**Cell Phone Etiquette**

**Source: Rachel Wagner Etiquette and Protocol**

Good cell phone etiquette is a must in today’s technology-driven workplace. And, it’s part of good business etiquette and office courtesy. Most people don’t intend to be rude on their smartphones. They just aren’t intentional about using these indispensable devices in a respectful, inoffensive way. Unfortunately, many companies still do not have policies on smartphone use in the workplace, which leaves it up to employees to feel their way across uncertain terrain.

But, smartphones and manners are compatible. Here are seven easily doable tips to help raise the bar on workplace smartphone etiquette.

7 Business Etiquette Tips for Cell Phone Users in the Workplace

Give 100% focus to the person in front of you. Don’t interrupt a face-to-face conversation with someone—in the hallway or in the employee lunchroom–by taking a call or texting. The question to ask yourself is this, “What impression am I making when my attention is diverted to my phone?”

At a business lunch, a mobile device shouldn’t be part of the place setting. Keep it stashed in a jacket pocket, handbag or briefcase.

In meetings, avoid “reading under the table.” Most people know to turn their phone to silent in a meeting. However, it’s not the occasional phone ringing that’s so annoying. It’s the people who scroll through their emails, check their Facebook page, text, tweet, or check sports scores–in their lap. People notice this more than you think. It’s not only distracting and discourteous to the speaker, but also to those around you. Also, paying attention to your messages instead of the meeting sends a signal that the people in the room are not important to you. And that’s a dangerous message if those people are clients, or have power over your job or career path. You want to appear engaged and a team player. If you are expecting an urgent call, mention it before the meeting begins and then excuse yourself and step away when you take the call. In longer meetings, wait until a break to check emails and phone messages.

Have a professional ring tone. Whether it’s your personal cell phone or one issued by your company, a professional ring tone is important to convey a professional image of you.

In a cubicle, turn your mobile device to silent. It’s annoying and distracting if your phone rings and you’re there, but it’s more irritating to coworkers if it rings and rings when you’re away from your desk. Let voice mail take the call if you step away for a cup of coffee or a meeting.

Take personal calls in a private place. Hearing someone talk loudly on a cell phone, especially about personal business is distracting and discourteous to coworkers trying to do their jobs. It’s best to go to an empty conference room or other private location to make a personal call. And do keep personal calls to a minimum so that you don’t appear unfocused to your team or your boss.

Never use your cell phone in the restroom. This is not the place to share personal or confidential company or client information. You never know who might be in listening range.

If you make it your personal challenge to use these etiquette tips, then collectively your workplace will enjoy greater cell phone etiquette. And that’s something that everyone will appreciate.