

Corporate Etiquettes

Etiquette for Small Talk

**Building Positive Connections Through Effective
Communication**

**Sem-4 Professional Grooming & Personality
Development (303193252)**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

1. Define small talk.
2. Identify do's and don'ts.
3. Practice initiation and response.
4. Demonstrate cultural awareness.

Topics to be Covered

1. Introduction
2. Importance of small talk
3. Key Principle for small talk
4. Topic suitable for small talk
- 6.7. Activity
7. Conclusion
8. Learning outcome

Introduction to Small Talk

- **Corporate Etiquettes** are the foundation of a respectful and effective workplace environment.
- One key aspect of professional etiquette is mastering the art of **Small Talk** — engaging in polite, light conversation that builds rapport and connection.
- Small talk helps **break the ice**, ease communication barriers, and create a **comfortable atmosphere** among colleagues and clients.
- It demonstrates **emotional intelligence**, attentiveness, and interpersonal awareness.

- When done appropriately, it helps in **building trust, teamwork, and long-term professional relationships.**
- Effective small talk also enhances **communication confidence** and supports a **positive organizational culture.**
- In essence, small talk is not “small” — it’s a **powerful communication tool** for building positive connections in the corporate world.

Importance of Small Talk

1. Helps **build rapport and trust** among colleagues and clients.
2. Encourages **collaboration and open communication**.
3. Creates a **friendly and inclusive work environment**.
4. Acts as an **ice-breaker** in meetings, interviews, and networking events.
5. Supports the development of **emotional and social intelligence**.

Key Principles of Corporate Small Talk

- Keep it **light, positive, and inclusive**.
- Show **genuine interest** in others through active listening.
- Maintain **professional boundaries** and avoid controversial topics.
- Be **respectful of time and space** during casual interactions.
- Use **appropriate tone, body language, and facial expressions**.

Topics Suitable for Small Talk

1. Weather
2. Hobbies
3. Travel
4. Food
5. Events
6. Workplace

Topics to Avoid

1. Politics
2. Religion
3. Salary
4. Gossip
5. Personal matters

Do's of Small Talk

1. Smile and make eye contact
2. Listen actively
3. Be positive
4. Ask open-ended questions
5. Respect opinions

Don'ts of Small Talk

1. Interrupt
2. Overshare
3. Use slang
4. Judge
5. Force talk

Steps to Effective Small Talk

1. Start with greeting
2. Find common ground
3. Show interest
4. Listen attentively
5. Exit gracefully

Body Language Tips

1. Eye contact
2. Gentle gestures
3. Nod and smile
4. Relaxed posture

Cultural Etiquette

1. Respect norms
2. Adjust tone and gestures
3. Avoid stereotypes
4. Learn polite phrases

Common Small Talk Starters

“How was your weekend?”

“Great presentation!”

“Have you tried the new café?”

“Lovely weather today!”

Role Play Activity

Practice 2-minute small talk:

- Meeting a colleague
- Talking to a client
- Greeting a new employee

Engagement Strategies

- Icebreaker game
- Group discussion
- Video analysis
- Peer feedback

Reflection Question

“Think about a time when small talk helped you connect with someone new.”

Ice-Breaker: “Find a Common Topic”

- **Purpose:** Warm up participants and demonstrate the value of small talk.
- **Activity:**
 - Pair up participants for 3 minutes.
 - Each pair finds **two common interests** (e.g., hobbies, movies, favorite food).

- Afterward, they introduce each other to the group using these common points.
- **Outcome:** Builds rapport and shows how small talk leads to connection.

Think–Pair–Share: What Makes Small Talk Effective?

- **Purpose:** Encourage reflection and critical thinking.
- **Steps:**
 - **Think:** Individually, participants recall a time when small talk helped them in a professional or social setting.
 - **Pair:** Discuss with a partner what made that interaction positive.

Think–Pair–Share: What Makes Small

Talk Effective?

- **Share:** Volunteers share insights with the larger group.
- **Outcome:** Identifies effective verbal and non-verbal small talk strategies.

References

1. Dale Carnegie – How to Win Friends
2. Debra Fine – The Fine Art of Small Talk
3. HBR – Power of Small Talk
4. MindTools.com

Video Links

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRG-YubP1rw>
- <https://youtu.be/UcVNwvpQm8A?si=pgqPIVHYAEmaaGPp>
- <https://youtu.be/EoHlh9XGw3k?si=kO9A-amTgCfaV3Pi>
- https://youtu.be/CzdVJ7gXmsw?si=hT-i9R3y0LmW_8mb
- <https://youtu.be/Zcl2B92JIJU?si=fzfuAOlhVQp-7q8u>

Conclusion

- Small talk builds relationships
- Be polite and positive.
- Every conversation counts!

Learning Outcomes

After this session, learners will be able to:

1. Exhibit polite conversational skills.
2. Demonstrate confidence.
3. Use positive body language.
4. Avoid inappropriate topics.

Thank You