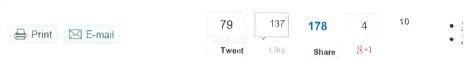


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6 ways you should mind your manners at work

Common courtesy is increasingly uncommon. That's a shame. Politeness is smart in your business dealings, and it's simply the right way to go about things.

By Dianna Booher | Posted: December 29, 2014





(Editor's note: This was one of the top viewed stories of 2014. We're rerunning it as part of a look back at the articles that captivated our readers the most.)

In a culture where many seemingly have no time for courtesy, minding your manners when others have forgotten theirs can get you a job, a promotion, or a date.

Manners make the man-or the woman-

distinctive, memorable. Yet I encounter and hear complaints about these workplace faux pas weekly:

- · Failure to respond on RSVPs;
- · Improper introductions;
- · Late arrivals to conference calls and meetings;
- Late thank-you calls or notes;
- · Unreturned calls or emails;
- · Inattention when people speak to you.

So here are a few reminders:

1. Accept or decline all invitations promptly

When you wait longer than a week to reply when a response is requested, the host may wonder whether you're waiting for a better offer to come along.

Hosts must plan the menu, pay for the food for each attendee, and in some cases rent serving dishes and furniture for a specific number of guests. If the host has to contact you to ask whether you're attending, you have committed a major faux pas.

2. Be prompt to meetings or conference calls

Arriving late communicates one of two messages: "My time is more valuable than yours," or, "I'm a poor time manager."

Neither is a positive message.

The longer I've dealt with senior executives, the more importance they place on punctuality.

3. Be present when you show up

When you attend an event, turn off all the gadgets and get in the spirit of the thing.

What host wants to have guests who stand in the corner and hang on their cell phone all evening? Or who wants guests who pop in for 15 minutes, only to announce that they were late and are leaving early because they have more important places to be and people to see?

If you're going to show up, join in. Don't make your attendance seem obligatory.

4. Introduce and include people

If you're involved in a conversation and someone joins you, introduce the newcomer to the group and toss out a line to rope them into the conversation.

If you're the person about to join the group, read the body language to make sure the other two people aren't involved in a private discussion.

5. Be prompt with a thank-you note or call

A note that arrives three weeks after the event or situation looks like "my mom made me write this."

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6. Turn off your background noise makers

Callers do not want to hear your music makers in the background (radio, iPod, or your iTunes selection) coming through while they're trying to carry on a conversation with you.

A version of this article first appeared on Dianna Booher's Booher Banter blog.

