asked specifically how I should handle things like this. After you get to know your boss better, you'll be able to predict much more easily how she would like you to handle things.

Posted by: Lisa | April 21, 2006 at 12:07 PM

Here is a list of books they are great for the information you are requesting:

1. Business Etiquette: 101 Ways to Conduct Business with Charm and Savvy

By: Anne Marie Sabath

2. Emily Post's the Etiquette Advantage in Business: Personal Skills for Professional Success

By: Peggy Post, Peter Post

3. Event Planning Ethics and Etiquette: A Principled Approach to the Business of Special Event Management

By: Judy Allen

4. Business Etiquette For The 21st Century: What to Do-and What NOT to Do

By: Lynne Brennan

5. The Etiquette Advantage: Rules for the Business Professional (Life@work (Broadman & Holman))

By: June Hines Moore

6. Social Skills Survival Guide: A Handbook for Interpersonal and Business Etiquette

By: June Hines Moore

7. The Ten Commandments of Office Etiquette: Being All Your Were Hired to Be

By: Don M. Icenogle

8. Business Etiquette For Dummies

By: Sue Fox, Perrin Cunningham

9. Executive Etiquette in the New WorkPlace

By: Marjabelle Young Stewart, Marian Faux

10. RoAne Rules: How to Make the Right Impression: Working the Room, or One-one-one, What to Say and How to Say It

By: Susan RoAne

Posted by: Debra | April 21, 2006 at 02:24 PM

Look at this powerful website with just loads of helpful information for your business life and your personal life.

<http://www.sideroad.com/> There are 21 articles alone on business etiquette right now. I especially like this site because you don't get popups and advertising. Happy reading and learning!

Posted by: Marie | April 21, 2006 at 03:01 PM

I actually have a free publication that was sent to me a while ago about business etiquette and protocol. I would be more than happy to e-mail it to you if you would like, it may not have all of the information that you are looking for but it might have some. Feel free to shoot me an e-mail if you are interested.

Posted by: Stephanie | April 21, 2006 at 04:38 PM