

## The NEW Rules of Engagement

### TIPS for Business Dining

**Seating:** Guests of any employer should be seated first. When a junior employee invites a senior employee to a meal for the purpose of seeking advice, however, the junior employee has assumed the role of host. The senior employee should be treated as the junior's guest.

**Electronic Devices:** Unless you expect an emergency phone call, email, or text, stash your electronics during business meals. Use the event to focus on other diners and build relationships.

**Napkins:** As soon as you are seated, discretely place your napkin in your lap.

**Bread & Butter Plates:** Your bread and butter plate is located near the top and to the left in your place setting.

**Silverware:** When your place setting incorporates multiple knives, forks and spoons, work from the outside to the inside. For most courses you will use a knife and a fork. As you complete each course, leave both utensils on your plate.

**Beverages:** Your beverages, water and wine(s), will be placed near the top and to the right in your place setting.

**Drinking at Business Meals:** If you don't drink alcoholic beverages, don't feel the need to make an exception at business meals. If you do imbibe, know your limits and adhere to them.

**Eating Bread & Rolls:** Break off a chunk equivalent to one or two bites, butter it, and enjoy. Avoid breaking a roll in half and buttering each half. Do not use your butter knife to cut a roll.

**European vs. American Style:** At the table, Americans typically employ a "zig-zag" style: When cutting food into bite-sized pieces, hold your fork in your left hand and your knife in your right hand. Cut a few bites of food. Then, place the knife across the top of your plate, move the fork into your right hand, eat, and enjoy. In continental Europe, diners typically hold their forks in their left hands while dining.

**Community Items:** Community items include things like salt and pepper shakers, bread baskets, a plate of lemon slices, etc. Once the meal begins, if a community item sits on the table immediately in front of you, lift the item, offer it to the person on your left, serve yourself, and then pass the item to the person sitting on your right.

**Napkins, Part 2:** If you need to excuse yourself from the table, fold your napkin and place it in your chair. At the end of a meal, fold your napkin and place it on the left side of your place setting.

**Who Pays?:** If you extend an invitation to a meal, you are acting as a host and should expect to pay for your guest's meal.