



# *Business Etiquette*

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## About the Tutorial

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Business Etiquette is a set of norms that instructs us on what is considered socially-acceptable behavior and what manners are conventional and are expected in a place, or while interacting with people with certain rank, age. It also teaches us the conventional and acceptable ways of interaction within a group or society.

Every culture has its own different set of manners, and a lot of manners are common across cultures. Business Etiquette answers, whether or not, a behavior is socially acceptable and culturally respectable.

## Audience

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This tutorial is designed primarily for the young professionals who have started their careers and are interested to know the working boundaries of how companies operate. It will also be a handy reference guide for aspirants before entering the corporate world.

## Prerequisites

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Before proceeding with this tutorial, you are expected to have a calm mindset, be flexible and open to exploring some of the suggestions mentioned here.

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# 1. BUSINESS ETIQUETTE – INTRODUCTION

No matter where you go, people expect you to behave in a certain way in society. There could be slight variations of customs and traditions that you have to respect. However, majority of these expectations will be common. For example, smiling is a universally recognized signal of an amiable person. On the other hand, frowning and being rude while interacting is considered impolite.

In “Business Etiquette” we will discuss what etiquettes, the business / corporate world expects from their employees and what you should do to meet their expectations. It helps in building a good, positive network of business people.



We will also discuss business etiquette with respect to the established conventions of business-dealing and the various cultural expectations.

In some parts of the world, starting the meeting with a straightforward discussion on business is considered rude, and there are certain places where discussing business while dining is considered inappropriate. Thanks to globalization, we cannot afford to be ignorant of the different cultures we live with.

## 2. DEFINING BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Business Etiquette is a set of social, professional and cultural sensibilities that a person is expected to possess in order to be considered a well-informed business-person with proper business acumen. Business Etiquette focuses primarily on being polite in your interactions with people and paying them respect while dealing with them, the way you would expect them to.

This politeness and respect is not limited to meetings held in person only. In fact, these levels of mutual respect and the polite way of addressing people and dealing with them is extended to business emails, telephonic conversations and business letters too.



Business Etiquette serves as an important tool to bridge gaps and develop a fast network of business-people who have a positive impression of your inter-personal skills and cultural sensitivity.

However, it should be kept in mind that Business Etiquette varies from place to place. A set of etiquettes that may be held in high regard in one country might not necessarily be observed closely in another country, and in fact, could be viewed as strange or rude at times.



### 3. BUSINESS ETIQUETTE – SIGNIFICANCE

Most people mistake Business Etiquette as only a study of cultural differences and the ways in which inter-cultural barriers can be broken. However, the truth of the matter is that multiple cultures and their studies are only a part of Business Etiquette.

Corporate culture has a distinct culture. It may not be necessarily an intercultural working place, and yet, there are many unwritten rules and codes of appropriateness that exist and are skillfully followed.

These norms are practiced and followed both, between and within companies. For example, employees drawing appreciation from their clients for choosing to dress up in formal wear at a meeting, even if there is no strict dress code.



An interesting thing to note is that someone's understanding of Business Etiquette could also be influenced and sometimes even limited by many factors that are prevalent at his working place.

Things like a company's mission statement, product lines, image, perception, brand value, reach, business partners, investors, clients and customers can all influence the idea and importance of etiquette in the minds of the company's employees.

## 4. IMPORTANCE OF FIRST IMPRESSION

We create an impression about a person within few seconds of meeting him. This sense of judging a person without knowing anything about him is an in-built quality.

This ability to form an impression of a person, quickly, so that we could categorize him in the “friend” category helps us to prepare ourselves for self-defense. It activates “fight-or-flight” defense mechanism, which we act accordingly. In modern terms, this intuition has been given the term “first impression”.



We always tend to respect our gut feeling and listen to our inner voice more than any rational explanation and this forms a foundational quality in all human beings. That’s the reason, experts suggest that when you meet someone for the first time, we should strive to achieve the perfect look and present the perfect image.

Knowing etiquettes will not only enable us to understand the other person’s sensibilities but will also help us present an impression of a gentleman or a woman. It will assist in putting your best foot forward so that the focus of the ensuing discussion will be more on the business topics rather than you looking out of place.



## 5. FIRST IMPRESSION WORKSHEET- I

Try to recall the first time you had met someone in a business meeting. It could be a job interview, or a chance to interact with people from the industry.

**1. What were the initial impressions you had when you met him?**

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**2. What were the thoughts going through your mind after the meeting?**

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**3. How would you describe him given an opportunity?**

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## 6. FIRST IMPRESSION WORKSHEET - II

Let's play a guessing game! You are given two pictures of two different people. You have to guess the following details about them, depending on the first impression, they made on you. You need not be accurate with your answers and do not think a lot before giving the answers. The idea is to capture the way you will interpret their looks.

| Woman                                  | Man                                    | Woman                                       | Man   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Where were they raised?                |  | What would they do in leisure?              |   |
| a) City<br>b) Town<br>c) Village       | a) City<br>b) Town<br>c) Village       | a) Reading<br>b) Cooking<br>c) Gardening    | a) Reading<br>b) Cooking<br>c) Gardening    |
| What's their favorite food?            |  | What music do they listen to?               |   |
| a) Pizza<br>b) Pulses<br>c) Pita Naan  | a) Pizza<br>b) Pulses<br>c) Pita Naan  | a) Classical<br>b) Country<br>c) Jazz       | a) Classical<br>b) Country<br>Jazz          |
| What would their ideal car be?         |  | What would their ideal job be?              |   |
| a) Audi<br>b) Toyota<br>c) Lamborghini | a) Ford<br>b) Toyota<br>c) Lamborghini | a) Chef<br>b) Embroidery<br>c) Law Practice | a) Chef<br>b) Embroidery<br>c) Law Practice |

Irrespective of whatever pre-conceived notions you might have had about both of them, I would like to mention that Richard loves to drive his Ford car to his bistro every morning and loves spending time with his customers while he cooks them piping-hot pizzas and pies.

After he closes the shop in the evening, he drives back to his farmhouse, humming "I walk the line" by Johnny Cash all the way. No prizes for guessing his hobby.

How many, do you think will agree with me, if I were to tell you that the man in the picture above is actually Richard?

Did you expect that?

Did you note, how important looks are, while creating the first impression? A person does not know anything about you and does not have any idea on your

qualities before meeting you. The first thing that he notices about you is the way you look.

Organizational Behavior can vary greatly from company to company but it comes as a surprise to many people that organizational behavior can, and does vary, appreciably within a company too. Etiquettes will also vary from person to person depending on whom you are interacting with.

For example, the body language, correctness of speech, right selection of words, and clarity in presentation will vary when you talk to your boss, or your supervisor as compared to a colleague who is of the same level as you.

You will feel even more relaxed when the person is a close friend. Similarly, you could easily skip a few steps in decorum when your friend invites you to your place. If your boss invites you for dinner, your etiquettes will be different.

## 7. QUALITIES THAT FORM ETIQUETTES

Business Etiquettes do not necessarily address dressing sensibilities, interpersonal skills and good public speaking abilities. Although these qualities are needed, there are other qualities too that are equally important.

**Here is a list of such important qualities:**

### **Punctuality**

A person on time is a dependable person. This is a general impression punctual people manage to effectively leave on the minds of many people. Someone who appreciates the value of his time will not appreciate waiting for others and others waiting for him.

### **Preparedness**

A person should always be well informed and prepared to furnish information, in detail, on any topic related to his job and responsibility at any given time. This creates an impression of being a resourceful person.

### **Courteous**

You need to be courteous to all the people you are interacting with, instead of limiting the courtesy to only those who you think deserve it. When you are working in an organization that has many talented and creative people in it, there is always a chance that ideas will clash with one another. In that case, you need to tackle the opposing thought and not the person.

### **Proper Representation of Thoughts**

There are times when your thought would be very clear on a particular topic but the choice of your words could send a mixed signal to the listeners. Many people end up being misquoted and misunderstood, due to lack of connection with the people listening to you. You should prepare your presentation thoroughly, beforehand and have a clear understanding of each word and the different ways it can be interpreted. Step in to clear any misconceptions people might have on a point.

### **Participation**

Companies, expect a lot from you. These expectations could be in the form of specific targets, which the company sets for you. In such times, it is very easy to

turn your back to a discussion that does not concern you and say- "that's not my problem". However, that problem could well be your problem in the near future. So, try to participate in the problem-solving process.

### **Properly Dressed**

The way you look when you meet someone for the first time goes a long way in establishing a perception of you in that person's mind. That does not mean that you should splurge on the clothes you are supposed to wear. Your clothes should not draw too much attention towards themselves. Dress conservatively but professionally.



## 8. GROOMING ETIQUETTES

Business dress code is often a question of common sense prevailing while deciding what to wear to the work place. However, cases of dressing disasters continue to occur, especially during the summers when you might find a colleague dressed up to work with a "day at the beach" hangover.

The reason these eyebrow-raising errors in dress codes occur is that many companies, especially start-ups and small to medium-scale businesses, have relaxed norms to almost no norms on dress code. Even if there are dress code rules, at times, they are vague and ambiguous. In such situations, it is always advisable to err on the part of "too formal" attire, as opposed to arriving dressed up informally enough to raise a few eyebrows.



**A few common errors people make in business dressing are:**

- **Ill-Fitting Clothes:** Clothes too big give you a bloated look and too tight fitting clothes accentuates the body in a non-formal way. In a meeting, you would not want the attention to shift from you and your presentation towards your clothes.
- **Wearing Short Skirts/Sleeves:** Short skirts and sleeves draw attention to your legs and hands when you sit down. That diverts the attention of the listeners and appears unprofessional.
- **Wearing Short Socks:** Short socks, or drooping socks expose skin and that distracts attention while crossing legs or sitting down. Always go for socks that cover 3/4<sup>th</sup> the distance from the ankle to the knee. Avoid wearing white socks as they immediately draw notice towards themselves.
- **Low-Cut or Plunging Tops:** Just as with short skirts, this distracts an interviewer and looks very out of place in a professional environment that requires a conservative dress code.
- **Improper Color Choices:** Colors, like green, yellow, red, etc., do not go down well in corporate circles. They not only draw attention towards themselves but also look unprofessional.
- **Clothes with Quotes, Pictures or Designs:** This lends a very informal and non-serious look to the interviewee. There is always a risk of people associating the slogans and mottos on the t-shirts to be your personal points of view.
- **Poorly-Maintained Shoes:** Shoes are a very important part of your business attire. Shoes, in a way, announce your arrival even before you interact with someone, so naturally, it draws a lot of attention. It is for this reason that your shoes should be always clean and polished.
- **Not Dressing Formally For Business Social Events:** Even dinners at the boss' house are formal business occasions. So, dress accordingly. The general rule about informal business dressing is that it should be treated as formal clothing.
- **Improper Grooming:** Unclipped nails, odorous breath and unkempt hair are all red-checks. If you are one of those who perspire profusely, use anti-sweat deodorants. However, keep in mind that the meetings will be mostly in air-conditioned rooms with very less chance of fresh air entering the room. So, wear a perfume or deodorant of a mild fragrance.

In addition to the tips discussed here, there are a few areas that need to be taken care of before you finally enter the premises and knock on that door. Let us discuss these:

### **Final Tips for Grooming**

- Avoid noisy and squeaky shoes as they will disturb and distract everyone.
- Trousers' side-pockets should not bulge with mobile phones, wallets etc., as it gives a bulky look to your legs.
- All noticeable body-piercing, tattoos should be concealed, as tattoos are since long, associated with rebellious behavior.
- Do not smoke or eat odorous food before interviews. Use breath fresheners.
- Clean your nails and teeth properly.

## 9. GROOMING ETIQUETTE – WORKSHEET

Read the following sentences and state whether they are true or false. Give your explanation too.

1. Bold and bright colors like pink and green are encouraged nowadays in office.

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2. If a company encourages its employees to wear casuals and boots to office, you can dress up such for an interview with them too.

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3. Some companies might practice a mandate of their employees not having facial hair or long hair.

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4. Tattoos and body piercings may be exposed during interviews, as it is a personal preference.

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5. Your first job is meeting the expectations of you first and then other things.

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6. A professional wardrobe needs to be expensive and full of brand wear.

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7. You must try to draw as much attention to yourself with your sense of dressing so that you can attract the attention of the interviewer and stand out in the crowd.

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8. You can relax on your dress code and grooming sense once you are employed with the company.

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9. Dressing for success means that your clothes are more expensive than anyone else's is.

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10. The best way to dress up for a job interview is to be in suits.

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11. Shirts with checks and ties with stripes and checkered designs are acceptable in companies.

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12. You can have a casual, informal dressing for interviews if your company allows its employees to dress casually.

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13. While dressing for work, women can be liberal with their accessories.

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## 10. DINING ETIQUETTES

When we are invited to our boss' birthday party at his place, we can't be dressed up the way we would had it been our best friend's birthday party. There needs to be a change in not only our dressing but also the manner in which we conduct ourselves.

In other words, we need to treat an invitee for any social gathering that involves meeting your co-workers just as you would treat a day at the office, the only difference being that, here you have a liberty to discuss family life and other topics that you generally won't get time to talk about in your professional life.

Two situations that arise, invoke the need to understand the need for dining etiquette and learn it - one, if you are the host of a get-together and the second one, if you are the guest.



### **When You are the Host**

Choose a restaurant that is conducive to holding sizeable meetings and provides good service. Make sure that you have made all the adequate bookings and seating arrangements. Clarify the billed amount and availability of desired menu before the meeting itself.

- Arrive fifteen minutes early on the day of the meeting and introduce people to one another if some of them have not been introduced to each other earlier. Offer the seat with the best view to your most important guest.
- While ordering food, try to recommend, what is the best of all the dishes there are on the menu if someone is undecided on what to choose. If that is too direct an approach, then you could help him out in a different way by letting him know what you are ordering, so that he takes the hint.
- Always be done with the ordering, before you start to discuss business with someone. Or else there will be many disturbances with the waiter asking you repeatedly for your order. In addition, the guests will be caught in two minds as to order or to listen to your business discussion.
- If the meeting is to celebrate an achievement or to dedicate it to someone, or is a congratulatory party thrown in honor of someone, it is always nice to speak something about it and make a small toast. It is perfectly all right to toast while sitting. Just hold your glass up and when others follow suit, you can say something to the point and end it.
- Be attentive to the needs of everyone around the table and keep an eye out on their preferences, which will help you to decide upon the right place for any future meetings. You might see that your chief guest has a taste for seafood so you might set up your next meeting at a place where the seafood is good.
- Always try to engage everybody in a conversation and be the facilitator in leading people to participate in the discussion, bring their points of view and experience into play too. This will help people to come out of their initial inhibitions of meeting someone for the first time and will encourage them to be themselves.

### **When You are the Guest**

Always, promptly reply to an invitation. Your answering will help the host in organizing and coordinating the meeting so try to answer as early as possible.



- Always arrive before time and always inform before time, if you are going to be more than five minutes late. Always take the opportunity to ask your host to recommend you on what you should order to break the ice.
- Many times, you will come across a generous host who will ask you to order what you please. Although you have been given a free rein on your choice of dishes, be considerate while ordering and do not take up this opportunity to order something extravagantly expensive. You are more likely to lose ground with the host that way.
- Always order something in the mid-budget range that would not draw attention towards itself and be easy to eat. Do not order runny, messy food as that might soil your clothes. Try to order food that can be easily eaten with cutlery, as opposed to those dishes where you have to use hands to eat.
- The reason is that there could be a chance that someone arrives late at the table, seats himself beside you, and offers you his hand to greet you. In a situation like this, it would be unsightly to see your hands smeared with food.
- Business dining follows almost the same template of etiquette as business dressing in the sense that, you are not supposed to draw attention towards

yourself due to your choice of food while dining, just like you were not supposed to draw attention towards yourself with your clothes in a meeting.

- Always remember that a business dinner or lunch is basically, a professional, formal meeting in a restaurant, instead of a room. Carry the same body language that you would carry when you would sit in for a business discussion with someone. Have a smile on your face but be on your guard.
- As a rule of thumb, the host is the one who steers the conversation from small talk to business discussion, so wait until he hints before discussing business. When invited to someone's home, it's considered improper to turn up empty-handed. You are not expected to gift something expensive- just a jar, or even desserts would be great.

If there comes a scenario where you have arrived at the table and you see many unknown faces, and the host is not around to introduce you to others, take up the initiative and introduce yourself to others, instead of sitting quietly in a corner and pretending others do not exist.



# 11. RULES OF WRITING

Writing is similar to starting an assignment. You need to be well-planned, prepared, focused, committed, and most importantly, passionate towards what you are doing. If you implement all the following points mentioned, the odds of writing well-appreciated text will be in your favor.

First of all, let's accept the fact that very few people, almost none can write a document the way they wanted to put it on paper, in the very first attempt. Ideas and memories often come when least expected, and these new ideas keep on changing your document with each subsequent input. Once you have put your ideas on paper, the next step would be to present it in a simple, logical, connected and clear manner. This needs planning and preparation, for which there are definite steps you can follow.

|                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Appropriate language           | Use of bullet points |
| Plain English (free of jargon) | Conciseness          |
| Simple sentences               | Constant improvement |
| Relevant content               | Feedback             |

**KNOW THE RULES!**



Researching on any topic is a very critical step before writing. Your sources need to be reliable and widely accepted. Before you identify and develop your topic, you should find the context and background information on your topic.

This can be done by referring to books, articles, journals, news sources, and magazines. People nowadays use video and sound recordings too. The following steps will help you to:

1. Note the important and relevant details.
2. Evaluate each point against the topic and purpose of your document.
3. Record the details of resource and reference (i.e. author, title and publishing)
4. Arrange content in a logical order under appropriate headings and sub-headings.

Knowing the audience pulse before you are writing the document will give a lot of support in deciding on the content and approach. In case you are not aware of the audience, you can write keeping in mind the demographic, i.e. the target group for your write-up, as online article writers or bloggers do. Before you begin to write, try to understand always what your reason of writing is. It could be anyone of the following:

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Providing information   | Sending reports            |
| Applying persuasion     | Recommendations            |
| Presenting your opinion | A desired action           |
| Proposing Ideas         | Reaching an accomplishment |

For example, if your intention is to sell a product or get someone to subscribe to a service you are providing, or are promoting a cause; ask yourself questions like - who are my potential readers? What is the background of my prospective target readership? Where do they live and how old are they? What are their interests and priorities? These questions will set the purpose for your writing.

## 12. WRITING THE DOCUMENTS

Once you have identified the audience for your writing, try to anticipate the information that your reader might think necessary and include it in your document as you write. It can be done by asking yourself the “WH-questions”.



1. **Answer the WH questions:** Answering “Who? What? Why? Where? When? Whom? How?” will give you a headstart on the content of the writing.
2. **Determine the Start and Finish:** After collecting all possible ideas that you have on the topic, you could go through them and reject a few that won’t make sense in this write-up. After that, find out the idea that will leave the maximum

impact on reading it, and put that at the start of the article. The end should have the idea that summarizes all the ideas in a clear and crisp manner.

3. **Get a Second-Person Opinion:** always get your written text checked by somebody before submitting it. This lends an objective, second-person perspective to the review and stops your emotions and indulgence from getting in the way. Do not do this if the content is confidential and not to be shared.
4. **Discuss Suggestions and Include Improvements:** Once your friends have suggested some changes, implement the ones you think are relevant.

## Developing Flow

Many people have very interesting ideas and even manage to put them on paper. Unfortunately, their readership does not extend beyond a particular stage. This is because, though their writing is good and the thoughts were properly mentioned, there may not have been a proper selection of words, or maybe a proverb like- “nipping it in the bud” was used, which readers may not understand.

Let us discuss 15 things to remember while proof-reading and revising your writing:

## Clarity

- Your writing must be understood at the first reading. Avoid technical jargon, unfamiliar words or formal language.

## Formal Vs. Modern

- Payment has been duly noted vs. we received your check.
- Attached hereto vs. please find Attached

## Avoid Ambiguity

- Words with double meaning or sentences that confuse readers should be avoided:
- Having eaten the fish, Kiran talked to Karan. (Who had the fish?)

### **Avoid Colloquialisms**

- In a nutshell vs. in short
- In this day and age vs. today, presently

### **Avoid using many Words**

- Prior to the event vs. before
- At this point in time vs. now

### **Avoid unnecessary Repetition.**

- Absolutely essential
- Combine together

### **Include only relevant information.**

- Omit unnecessary background information.
- Keep sentences short and simple – 17 words or less.

### **Completeness**

Check that all the information the reader will need is included:

- Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

### **Correctness**

Check accuracy of grammar and spelling of names of people and places).

- He done it vs. he did it.
- It's color has faded vs. its color has faded.

### **Don't Rely on Spell Check**

- Typing 'no/on', 'then/than', 'quite/quiet', 'lose/loose' will not show errors.

### **Concreteness**

Give specific details.

- Your investment plan will earn high interest.
- Your investment plan will earn 8% interest.



## **Convincing**

Use language that is believable. Avoid exaggeration and superlatives.

- Always vs. Usually
- Never vs. Rarely

## **Courtesy**

Display good manners in your writing. Use passive voice when communicating bad news to avoid negative overtones. For example,

- We cannot agree to the terms and conditions outlined in the contract.
- Some discussions regarding the terms and conditions need to be done.

## **Write with the reader in mind**

- Sexist- Chairman, businessman
- Condescension- 'Of course', 'Obviously'

## **Using Bullet Points**

- Communicates your message in an easy and clear manner
- Highlights the most important information.

# 13. EMAIL ETIQUETTE

Email is widely used as a form of inexpensive yet highly effective business communication tool. Printouts of emails are rarely taken and soft copies are used because archiving and retrieving emails is easily. The reason of its popularity is the ease of access, which everyone in an organization starting from the CEO to the janitor can use.

Emails are an efficient way to communicate information in a well-presented, easy to read and professionally appropriate manner. Many people quote lack of time as a reason to forward sub-standard emails that range from incomplete to incomprehensible.

Many people mistake emails with text messaging, or at least their approach towards writing emails suggests so. Let us discuss the difference between a text conversation and writing email. In a text message conversation, two people can exchange information, share details, provide corrections and ask for clarifications in a rapid back-forth manner of communication.

Compared to this, emails are read by professionals who, depending on their work, may get anything between 20 to 200 emails a day. They neither want to engage in a back-and-forth conversation, nor have the time to ask for details, multiple times. They just want to understand the content of the email, read out the instructions, process the information, get the task done and empty the "unread" section of the inbox.

**Keeping this in mind, let us discuss some tricks to write effective emails:**

1. Plan your message.
2. Use the subject line to grab the reader's attention.
3. Keep your message short and clear
4. Do not type your entire message in lower case.
5. Proofread your message before sending it and assume accountability.
6. Take a few minutes to cool down before sending any email while angry.
7. Do not type your message in capitals. Capitals are considered to be SHOUTING.

**In certain cases, emails may not be suitable. Prefer to call someone when:**

- You have to discuss personal, sensitive or confidential information.
- You are going to give bad news.
- Your message is complex and meaning might be lost in the wordings.
- you need an immediate response.

## **Legal Risks of Emails**

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Emails are the preferred mode of communication in many workplaces, and this means they carry a lot of information that could be confidential. Many companies train people extensively on how they are supposed to frame their emails and what kind of emails, to whom they are supposed to forward .

The security and confidentiality of the information in the emails is the joint responsibility of both the sender and the recipients. Companies have strict guidelines to safeguard their documents and their contents. Let us discuss some of the most commonly followed guidelines to prevent email misuse.

**You and your company will be held liable for numerous legal suits if:**

- You send or forward emails with offensive content
- You send an attachment that has a virus
- You forward the sender's email to another person without permission.
- You try to forge others' emails or send emails from others' accounts
- You try to conceal your identity from the receivers when sending email.
- You copy a message belonging to another person without permission.

## **Elements of a Formal Email**

While most of us send informal emails to friends that might contain grammatical mistakes in them, the same is not true when writing to colleagues, especially when we want to make a good impression, as we have to be more careful and diplomatic this time. Here are some general tips on the right format of an email:

**Background:** The default white background should be used for all emails. Colored backgrounds, or scroll designs seem to be unprofessional and distracting.

**Font:** Preferred fonts are Times New Roman or Arial, Font size-12.

**Font Color:** Font should be navy blue or black only.

**Contact Details:** Official contact information like name, designation, email id, contact number, company logo and address of correspondence should be mentioned in the signature area. Personal statements are best avoided.

**First Name and Surname:** They should be mentioned in the same font as used in the body of the email, only two font sizes larger. Cursive fonts for name is not recommended.

**(To be mentioned in the same font and size as body of the email)**

1. Designation
2. Department
3. Company Name & Address
4. Landmark and ZIP Code.
5. Contact Number
6. Email address
7. Company telephone number
8. Company fax number
9. Company URL
10. Disclaimer

### Example of Email

**To**< [md@tutorialspoint.com](mailto:md@tutorialspoint.com)>

**Cc**< hr@tutorialspoint.com>

**Subject:** Reply on Interior Decor | Finalizing date and time for meeting

Dear Sir,

This has reference to the mail sent by you to contact an interior décor firm. As per your instructions, I have contacted Hasta La' Vista, one of the most reputed firms.

They are pleased at the prospect of us, working together. They have requested me to schedule a meeting for their representatives and explain the rest of the details in person.

Herewith attached is a pdf file, explaining their terms and conditions.

Kindly go through it and let me know your availability so that a meeting can be fixed.

Thanking you.

With Regards,

Vineet Nanda

(Senior Corporate Trainer, Soft Skills)



Email- [vineet.nanda@tutorialspoint.com](mailto:vineet.nanda@tutorialspoint.com)

Website- [www.tutorialspoint.com](http://www.tutorialspoint.com)

Address- Tutorials Point (I) Pvt. Ltd., 388-A, Road no 22, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, A.P.

#### YOU MUST READ THIS NOTICE

The information contained in this email and any attachments is confidential and may be subject to copyright or other intellectual property protection. You are not authorized to use or disclose this information other than with the express consent of the sender



## 14. TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE

Telephonic conversations are fast replacing traditional “on-venue” meetings, due to the logistics and time saved. It is much easier for people to have a conversation over the phone nowadays, as compared to travelling to a distant place to do the same.

Although the obvious advantages of a telephonic conversation are many- one being that the person does not have to be physically present during the time of the interview, this could also be one of its distinct disadvantages.



In a face-to-face conversation, 70% of the person’s responses are non-verbal and are related to body language. In a telephonic conversation, you have to make up for that 70% with your voice projection, tone and modulation.

**Some Important Points on Telephonic Etiquette:**

- Speak loud enough to be heard clearly. Keep your mouth close to the mouthpiece. It is advisable to use a hands-free equipment, if possible, so that your hands are free to jot down points. Many people express their points by the use of their hands to emphasize on specific areas of discussion. Using hands-free equipment will also enhance your expressive skills.
- Let the other person do most of the talking, as he will be explaining what he wants to inform you about, for you to understand. Also speaking out of turn could irritate the listener.
- Smile and speak in a conversational manner. Smiling while talking changes the shape of your mouth when you pronounce the words and the listener easily picks up this change in tone.
- Place a notepad, pen, and a copy of the document that is being discussed near you for reference and jotting down important information.
- Try to go to a place that has as less background noise and interference as possible while attending a telephonic interview.
- If you are stuck in a traffic or a noisy place when someone from office calls and asks if it's the right time to talk to you, excuse yourself politely and offer to call back in 5-10 minutes. This will give you time to go to a silent place to prepare your mood and mind for the conversation.
- Turn off Call-waiting and such applications that give beeping notifications during calls, so that the other person's attention is not diverted due to the distracting sound.



# 15. ETIQUETTE ACROSS BORDERS

People all over the world have different etiquettes that they observe with respect to their culture and nativity. We have compiled a few interesting ones over here. You might find some of them amusing. However, the people who follow these etiquettes take them very seriously, and they should be respected.

- **Austria:** Putting hands in pockets is considered to be rude among the title-emphasizing Austrians. They love using the titles with the last names and stick to the formal way of addressing people, as opposed to getting on a first-name basis with people in the first meeting.
- **Brazil:** Brazilians are expressive people and do not observe strict rules on personal space. Just like Argentinians, they are comfortable standing close to you while speaking and do not mind patting people and holding their hands. Their way of conducting a business discussion is also informal with people liberally cutting into someone else's conversation with no one minding it.
- **Russia:** Kisses on the cheek exchanged between people of the same sex is acceptable and is a custom that is followed extensively. However, this should not give you the impression that you are going to receive a very warm welcome on your first meeting. Russians believe in slow burn and like to be acquainted with someone in their own sweet time.
- **France:** French love the tag of being sophisticated people and listening to them speak, is like listening to a long, continuous, witty conversation. They put great emphasis on personal privacy; hence refrain from asking personal questions.
- **Germany:** German women expect men to be protective of them and it is considered rude to chew gum in public and lose temper in public. German people love a conversation that is intellectual in nature, and are generally not very fond of jokes. They have a humorous side, though, which they expose only after repeated meetings with them.
- **Italy:** Italians like to maintain eye contact while having a conversation. This is not only a sign of confidence to them, but also tells them that you are genuine and mean what you are saying. They are also flirtatious by nature and can stand quite close to you while talking.
- **United Kingdom:** Using adjectives to describe things are generally, frowned upon, so conversations tend to be very polished and even. Prolonged eye contact is considered rude and personal space is given a lot of importance. Touching someone's person is only reserved for family members.

- **United States:** Americans like to maintain eye contact while talking and they are quite happy to come to a first-name basis during the first meeting itself. They tend to be more informal in their speech. However, they lay tremendous value on punctuality so never catch an American on the wrong side of the clock.
- **Argentina:** Argentinians are very touchy when you use the "thumbs-up" sign with them as they consider it obscene and very offensive. Also, they tend to punch their left palm when they think what you are saying is unbelievable to be true.
- **Australia:** Australians love buying a round of drinks for friends and generally, do not like splitting the bill. They are offended by the finger gestures of the 'V' sign and "thumbs-up" sign. Yawning in public is considered uncouth.
- **China:** Chinese, on the other hand, refrain from touching and hugging in public places. They also do not appreciate people clicking and cracking fingers and pointing at them while speaking. Loud clothes and whistling is not seen in favorable light. Chinese, also, do not like discussing business while dining.



- **Canada:** Canadians love the concept of personal space. Hence, they avoid getting very close with the person they are meeting. They tend to avoid hugging and touching people. It is very important to maintain proper body language while sitting down to have a business discussion with Canadians.

- **Japan:** Compare that to Japan, where long-duration eye contact is considered rude and disrespectful. In addition to that, touching someone while speaking and not respecting their personal space is something Japanese don't appreciate.

## 16. CONCLUSION

Business Etiquette is one of the most important and yet, most neglected part of a professional's life. If you are not aware of the basic rules of etiquette while meeting new people and dealing with clients, then you are most likely to make many errors that might be unknown or seemingly innocent to you, but could be easily misconstrued as deliberate and offensive by the person listening to you.

This was a small step in making you aware of what the simple rules in etiquette that you are expected to be aware of and follow them when you are interacting with people.

We hope you are now ready to utilize what you have learnt from this reading and are going to implement that in your life. All you need is a bit of self-confidence and a bit of practice! Best of Luck!