

## **Mind your manners**

*“Thank you” and “please” can give you a boost up the ladder*

Proper business etiquette gives you an edge over other candidates when employers are considering promotions or making hiring decisions. Good manners demonstrate the qualities employers desire most – team players and excellent communication skills. Being polite also instills confidence in your co-workers that you can deliver as promised.

Employees who are rude or disrespectful not only disrupt the work environment but their bad behavior can impact the company’s bottom line. An unpleasant workplace lowers employees’ morale, decreases productivity, affect customer service and can possibly have legal implications.

Whatever your position in the company, lead by example by displaying good manners. It will not only make for a more pleasant work experience but definitely show your supervisors you have great potential for moving up the ladder and gains you respect from your peers.

### **Talk the talk, walk the walk**

“Please” and “thank you” are the basics learned in childhood – yet many don’t use them at work. When you thank a co-worker, even for a simple effort, you brighten their day and reinforce the value of their contribution. Using “please” will get you what you want more often than issuing an order. You can’t demand respect; but you can earn it.

### **Respond in kind**

Always respond in a timely fashion to emails and voicemails. Even if you don’t have the answer, acknowledging their message shows you value their time and gives assurance their need will be met.

### **Calendar care**

Who doesn’t groan at the prospect of yet another meeting? But so many are held that aren’t needed. Follow this rule of thumb – if no action is needed, neither is the meeting. When attending a meeting, be on time and be prepared. Follow up on any actions given you and, if you were the lead, send a quick thank you to attendees with the list of actions and decisions made.

### **Wait until it’s your turn**

During meetings or conversations with co-workers, listen more, talk less. By listening carefully, you show them you respect their opinions and ideas. It’s human nature to jump in when a thought pops in your head. Fight the urge. It’s disrespectful to interrupt and may cause a meeting to run over. If the speaker delivers misinformation, and it must be corrected before the conversation continues, show a physical cue by raising your finger, say “Excuse me but...” Make your point quickly and then allow the person to finish.

## **Promises, promises**

Agreeing to an appointment or a deadline is a contract. Fulfill your obligation and show the person you value their time by being on time for the appointment, delivering on deadline. If you're late, you've broken your end of the bargain and can lower their confidence in your ability to perform your job. It also sends a message that you've more important things and they are low on your priority list. If you are running late, call and be sure to apologize when you arrive. If you're behind deadline, report it immediately; ask for help if needed and do what you can to make up for lost time.

You may be perfectly capable of fulfilling the duties associated with your position in your company but, if you fail to show proper manners and that you value your co-workers, it's a surefire way of making others question your competence.

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For more "do's and don'ts," read [Respect goes a long way in the workplace](#)