

# HOW NOT TO GET FIRED

## PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE

### What is Professional Etiquette?

Professional etiquette is a set of expected behaviors for individual actions in a given setting. Within a place of business, it involves presenting oneself in a professional manner, as well as treating coworkers and clients with respect and courtesy. Professional etiquette creates a pleasant work environment for everyone.

### Why Is It Important?

Professional etiquette provides a set of expected behaviors within which people can operate as they work, collaborate, and communicate with others. As you engage with professionals, you build a trusted reputation of excellence by consistently showing others that you are respectful, credible, and responsible. You also express a friendly can-do attitude. Your professional etiquette could be the deciding factor between you getting the job and it going to another candidate. So make your first impressions count!

## Boundaries

### Do...

- Establish work relationships.
- Be mindful of your role at work events and parties.
- Clean up after yourself.
- Check in with your supervisor when work is slow.
- Be ethical.

### Don't ...

- Bring personal matters into the workplace.
- Forget that your behavior reflects on you, your co-workers, and the organization.
- Expect an office maid.
- Assume that doing homework or using social media on the job is acceptable.
- Misuse work resources or take food items that belong to others.

## Email

### Do...

- Create a professional email address.
- Have a clear subject line.
- Include your signature and contact information.
- Leave the "To" field blank until you've completed your message.
- Spell check, grammar check, and proofread.
- Respond to emails within 48 hours.

### Don't ...

- Use Texting Language.
- Use emoticons/emojis.
- Use "Reply All," "CC," and "BCC" haphazardly.
- Write in ALL CAPS.
- Vent your frustrations or emotions.
- Send personal emails.

## Phone and Voicemail

### Do...

- Speak clearly, audibly, and use the person's name throughout the call.
- Have a clear idea/purpose for the call.
- Leave a message with your name, email, and phone number (repeated twice).
- Cover one topic per voicemail message.
- Follow up with an email after your phone call.
- Maintain your voicemail inbox to avoid a full inbox.

### Don't ...

- Use slang/text words.
- Take calls in a noisy environment.
- Keep the person on hold for long periods of time.
- Use your cell phone during work hours.
- Leave long voice messages.
- Forget to return calls within 24 hours.

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## Social Media

### Do...

- Remain professional. (If you would not say it in person, do not say it on social networking sites.)
- Use proper grammar.
- Keep track of your digital footprint by maintaining/updating your accounts.
- Promote yourself by sharing articles, videos, blog posts, and other content.
- Use LinkedIn and other professional sites when reaching out to employers.

### Don't ...

- Share too much information (TMI).
- Post inappropriate comments or photos.
- Neglect to proofread social media posts.
- Forget that people may have a different sense of humor than you.
- Badmouth competitors.

## In-Person Meetings

### Do...

- Show up on time.
- Prepare projects and possible problem-solving solutions.
- Listen actively.
- Contribute by asking questions and offering ideas.
- Have a learning attitude.
- Follow up with any agenda items quickly.

### Don't ...

- Play with your mobile device or answer calls/texts.
- Doodle.
- Act like a know-it-all.
- Keep yawning or fall asleep.
- Have side conversations.
- Be disruptive.
- Talk over others.

## Sick and Vacation Days

### Sick Day Do's ...

- Ask supervisors what they prefer regarding emails, voice messages, and direct calls.
- Consider those who need to know, including team members and appointment organizers.
- Avoid the Monday/Friday sick day pattern.

### Vacation Do's ...

- Plan ahead and remind your supervisor a week in advance.
- Know your work cycle.
- Follow workplace procedures and add all vacation days to your work calendar.

