

CIVILITY EXPERTS

Worldwide

COMMUNICATING PROFESSIONALISM

TRAINER'S LESSON



The Civility at Work Series

THE CIVILITY AT WORK SERIES

Recent studies suggest that incivility in the workplace can significantly impact morale, customer service, productivity, and the bottom line. Increasingly, consumers as well as employees are demanding courtesy and respect. Whether it's teaching executives to write a proper thank you card, encouraging front-line employees to practice proper telephone etiquette or coaching a new manager on appropriate business dress, companies who care about internal and external client service are increasing the bottom line by investing in civility training.

In response to high demand from a range of industries, Civility Experts Worldwide is pleased to offer **CIVILITY AT WORK** series of Trainer Kits. These comprehensive training kits provide cost-effective, practical tools that meet the needs of modern business.

Positive outcomes of civility training:

- * achieving professional goals
- * increasing confidence
- * creating positive first impressions
- * practicing positive, professional communication skills; in print, on the phone, electronically, nonverbally, and face-to-face
- * improving presentation skills
- * increasing social IQ for mixing and dining situations
- * building productive workplace relationships
- * ensuring client service satisfaction
- * increasing revenue



ABOUT CIVILITY EXPERTS WORLDWIDE Workplace Civility Expert

The “face” of the Canadian workplace is changing. Labour sources suggest that by 2012, the majority of growth in the Canadian labour pool will be New Canadians and Internationally Trained Professionals. To thrive amidst the impact of this significant change, progressive Canadian businesses are seeking to understand the needs and cultural perspectives of New Canadians and to effectively incorporate intercultural personnel into their Canadian work forces.



LEW BAYER,
President Civility Experts Worldwide

Accordingly, nationally acclaimed civility in the workplace expert Lew Bayer founded The Center for Organizational Cultural Competence (COCC) in April 2008. In an effort to meet the needs of employers who want to attract and retain qualified employees from the growing multi-cultural labour pool, the Center offers training, presentations, and educational tools related to managing change, addressing diversity, building organizational cultural competence, and leveraging differences at work.

Fostering inclusiveness is good business for Canadians in every occupational sector. The team at the COCC includes



experts in organizational issues, intercultural competence trainers, English as additional language instructors, cultural perspective advisors, and experienced competency and transferable skills analysts.

For the past 10 years, Lew has been a Principal of The Civility Group Inc. which she co-founded in 1999.

Lew is also President of the In Good Company Civility Experts.com training team, co-founder of Winnipeg Roaring Women, chosen as a member of the City of Winnipeg Citizens Equity Committee, SITAR, and MEEPA. Lew is a 6-time published author, national columnist for Canadian Living and Heart Magazines and web, a trained Intercultural Communications Facilitator, proficient writer and renowned professional speaker. She has twice been nominated Manitoba Woman entrepreneur of the year, in 2007 she was a finalist in the International Trade category.



LESSON PLAN

Communicating Professionalism

Lesson Plan Contents at a Glance:

Overview of communication.....	11
What does etiquette/civility have to do with communication?	13
How are your communication skills?	18
Components of respectful communication	25
The 4 E's Rule	31
Communicating respect at work	32
Appendix A – Participant Masters File	as attached



Possible Titles For Session:

- * Communicating with Courtesy
- * P's and Q's for Profit
- * Navigating the Manners Minefield
- * Creating a Culture of Connectedness: Communication Essentials

Length of Session:

3 hours, including 2-ten minute breaks.

Sample "Sell" Segment:

Imagine having the ability to hold the attention of others. Imagine sending a message of confidence and credibility without saying a word. And, imagine saving time by sending clear, concise electronic and written communication. All this is possible by practicing some simple communication techniques. Join Canada's civility at work experts and learn the nuances of communicating respect and professionalism.

Who Would Benefit From This Session?

Front-line personnel, human resources professionals, executives, project managers, anyone who interacts with other people in any way; electronically, via the telephone, or face-to-face, would benefit by brushing up on his/her communication skills.

Rationale For This Session:

One of the prevailing issues within the etiquette business is the pervasive misunderstanding on the part of many businesspeople about what exactly etiquette is. Most business people don't automatically make the connection between etiquette (and/or civility) and professionalism. They don't understand that civility impacts us everyday. There is a tangible cost to business and rudeness is rampant



in the workplace. Among other things, how we talk, move, dress, negotiate, and communicate is directly influenced and impacted by our understanding of, and attitude towards, civility.

Imagine, 85% of us feel that the world would be a better place if we just said “please” and “thank you” more often (ABCNEWS/World Tonight Poll May 1999). A man who has good manners does not hurt the feelings of others, and therefore he is on good terms with his friends and neighbors and also with others. In this way, he helps to keep peace in society. But a man whose manners are bad has no respect for others. He uses words carelessly and behaves rudely towards other and causes a lot of ill-will and unpleasantness. <http://hundredmoralstories.blogspot.ca/2013/01/talk-about-good-manners.html>

Session Outcomes:

After attending this session you will be better able to:

- * Consistently exhibit the qualities of a professional
- * Learn techniques for communicating respect and leadership
- * Present yourself in a positive way
- * Understand and address the needs of those you are communicating with
- * Adopt the 4 E’s philosophy

Topics Covered in This Session:

- * Overview of communication
- * What does etiquette/civility have to do with communication?
- * How are your communication skills?
- * Components of respectful communication
- * The 4 E’s Rule
- * Communicating respect at work

“Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you’ll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you’ll find that you have more of it.”

~ Ralph Marston



Statistics:

Here's more to ponder — nearly 1 in 4 of all employees suffers chronic anger on the job. Workplace anger is on the upswing, because people feel betrayed by their employers (*The Marlin Co. & Yale School of Management*)



In a five-year workplace study, more than half surveyed said they were distracted by rude behavior at work and got less done while fuming or worrying about it... 22% said they purposely quit doing their best work due to incivility (*Christine Pearson, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill*)

Quotes and Anecdotes:

“When I was young, I used to admire intelligent people; as I grow older, I admire kind people.” ~ Abraham Joshua Heschel



“Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.” ~ Albert Schweitzer

“A successful person is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks that others throw at him or her.” ~ David Brinkley

“In God we trust, all others we virus scan.” ~ Unknown

Modern Relevance:

Manners have taken many an unexpected turn with the age of social networking on the internet. We used to say it was impolite to call anyone after 9 pm, but have you noticed how that has changed with texting and messaging? Anything goes 24/7!



<http://sharonsantoni.com/2013/05/les-bonnes-manieres-or-good-manners-today.html>. Please see the following link for an infographic on Netiquette <http://edtechreview.in/trends-insights/insights/1352-infographic-15-rules-of-netiquette-for-online-discussion-boards>



History:

DISRESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

Dueling

The duel usually developed out of the desire of one party (the challenger) to redress a perceived insult to his honour. The goal of the duel was not so much to kill the opponent as to gain “satisfaction,” i.e., to restore one’s honor by demonstrating a willingness to risk one’s life for it.

www.wikipedia.com

Wearing shoes

Sitting with the soles of your shoes showing. In many cultures this sends a rude message. In Thailand, Japan and France as well as countries of the Middle and Near East showing the soles of the feet demonstrates disrespect. You are exposing the lowest and dirtiest part of your body so this is insulting.

Passing with one hand

Passing an item with one hand is considered very rude in Japanese culture. In Japan this is very rude. Even a very small item such as a pencil must be passed with two hands. In many Middle and Far Eastern countries it is rude to pass something with your left hand which is considered “unclean.”

Cultural Tips:

Cultures can be different not only between continents or nations, but also within the same company or even family: every human being has their own history, their own life, and therefore their own cultural experiences (geographical, ethnical, moral, ethical, religious, political, historical) as well as a cultural affiliation or cultural identity.



Typical examples of cultural differences:

- * In Arabic countries the odours (of condiments, coffee etc.) are often perceived in more differentiated ways than e.g. in northern America.
- * In Asian countries the perception of time is rather past-oriented (ancestors, values), in Latin American countries as well as southern European countries, rather present-oriented, and in western Europe as well as North America rather future-oriented (achieving goals).

Behaviour and gestures are interpreted differently:

- * Showing the thumb held upwards in Latin America, especially Brazil, means “everything’s ok”, while it is understood in some Islamic countries as a rude sexual sign.
- * “Everything ok” is shown in western European countries, especially between pilots and divers, with the sign of the thumb and forefinger forming an “O”. In Japan, this sign means, “now we may talk about money” and in southern France it denotes the contrary, “nothing, without any value”; moreover, in some Latin American countries, Eastern Europe, and Russia it is an indecent sexual sign.
- * In North America as well as in Arabic countries the pauses between words are usually not too long, while in Japan pauses can give a contradictory sense to the spoken words. Enduring silence is perceived as comfortable in Japan, while in India, Europe and North America it may cause insecurity and embarrassment. Scandinavians, by Western standards, are more tolerant of silent breaks during conversations.
- * Laughing is connoted in most countries with happiness—in Japan it is often a sign of confusion, insecurity and embarrassment.



- * In the UK, Ireland and Commonwealth countries the word “compromise” has a positive meaning (as a consent, an agreement where both parties win something); in North America it may rather have negative connotations (as both parties lose something).
- * If invited to dinner, in some Asian countries and Central America it is well-mannered to leave right after the dinner: the ones who don't leave may indicate they have not eaten enough. In the Indian sub-continent, European and North American countries this is considered rude, indicating that the guest only wanted to eat but wouldn't enjoy the company with the hosts.
- * In Mediterranean European countries, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa, it is normal, or at least widely tolerated, to arrive half an hour late for a dinner invitation, whereas in Germany this would be extremely rude.

www.wikipedia.com

Make a “V” sign. This means “Victory” in most of Europe when you make this sign with your palm facing away from you. If you face your palm in, the same gesture means “Shove it.”

http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/body_language.php

Reference and Research:

Web pages:

<http://sboyd.com/resources-2/articles/>
<http://sboyd.com/resources-2/books/>
<http://www.mhprofessional.com/product.php?isbn=1259183009>
www.tipsforsuccess.org/success-articles.htm
www.CEOexpress.com
www.Refdesk.com
www.wikipedia.com



Books:

True Professionalism: The Courage to be About Your People, Your Clients, and Your Career. Author: David H Maister. Publisher: Simon and Schuster, May 18, 2000.

Speaking Effective English: Your Guide To Acquiring New Confidence in Personal and Professional Communication (Audio Book). Author: Bettye Zoller. Publisher: Simon and Schuster Audio, December 12, 2006.

Professional Communication Series. McGraw-Hill/Irwin. Publisher: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, October 29, 2002.

Please refer to the following for added materials and readings

1. http://www.amazon.ca/Managing-The-Professional-Service-Firm/dp/0684834316/ref=pd_bxgy_b_text_y
2. http://www.amazon.ca/TRUSTED-ADVISOR-Charles-Galford-Maister/dp/0743207769/ref=dp_ob_title_bk
3. <http://www.amazon.ca/Professional-Communication-Series-Technical-Communications/dp/0078298776>
4. <http://www.amazon.ca/True-Professionalism-Courage-People-Clients/dp/0684840049>
5. <http://www.amazon.ca/Speaking-Effective-English-Professional-Communication/dp/074356412X>

To Present This Session You Will Need:

- * Participant Handouts
- * LCD projector and screen if you will be using Powerpoint
- * Flip charts
- * Video clips about communication that illustrate the topic



Participant Handouts:

See Appendix A for Participant Masters.

Agenda Summary: (For 3-Hour Session)

Trainer would begin session with a self-introduction and briefly outline the topics that will be covered in the workshop. Then trainer will discuss what communication is and how it relates to civility/etiquette. Next, trainer will have participants evaluate their own communication skills. Trainer will then talk about communication behaviours that convey respect and explain what the 4 E's philosophy is. The last portion of the session will be about situational etiquette, specifically communicating respect at work.

THROUGHOUT THE LESSON PLAN STEP-BY-STEP
DIRECTIVES FOR THE TRAINER ARE PRINTED IN GOLD

Trainer's Notes:

This session is a good prerequisite to the other lessons on communication because it covers all the basics of business communication. If you are presenting for a very experienced or mature audience, you would be wiser to tailor a session using portions of Lessons 2–5. In addition, adult learners like to participate in the learning so be sure to include group work and exercises.



Knowledge Material: Overview of Communication

INTRODUCTION (10–15 minutes)

Trainer begins:

Have you ever wondered how many words you say in a day?



And, wouldn't it be interesting to know what ratio of "talk" is in person versus how much is over the phone or via the computer? There's probably no doubt that the quantity of "talking" we're doing in print has increased substantially now that we can rely on our computers to format and check spelling in our letters and emails. It's interesting though, that even though the modes, quantity, and speed of our communication have advanced at a rapid pace, the quality and craftsmanship of our communication has deteriorated. Most of us just aren't sure what the modern guidelines are for communication. As a result, we sometimes resort to sloppy, slang-filled speech about mundane and inappropriate topics, or maybe yammering on until someone else who isn't really listening interrupts us and maybe being lazy about spell-checking our emails.

Careless communication has a price. Whether you're writing a cover letter for that dream job, doing a presentation for a key client, or meeting your future boss for lunch, you'll want to present yourself positively. Communicating respect and consideration is the key.

Trainer asks participants to list "modes/types" of communication as trainer writes responses on a flip chart or white board. Responses may include:

- * Talking face-to-face
- * Talking to a person on the phone
- * Using PDA
- * Email
- * Fax
- * Voicemail
- * Body language
- * Hard-copy letter
- * Tele-conference
- * 3rd party communication, e.g., translator
- * In print



- * Other _____
- * Other _____

Trainer continues:

Even when you do nothing and/or saying nothing you are communicating something. If you interact with people in any way you are communicating. Every communication offers an opportunity to present oneself in a positive, professional way. It does not matter how rich you are, how beautiful you might be, how old or young, or how many degrees or years of experience you have...it doesn't even matter who you know... if you cannot communicate effectively. (By the way, even negative messages can be conveyed in either effective or ineffective ways.

Trainer hands out index cards and asks participants to use one side to write a communication question, issue or problem. And, on the other side, participants should write a "tip" or idea, some good habit or method they have that helps them communicate effectively, e.g., colour coding emails.

Passive-aggressive behaviour refers to passive, sometimes obstructionist resistance to authoritative instructions in interpersonal or occupational situations. It can manifest itself as resentment, stubbornness, procrastination, sullenness, or intentional failure at doing requested tasks. For example, people who are passive-aggressive might take so long to get ready for a party they do not wish to attend that the party is nearly over by the time they arrive.

www.wikipedia.org

Knowledge Material:

WHAT DOES ETIQUETTE/CIVILITY HAVE TO DO WITH COMMUNICATION?
(5–10 minutes)



Trainer explains:

We communicate in some way everyday. And when we are communicating with others, everything we say or do sends a message. In workplace settings, we are accountable for consistently exhibiting professionalism and appropriate communication is a key component of customer service. This applies regardless of your rank.

Trainer asks participants, “What assessments do you make for each of the following communications?”

- * Someone speaks very slowly – they don’t know what they’re talking about, they lack confidence, they are not “with it” or focused.
- * Someone speaks very quickly – they are in a rush, they are impatient, they are lying.

These are just two examples, think of all the ways we communicate; how we dress, how we hold our head, gestures, nervous habits, how we write email, our grammar, etc. In every one of those instances, we are giving others opportunities to make judgments about us- we want those judgments to be positive. Ignoring how our behaviour impacts others is disrespectful and exhibiting unacceptable communication behaviours, e.g., swearing, is an overt breach of etiquette.

So, what is etiquette anyway? Etiquette is the “guidelines” or rules for behaviour. The “rules” of etiquette change depending on where you are and other situational conditions.

“Civility” refers to how individuals interact with each other and to what extent those interpersonal interactions fit into an accepted social code.



Terms to Know:

Etiquette, one aspect of decorum, is the code that governs the expectations of social behavior, the conventional norm. It is an unwritten code, but it may be codified in written form. Etiquette usually reflects formulas of conduct in which society or tradition have invested. An etiquette rule reflects the underlying ethical code itself. Like “culture,” it is a word that has gradually grown plural, especially in a multi-ethnic society with many clashing expectations. Thus, it is now possible to refer to “an etiquette” or “a culture,” realizing that these may not be universal. Etiquette is dependent on culture; what is excellent etiquette in one society may shock in another. Etiquette evolves within culture.

www.wikipedia.com

The word “etiquet” is a French derivation, and first meant a label or ticket. It’s origin goes back to the days of Louise XIV. The Scottish head gardener at Versailles found his cherished flower borders were being trampled on, so he put a number of labels or “etiquets” near the flower beds to warn people off. The signs were ignored, so the gardener asked for help from the King who ordered that visitors must keep within the “etiquets”. Hence the significance of the word—a limit or boundary beyond which one must not go.

*Gertrude Pringle,
Etiquette in Canada, McClelland and Steward, 1932*

Francis Bacon said,
“If a man can be
gracious and
courteous to
strangers, it shows
he is a citizen of
the world.”

Civic virtue is the cultivation of habits of personal living that are claimed to be important for the success of the community. The identification of the character traits that constitute civic virtue has been a major concern of political philosophy. The term civility refers to behaviour between persons and groups that conforms to a social (i.e., “civil”) mode, as itself being a foundational principle of society and law.

www.wikipedia.com





By taking the time to learn how to communicate appropriately and effectively, and then choosing to consistently exhibit those behaviours, we are showing respect for ourselves and for others.

Modern Relevance:

EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES RELATE TO A COMPANY'S HEALTH



There's a direct link that runs from employee satisfaction, through customer satisfaction, to a company's financial performance, according to the results of a study by the Forum for People Performance Management and Measurement at Northwestern University. Reported findings of the study include:

- ✦ The key characteristic for explaining employee satisfaction is organizational communication, upward and downward.
- ✦ Employee satisfaction is a key antecedent to employee engagement.



- * Organizations with engaged employees have customers who use their products more, and increased customer usage leads to higher levels of customer satisfaction.

Contact: Forum for People Performance Management and Measurement, [http://www.marketing.org/files/employee_engagement_study\(1\).pdf](http://www.marketing.org/files/employee_engagement_study(1).pdf) and http://www.marketing.org/files/human_resources_and_marketing_study.pdf

TRAINER'S NOTES:



Knowledge Material

HOW ARE YOUR
COMMUNICATION SKILLS?
(15–30 minutes)



Trainer should begin this segment by reiterating the connection between courtesy/civility and communication. For example, polished professionals understand that it doesn't matter how smart you are, how much experience you have, or how important what you have to say is...if you do not communicate in a way that makes people want to listen to you." (Keep in mind that in business settings, you usually want the listener to do something specific after listening to you too).

So, how do you get people to listen to you? Trainer asks participants why they listen to some people and not others. Trainer writes their suggestions on the flip chart.

Responses may include:

- * the speaker pays attention to me when speaking
- * I can tell by the speaker's nodding and comments that he/she is listening to my responses and really wants to hear what I have to say too
- * the speaker doesn't interrupt
- * the speaker is respectful
- * the speaker makes sense
- * the speaker provides clarification or gives me an opportunity to ask for clarification

Trainer suggests that although many of our actions are well-intended, we maybe don't realize that we have adopted communication habits that are not necessarily interpreted as "professional," "clear," or "effective". (This



could apply to face-to-face communication, telephone conversations, or email and other written communications.)

Trainer asks participants to refer to handout – Rate Your Communication Skills.

It is estimated that it will take participants 3–4 minutes to complete the sheet and then 3–4 minutes to discuss responses.

After participants have completed worksheet, trainer asks participants “Who recognizes a couple of areas they can work on?” Trainer can choose one or two issues on the sheet and discuss them with the group.



EXERCISE

Rate Your Communication Skills

Communication Skills	Need to do less	Doing Alright	Need to do More
----------------------	-----------------	---------------	-----------------

Be brief and concise, get to the point
 More and more, professionals expect communications, whether face-to-face, in print or by voice to be short and get straight to the point. You may be interested to know that experts suggest busy business people only really read and absorb documents of 1 page in length- they may skim longer documents, but they rarely read or absorb the content. Also, studies suggest that adults have an attention span of 20 minutes when listening or reading for the purpose of retaining information.

Use body language, gestures and stance to support my words
 If you are a person who speaks with your hands or relies on your facial expressions to clarify your words, you have to be particularly careful when writing emails or speaking on the phone because you may subconsciously expect that listeners and message recipients have cues and add-on information that they don't.

Use words that accurately describe what I want to say
 This is an interesting issue. Studies suggest that women in particular have a tendency to beat around the bush, or to soften a message- especially when it involves bad news or personal opinion. So...if you are a man talking to a woman, always be sure to ask for clarification, or watch body language and don't assume that the woman said what she really meant. For example, "I'm fine, no really, I'm fine" And, if you are a woman try harder to remember that business is business and say what you mean- this builds credibility and confidence.

Ask others to repeat (playback) what I have said to them
 If you are the leader or boss in a situation, don't be shy about asking people to repeat directions or say back to you in their own words what they think you just said to them.



Communication Skills	Need to do less	Doing Alright	Need to do More
----------------------	-----------------	---------------	-----------------

Let others know when I don't understand something they've said

How many people do you think will ask for clarification? Experts say 2/10- no wonder most of the time, we're wandering around in a fog, not really understanding what was said, e.g., workplace meetings.

Listen to understand rather than preparing my next remarks

Before I agree or disagree or say anything, check to make sure I understand

Many of us have a tendency to anticipate endings, or to assume we know what is going to be coming out of someone's mouth. Try hard to wait, and listen, until someone has finished his/her thought before responding.

Check out with others what I think they are feeling rather than assuming I know

Observe non verbal messages

Very often, if you're paying attention, nonverbal cues such as posture, movement of eyebrows, fidgeting, weight shifting, and other gestures can speak volumes about how truthful someone is, and how credible a person is.

Share good feelings (praise, happiness, appreciation)

Unless someone specifically asks for your opinion or constructive criticism, try not to give it. Instead, find something positive to comment on or say nothing. Remember, if you are going to "gush" verbally and say something emotional or sensitive- just speak it- in business settings, avoid the impulse to hug or touch someone.

Skills I want to practice:



References: Behavior Styles 1988. (Agdex 1834-8)
References: The Art of Communicating, Bert Drecker, Crisp Publications, 1988.
Communicating Effectively: The Key to Your Organization's Success, Alberta LEAD, 1990

Trainer leads into next section by stating, "Unfortunately, even when we make our best effort to communicate clearly and concisely, or to be a good listener and not jump to conclusions, miscommunications can still happen.

Professionals who want to consistently convey a positive, respectful communication style need to know how to respond calmly to avoid communication catastrophes. Trainer asks participants to turn to Avoid Conversation Catastrophes Handout. This exercise can be assigned to small groups, or trainer can work with the participants to discuss together. (This is a good large/whole group activity.)

It is estimated that this exercise will take 10–12 minutes.

AVOID CONVERSATION CATASTROPHES

It's a nice idea to be polite to people, even when they're wrong, or screaming at you, or obviously picking a fight. The reality is that it's not always easy to be "the bigger person" and walk away from someone who has deliberately put you in an embarrassing or difficult situation. First and foremost it's important that you see it coming. For example, you know that someone may be trying to get a rise out of you when and if they start a conversation with statements like those listed below. How could you respond to each politely?



Trainer reads off each example (or if time is an issue asks, “Have you experienced any of the following conversation catastrophes waiting to happen?” Then let participants choose 2–3 to discuss. If no one is forthcoming, simply choose a couple and talk about why they are tension creators, and how to handle them.

- * With all due respect... (implies the speaker is going to be disrespectful)

Polite response – I’m not sure I’m comfortable with where this conversation is headed, let’s change the subject...

- * This might be out of line... (implies the speaker is willing to risk being out of line and probably will be)

Polite response – Smile and say, whoa, be careful, I’m not in a great mood, or... let’s not risk it, okay, let’s talk about—instead...

- * May I ask a personal question? (implies familiarity or prying which may not be welcome or appropriate)

Polite response – Actually, I’m a very private person...or I’m not comfortable answering personal questions.

- * I hope you don’t mind but... (suggests the speaker thinks you might mind, and may even have reason to)

Polite response – Actually, I’ve had a difficult day or I’m stressed (or tired or whatever), and so I probably will mind...or...You know, I’m just going to take a minute...

- * If I can offer you some advice... (Implies the speaker has an opinion or is making a judgment—and probably not a favourable one)

Polite response – Thank you but no, I’d really like to handle this decision, or situation, or issue on my own...or, I appreciate your interest/concern but I’ve made up my mind...

EXERCISE



* If you want my opinion... (suggests the speaker thinks you do want his/her opinion and/or that he/she intends on giving it regardless)

Polite response – Actually, no thank you, I’m not really up to opinions today ...or, would you mind if we talked about this later.

Fortunately, with a little practice you can watch for these troublesome lines and resist taking the bait. Instead turn the tables on the “instigator”. The most effective thing to do in this situation is answer an uncomfortable question with a question.

****Tip- A simple question that seems to fit almost any awkward situation is “that’s a strange question, could you be more specific?” or “I’m not sure I understand the question, would you rephrase it?” At least, you’ll buy a little recovery time. Worst-case scenario, it is perfectly acceptable to simply smile and say, “you know, I’m just not comfortable answering that question.” This usually results in the questioner saying, “oh, sorry I asked.”*

NOTES:
Intrapersonal communication – communication with ourselves— independent relationship.
Interpersonal communication – communication with others, interdependent relationship.

Honestly is my version of the truth.
 ~ Unknown

TRAINER’S NOTES:



Knowledge Material:

COMPONENTS OF RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION (15–20 minutes)



Trainer states:

People regularly judge each other on the basis of communication; how we dress, how we move, how we write, and how we talk. Most people would agree that once they've made a judgment about someone it's pretty hard to change their mind.

Trainer asks participants:

“How many times do you think someone has made an incorrect assessment of you based on his or her first impression of you? Do you know how you are presenting yourself?” The attributes listed below are just a few characteristics we need to consider when putting our best foot forward towards communicating professionalism.

- * **Clean and neat appearance** – Maintaining “clean and neat” can be as simple as remembering to pick up your suit at the cleaners or as tedious as ironing your shirt each morning (and that means the whole shirt not just the front). Pay some attention to the details because it is the details that will hold someone’s attention if you are lucky enough to get that person’s attention.
- * There are few things as disappointing as receiving a limp, spaghetti-finger **handshake** from a confident looking professional. Firm handshakes give others a welcome greeting and set the tone for respectful communications.
- * A **friendly smile** shows others that you are happy to see them, puts them at ease.



- * Lycra skirts or “I Love Beer” t-shirts are not **appropriate work clothing** unless you are a go-go dancer or work in a brewery. Remember to wear clothes and accessories that are suitable to the environment you are employed at. Look like the professional you aspire to be.
- * **Respect the time of others** by arriving when you say you will arrive. Organize yourself according to the business priorities and leave the office early in times of traffic or disturbing weather. Always telephone when you are running late.
- * Fumbling with papers, stammering out responses, and nervous giggling are all clues that you are just pretending to be **knowledgeable and prepared**. Spend time before appointments to organize your thoughts and documents. If people show up without a scheduled time to meet ask them to return later so you can be primed and ready to go.
- * A **sense of humor** helps make a first impression positive, as long as the humor is delivered in proper context. When meeting new people the pressure to impress can be nerve racking so turning the situation around with laughter can alleviate stress and make others feel more relaxed.
- * To ensure a positive first impression act as though the person you are speaking with is at that moment, the only person in the room. Direct **eye contact** is essential if you want to send a respectful message and give others an impression that you are interested and attentive.
- * **Listen** with your whole being. When someone is speaking make sure you look directly at them and use nodding along with the occasional “uh hum” or “hmm” to let him/her know you are listening.



EXERCISE

WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION QUIZ

1. I should be honest with co-workers at all times.
True or False?
2. It is sad but many adults feel bullied in the workplace.
True or False?
3. One of the primary reasons there are miscommunications at work is...
 - a) no one is listening
 - b) no one says what they mean
 - c) we do not back up what we say with nonverbal communication
4. The easiest way to end an argument is to say you are sorry.
True or False?
5. Typically only 5% of our nonverbal communication is deliberate?
True or False?
6. I have 60–120 seconds to make a first impression.
7. People are more likely to trust me when they first meet me if they can see both my hands.
True or False?
8. When you shake someone's hand it's appropriate to move your body in close proximity to theirs and it's okay to pat them or put your other hand on their elbow or shoulder.
True or False?



9. When someone says, “Don’t get up!” they really mean it and it’s not necessary to get up.

True or False?

10. If I’m meeting two or more co-workers at the same time, I should always introduce myself and shake hands with the women first.

True or False?

11. The objective of first impressions is to determine whether I trust someone enough to continue a relationship with them.

True or False?

12. People appreciate a clean and neat appearance, however, they will notice my attitude and demeanour more than they’ll notice my clothes.

True or False?

13. Can I send an e-mail as a thank you after a lunch meeting?

- a) Sending an E-mail thank you is all that is expected.
- b) A hand-written note is always the best option.
- c) Just call...it takes so much less time.

14. Should a man or a woman initiate a business handshake?

- a) The most senior person by age.
- b) It does not matter – just do it!
- c) Whoever invited the guests should initiate handshakes.

15. How long does a person have to return business phone calls?

- a) Business calls should be returned within one hour.
- b) A maximum of seven days.
- c) Each person needs to establish a return calls policy.



16. If invited to a function where I will not know anyone except the guest of honor, whom am I allowed to bring?
- a) No one, unless the invitation explicitly states “and guest”.
 - b) A client or friend who may know the guest of honor.
 - c) If you are uncomfortable alone, don’t attend. Send a note of regret.

17. At a business lunch who should pay the bill?
- a) Always split it down the middle.
 - b) The person who did the inviting should pay the bill.
 - c) The person who makes more money should pay the bill.

18. When I am wearing a nametag it should be on my right lapel.

True or False?

19. A good hand shaker maintains hand contact until an introduction is complete.

True or False?

20. How would you introduce your boss to your spouse at a work related event?
- a) Mr./Ms. Boss, I’d like you to meet my spouse.
 - b) Spouse, this is my boss Mr./Ms. Boss.
 - c) Spouse, I’d like to introduce Mr./Ms. Boss.

21. Business casual means a man’s shirt should have a collar.

True or False?

22. Chewing gum is a good habit to get into if you want to keep fresh breath.

True or False?



Research suggests that 90% of those who are kept fully informed are more likely to be motivated to deliver added value to the company. The business benefits of communication are clear: the more you communicate with staff, the more they are motivated to deliver results for the organisation.

Knowledge Material:

THE 4 E'S RULE (2–5 minutes)



Trainer explains:

A recent study suggested that one quality that differentiates leaders is consistency. Specifically, good leaders have an ability to be fair and reasonable, regardless of who they are interacting with and when making decisions. This idea relates to communication in the workplace and what experts at The Civility Group Inc. call the *Four–E's Philosophy*. Generally, applying the Four E's philosophy will help you with many of the small and simple decisions you have to make daily, and because interpersonal relationships can sometimes complicate workplace decisions, a Four E's attitude might get you over some communication hurdles as well.

The Four E's Philosophy (by The Civility Group Inc.) is that everyone, in every situation, every time, gets exactly the same respect and consideration.

For example, we don't make decisions about who is treated respectfully or courteously on the basis of gender, generation, rank, the day of the week, etc. When it becomes obvious to employees (because they see it everyday) that a manager or supervisor is consistent in treating people fairly—no favoritism, no decisions based on age, or gender etc—but always instead focused on the business priority—



respect grows. It doesn't take long either until people stop playing games and trying to manipulate the boss or play the politics because they see it is fruitless to do so. Adopting the Four E's Philosophy will help you become a better communicator, for example, adopting a 4 E's attitude means that you wouldn't condescend verbally, or talk down to someone just because of their rank. And you would give the same consideration to communications with your boss that you would to communications with a delivery person or a front-line assistant.

Basically you think about the repercussions of everything you say and do and go from there. And if you add a focus on the business priority, meaning you ask yourself, "Will this conversation help me achieve my business goals?" or "Will this communication build-up a workplace relationship?" if the answer is "no"—the decision should be easy. If you are someone who uses a pros versus cons approach to problem-solving/decision-making, always be sure to include the impact (both pros and cons) of any/all communications to relationships and to others who are impacted by what you say and do.

Knowledge Material:

COMMUNICATING RESPECT AT WORK

Trainer begins:

Over the course of a life time most people will spend at least one-third of the total hours they are alive at work. If you've ever had a bad day at work, or don't enjoy your job, you know that one hour can feel like a lifetime. This is one of the reasons why monitoring stress and fostering positive workplace relationships is so important. Effective, appropriate communication skills are essential to showing care and consideration to co-workers, higher-ups, and clients.



So what does communicating with care entail? First and foremost we have to do away with some commonly held misconceptions that have led to poor communication habits. For example:

- * Some people believe that if they're not being understood, they need to speak louder. The speaker presumes that the error is on the part of the listener—maybe that he/she is hard of hearing. The reality is that the speaker's message is not being delivered in a clear, concise way.
- * Some of us feel that it is essential to memorize really “big” or obscure words and use them whenever possible therefore giving our associates the impression that we're well spoken or well-read. This tactic rarely fools anyone. There is always someone who actually has a working knowledge of the vocabulary you're pretending to know and you'll end up looking insincere and pretentious. Always make an effort to speak in a language easily understood by your listeners. This applies to the written word as well.
- * Occasionally, we may discover that others have an opinion which differs from our own and regardless of the situation or the company we feel compelled to debate the issues until the disagreeing party comes around to our way of thinking. This “banter” typically leads to one party giving in to avoid a heated confrontation and someone always leaves feeling a little steam-rolled. Arguing is rarely productive communication and certainly is not appropriate in most “open” business environments. Keep in mind that your opinion is simply that—yours—and everyone else is entitled to his or her own opinion too.



- ✦ The most common and quite frankly the rudest of poor communication behaviors is interrupting. If a co-worker is trying to explain to a group an idea or situation and is maybe talking a little too slow, we may have a tendency to try helping them out by finishing their sentences for them. Sometimes we think we can say it better or maybe we're just impatient. Most often our rudeness can be justified by commenting sideways about the co-workers lack of communication skills after the fact.
- ✦ Finally, many people have adopted “communication coping skills”—things like “fast talking”, encouraging the notion that the quicker you speak the more information you can share with others in a shorter period of time. And then there's the “nodder” who feigns attention by continuously bobbing his/her head while thinking about other things in his/her head. In most cases, listening is presupposed by eye contact. If you're glazing over and your mind is elsewhere, the speaker will know. They may pretend not to, but they will know.

Trainer continues:

There is no question that when you put several people with different experiences, opinions, personalities, and many other differences in the same space for several hours, add deadlines and an array of stressors, it is no surprise that miscommunications happen—it's inevitable really.

Further Reading: <http://www.mhprofessional.com/product.php?cat=106&isbn=0071805931&cat=106> and <http://www.mhprofessional.com/product.php?cat=106&isbn=0071809511&cat=106>

The very best way to manage communication issues is to anticipate them and prevent them. This is one of the reasons why organizations implement codes of conduct which include everything from how employees address each other, to how, when, and to whom emails are sent (e.g., what cc means) to how people are to dress, and much, much more.



Trainer refers to tip sheet on Modern Communication Tips.

<http://www.normandale.edu/assets/prebuilt/OnlineEducation/skills/netiquette.pdf>

Modern Communication Tips:

When using the telephone:

- * Act as though you are communicating face-to-face; do not eat and talk, type and talk, or do anything that would interfere with completely focusing on the speaker/listener on the other end of the phone.
- * Stand up if you can and smile when you talk. This increases the energy and improves the tone when you are talking on the telephone.
- * Always leave your name and number at the beginning and again at the end when you are leaving a telephone message.
- * Make telephone “appointments”—schedule specific times to talk, rather than play telephone tag.
- * Do not put callers on the speakerphone without permission and if you do, always tell them if someone else is already in, or enters, the room.

When using email:

- * Always respect the company’s policies for mixing business and personal communications.
- * Always use a subject line. Keep subject line to 30 characters or less (approximately 6–7 words).
- * Treat email as a memo- attach additional information as a letter or formal memo.

T
I
P
S
H
E
E
T



- * Keep email length to 3–5 sentences.
- * Use a separate email to address separate issues.
- * Always insert your signature with first and last name, title, place of work, and telephone number. A mailing address and/or fax number as well as company website information are also helpful.

When sending paper communication:

- * Always choose the mode of communication, print/paper, electronic, or voice that is preferable to the recipient of the communication.
- * Always use a spell and/or grammar check.
- * If the information is sensitive always request a receipt notice; either an email send-back message or a voicemail. It is the sender's responsibility to ensure receipt.
- * Send less, but more concise information.
- * Remember you are sending an impression. Be inclusive, be appropriate and be neat.

When sending a fax:

- * Always consider confidentiality. Telephone to ensure receipt of sensitive documents.
- * Always send a cover page and include the following on the cover page:
 - ¥ Your name (first and last), telephone number and fax number
 - ¥ The recipient's name (first and last) telephone number and fax number
 - ¥ The number of pages



Trainer refers to “Avoid Conversation Catastrophies” and discusses with the group.

An **honorific** is a word or expression that conveys esteem or respect and is used in addressing or referring to a person. “Honorific” may refer broadly to the style of language or particular words used, or, as in this article, to specific words used to convey honor to one perceived as a social superior. Sometimes the term is used not quite correctly to refer to a title of honour (honorary title.)

Honorifics are usually placed immediately before or after the name of the subject. They may also be used to denote occupation, such as “Doctor,” “Coach,” “Father” (for a priest), or “Professor.” Some honorifics can act as complete replacements for a name, as in “sir” or “ma’am.” Subordinates will often use honorifics as punctuation before asking a superior a question or after responding to an order, “Yes, sir.”

English honorifics are usually limited to formal situations, or when children address adults.

Chinese honorifics during the ancient and imperial periods varied greatly based on one’s social status, but after 1920, most of these distinctions had dropped out of colloquial use.

Japanese honorifics are similar to English titles like “Mister” and “Miss,” but in Japanese, which has many honorifics, their use is mandatory in many formal and informal social situations. Japanese grammar as a whole tends to function on hierarchy—honorific stems are appended to verbs and some nouns, and in many cases one word may be exchanged for another word entirely with the same verb- or noun-meaning, but with different honorific connotations. The Japanese personal pronouns are a good example of the honorific hierarchy of the Japanese language—there are five or more words that correspond to each of the English words, “I” and “You.”

Vietnamese honorifics are very similar to Japanese honorifics in their use. Like its Japanese counterpart, Vietnamese honorifics function on hierarchy of social and familial status. And, again similarly, both systems have several terms for “I” and “You.” However, there is a striking difference between the



Vietnamese honorific system and other systems, in addressing certain family members: Let's say your first cousin once removed (son or daughter of your cousin) is older than you. Despite being of more age, your first cousin once removed would (formally) have to address you as "Anh (your first name)" or just "anh", if the addressed is male, and "Chi (your name)" or just "chi", if the addressed is female. Both terms on their own mean "my elder". Such a situation is an example of how hierarchy in the family takes precedence even over age.

Korean honorifics vary according to social distinction. The Korean language also distinguishes social differences with special noun and verb endings. The relationship between a speaker or writer and his or her subject and audience is paramount in Korean, and the grammar reflects this. The relationship between speaker/writer and subject is reflected in honorifics, while that between speaker/writer and audience is reflected in speech level.

In Ancient Rome, Roman honorifics like Augustus turned into titles over time.

Indian honorifics abound, covering formal and informal relationships for social, commercial, spiritual and generational links. Honorifics may be prefix, suffix or replacement types. There are many variations across India. In Gujarati, for an uncle who is your mother's brother the replacement honorific "maama" (long 'a' then short 'a') is used and a male friend will often earn the suffix honorific of "bhai".

Italian honorifics are usually limited to formal situations.

Malay Honorifics are the Malay language complex system of titles and honorifics which is still extensively used in Malaysia and Brunei. Singapore, whose Malay royalty was abolished by the British colonial government in 1891, has adopted civic titles for its leaders.

www.wikipedia.com



EXERCISE

Trainer reads off each example (or if time is an issue asks, “Have you experienced any of the following conversation catastrophes waiting to happen?” Then let participants choose 2–3 to discuss. If no one is forthcoming, simply choose a couple and talk about why they are tension creators, and how to handle them.

AVOID CONVERSATION CATASTROPHES

- * With all due respect... (implies the speaker is going to be disrespectful)

Polite response – I’m not sure I’m comfortable with where this conversation is headed, let’s change the subject...

- * This might be out of line... (implies the speaker is willing to risk being out of line and probably will be)

Polite response – Smile and say, whoa, be careful, I’m not in a great mood, or... let’s not risk it, okay, let’s talk about—instead...

- * May I ask a personal question? (implies familiarity or prying which may not be welcome or appropriate)

Polite response – Actually, I’m a very private person...or I’m not comfortable answering personal questions.

- * I hope you don’t mind but... (suggests the speaker thinks you might mind, and may even have reason to)

Polite response – Actually, I’ve had a difficult day or I’m stressed (or tired or whatever), and so I probably will mind...or...You know, I’m just going to take a minute...

- * If I can offer you some advice... (Implies the speaker has an opinion or is making a judgment—and probably not a favourable one).



Polite response – Thank you but no, I'd really like to handle this decision, or situation, or issue on my own...or, I appreciate your interest/concern but I've made up my mind...

- * If you want my opinion... (suggests the speaker thinks you do want his/her opinion and/or that he/she intends on giving it regardless).

Polite response – Actually, no thank you, I'm not really up to opinions today ...or, would you mind if we talked about this later.

Fortunately, with a little practice you can watch for these troublesome lines and resist taking the bait. Instead turn the tables on the “instigator”. The most effective thing to do in this situation is answer an uncomfortable question with a question.

****Tip—A simple question that seems to fit almost any awkward situation is “that’s a strange question, could you be more specific?” or “I’m not sure I understand the question, would you rephrase it?” At least, you’ll buy a little recovery time. Worst-case scenario, it is perfectly acceptable to simply smile and say, “you know, I’m just not comfortable answering that question.” This usually results in the questioner saying, “oh, sorry I asked.”*

Depending on how much time is left, trainer may choose to have participants do short answer questions either as individuals or in groups.



EXERCISE

General Business Communication Tips: Group Assignment

Work with your group to complete this worksheet.

1. How can you be casual, comfortable, and courteous at the same time?

It is important to smile and be friendly but don't talk about your personal life, health or money or family issues. Even if a guest asks, find a way to change the subject—talk about the guest instead. Sometimes people are polite and ask questions about you when they really don't want or need to know the answers.

2. How do you know when “friendly” goes too far with client relationships and what do you do if that happens?

If a client is getting too personal, just say, “I'm kind of a private person” or “I appreciate you asking but do you mind if we talk about something else”. Try not to be defensive when/if someone says something that seems inappropriate. Change the subject or remove yourself from the situation.

3. What are some techniques for getting people to listen when you have something to say?

If you have to interrupt or get someone's attention, saying that person's name is helpful. If it is a health or safety issue say so at the beginning, “Attention please, this is important health/safety information”. If you are in the habit of giving others a chance to ask questions or get clarification after you speak, they will be more inclined to listen. Always address people by their names if you can rather than say, “Hey buddy” or “Listen up guys” etc.



4. How can you improve your listening skills and “read between the lines”?

Watch people’s body language when they speak. If your gut says something isn’t right, ask questions- politely. When people use nonspecific terms like—“fine” or “kind of” or “maybe” that is usually a good indication that you should read between the lines and ask more questions. Only 2/10 people will ask for clarification so always provide details and repeat instructions even if it seems silly to do so. Don’t assume people know things. If you speak politely and sincerely, people won’t feel condescended to.

5. How can you keep control of situations and earn the respect of your clients?

Set the tone at the beginning, shake hands, look people in the eye and be friendly but don’t get too personal. That way people will recognize you as a professional and be more likely to respect you when you have to give directions. Try not to speak about yourself too much either—focus on the client.

6. How can you be diplomatic when you have to give bad news?

Just be honest with people. Don’t beat around the bush—be direct and get to the point. E.g, “I have some bad news, the weather conditions are not improving so we cannot fish until the storm passes.” Then try to have a solution or offer an alternative so that people know what will happen next. You don’t have to apologize—it’s not your fault the weather is bad, simply state the facts.



7. What can you do to master your non-verbal communication and send a positive message?

When you stand up straight, look people in the eye and say things like you mean them, people will find you credible. If you slouch and drag your feet, people won't take you seriously and might find you lazy and unprofessional. You don't always have to engage in conversation but you should smile and visually acknowledge people.

8. How can I learn to monitor my speech style, grammar and tone of voice?

If you are tired or angry, speak less or at least think before you speak but don't give people the silent treatment. Speak loudly enough that people can hear you without straining, use words they will understand, and speak at a reasonable pace. If English isn't your first language, tell people that when you first meet them and then don't be annoyed if they ask you to repeat yourself.

Note to Trainer:

*This section would include group discussion and scenarios that are "real" to the session participants. You should either ask the client for some scenarios that could be incorporated, or hand out blank index cards at the break and ask participants to write down a communication question they might have.

Only 40% of employees report that their leaders are effective employee communicators. It would seem that leaders have more work to do.

www.explorandum.com



Trainer leads into next segment by saying, “It is important to remember that when you do respond to an inappropriate comment, express an opinion, or make any statement, you need to say whatever you’re saying like you mean it—talk on purpose—this build your credibility and gets, as well as keeps, the attention of others. One important aspect of professional communication is having the ability to communicate confidence.

Refer to handout on Communicating Confidence. It is estimated that brief review of this tip sheet will take 4–6 minutes.

COMMUNICATING CONFIDENCE

How we talk, our tone of voice, speech style and the vocabulary we use says a lot about who we are. Whoever is listening can often pick up clues about how much we really know, how strongly we feel about something and how much self-confidence we have just by listening to the words we use and how we use them. It’s important to learn how our body language along with can the words we use can help us to communicate to others that we are positive and happy. The only challenge can be those words and phrases that show the opposite. Here are some examples:

The following words say, “I’m not entirely sure” or “I’m not too confident” or “I’m not feeling very optimistic”

maybe	sorry	no!	that’s not possible
Huh!	sometimes	but....	hmmm...
I can’t....	#\$@(*&^.....	never	always
what?			

TIP SHEET



***Note: Women have a tendency so say sorry a lot! Taking responsibility for things you cannot control, or apologizing for things you did not do, undermines your credibility.**

These words say “I’m confident”, “I’m positive”, “I’m confident”

yes! thank you I’ll find out let’s see

I can If...then.... What about... Please

I will I want to

When we speak to others, especially someone who is angry or upset, we want to use language that shows concern and a willingness to help, however, we do not want to take personal responsibility for things beyond our control and we do not want to appear incompetent or wimpy in our communications with them.

KEYS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. You should know the point you are trying to get across and state it at the beginning of communication.
2. Speak clearly and slowly enough that the listener can understand. Listen when it’s the other person’s turn to speak and watch their body language.
3. Use words that show your positive side and speak with energy.
4. Speak in full sentences but try to keep things short and simple when possible.
5. Give the listeners an opportunity to ask questions and be sure to ask them a few questions so you know they understood.
6. Try not to say “hmmm” or “umm” or leave long pauses between your sentences.



7. If you are speaking an opinion, say so. Don't speak as though your statements are facts or the only way it can be.
8. Use your whole body when you speak, make direct eye contact, make your body language match what you say and control your expressions and hand movements.

COMMON MISTAKES THAT SERVICE PEOPLE MAKE

*Trainer should emphasize that "customer" refers to both internal and external customers. In addition, "service people" technically refers to both employees and employers.

- * Thinking the customer needs them more than they need the customer.
- * Thinking they can get by on "charm" alone. Service without quality works sometimes but not long term
- * Acting as though the telephone ringing or approaching customers are interruptions.
- * Forgetting that customers are people too; they have emotions and expectations.
- * Acting as though the customer is not as smart as the serviceperson, and then trying to take advantage.
- * Being dishonest and thinking no one will notice or remember
- * Acting as though they deserve a reward/tip just for doing the basics.
- * Being overly familiar with customers—too personal or giving too much information.
- * Letting his or her own negativity ruin an experience for a customer.

T
I
P
S
H
E
E
T



- ❖ Forgetting that co-workers, suppliers, and everyone they come in contact with while “on the job” is a customer too.

How to Say No, Politely

There are various situations that can you feel like shouting loudly, “Leave me out of this”, or “Don’t make me do this” and “Please go away”. Unfortunately, simply saying “No” is not enough to get you out of those situations. Try to remember that no matter what your reason is for saying no, adding a simple “please” or “thank you” to the “No!” will help you get your point across succinctly and yet politely.

The reasons we say “No” are often different depending on the situation. And because the person hearing the “No” doesn’t always understand our reasons, our declining is often considered as a personal antic, or strategy, as opposed to an answer based solely on the request or circumstance.

Here are some tips to help you to be honest and say “No” when you mean “No”. Having the ability to do this will help eliminate much of the self-imposed guilt and unnecessary stress that sometimes go along with saying “No”.

- ❖ Practice saying “NO”. All together... No thank you!” Again please, and again. Now how hard was that? You see, a little practice may give you the courage to say “No”. We often over-extend ourselves by saying yes too quickly and then we feel resentment for not helping out. Try to not over explain yourself. Letting others know that you just cannot manage whatever it is should be sufficient.
- ❖ When apologies are over-used, the words “I am sorry” lose their meaning. If you are asked to do something and you have no interest or intention of doing it, just say so. If you are not sorry because you cannot do something a simple no thank you will do.
- ❖ If you are unable to say yes to someone’s request as stated, there is no reason you can’t present an



alternative. For example, “No, today won’t work for me, but how is next week Tuesday?” Offering an alternate plan shows that you know your limits but also shows your interest, and lets your others know that you are accommodating.

- * If you are unsure about why someone is asking you to do something, for example, you think a friend’s interest in getting together may be more about he/she discussing a project he/she needs help with than about sharing dessert and coffee, consider asking a few questions to be sure e.g., “Is this a catch-up coffee date or is there something you need to discuss?”
- * Delaying a response because you are afraid to say “No” or trying to put off the inevitable can be as stressful to the delayer as it is to the delayed. If you know you are going to decline take a deep breath and do it. No need for long-winded excuses or made-up stories that will eventually come back to haunt you.
- * No does not mean yes. If the person to whom you are saying no cannot, or will not, take no for an answer you may need to repeat your response until it is understood. If at some point the situation seems inescapable, try a little humour. For example, let a relentless coworker know that his/her behaviour is flattering but out of line or too much. Say something like, “Wow, you are very persuasive, good and I do appreciate the offer, but the answer is still no thank you”.
- * If you have to decline a request because you have an honest deadline or appointment, simple provide a brief explanation. For example, consider saying, “I would enjoy having lunch with you but unfortunately I have a 2:00 pm deadline for the ABC company”.

Further Reading: <http://99u.com/articles/7076/setting-boundaries-saying-no-nicely>



Add-On Information

Trainer explains that professionalism is about an overall image. This is why salespeople worry that their cars are new and clean, this is why executives want the high-up, corner office with the view, and this is why we should pay attention our workspace.

DESK DECORUM

Whether you realize it or not, your workspace and the way you keep your desk or decorate your office says a lot about you. Technically, if your workspace is on company property, it should reflect the company you work for and the type of work you do. But these days with many of us spending as much time at work as we do at home, it is more acceptable and sometimes necessary for our productivity, that our offices also reflect our personal style. But how do you add a personal touch to your office space without going overboard or offending anyone? How do you ensure a professional, positive impression and personalize your space at the same time? Here are some tips:

First, consider the overall “tone” of the company you work for. You should be respectful of the existing mood and impression the company is trying to portray when making your decorating choices. This is especially true if you frequently hold meetings or greet clients in your office. Is your company a formal, serious or conservative business? If so, maybe you should consider starting with neutral or conservative wall colors and furnishings. Are you in a creative, more casual field? In this case, it’s probably more acceptable to paint your office walls brighter colors or choose more contemporary furnishings. Check out your company’s marketing material. The stationery or the style of business cards may suggest a mood or level of formality. You could also consider your company’s dress code in determining a mood for your office.



Once you have established the general mood of the office, you can begin to personalize things. Be careful. There is a fine line between personal and too personal, which results in, unprofessional. Here are some examples:

Personal

One or two small family photos

One or two pieces of art

Paintings, prints or sculpture

A custom, comfortable chair

One scented or aromatherapy candle

Air freshener

A motivational quote or personal mission your bulletin board

Colorful mouse pad or interesting screen saver

A fruit bowl or candy dish

A plant or fresh cut flowers

Unprofessional

Personal photo albums or more than three 5 x 8 photos

Every picture your 6 year old ever drew plastered all over your walls

Throw pillows and afghans

Votive candles throughout the room

Strong Incense

Purple sticky notes and statement posted on smiley faces and warm fuzzies all over your computer

Personal photos or anything “questionable” – lewd or inappropriate as screensavers

Cookie jars, left over lunches
Bags of open junk food

Dead flowers or ill-potted, neglected plants



Whatever your office décor choices, remember that in business settings, business is the priority. The impression your office sends to co-workers, higher-ups and clients should always be considered. Always think about how you can present yourself in a competent, organized, polished professional way.

For visual aids and further ideas on how to decorate a desk:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1UHDa26fP8>
- <http://www.marthastewart.com/274366/desk-organizing-ideas/@center/276989/organizing>
- <http://www.wikihow.com/Organize-Your-Desk>

TOP TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD NEVER DO AT WORK

It really is too bad that common sense is not common practice. If it were, we wouldn't have to explain to people why they cannot wear their pajamas to school or work. And, we wouldn't have to tell people that if you start work at 9:00 am you must be ready to work at 9:00 am. That means you have to park and get your coffee and take off your coat and gossip with co-workers and whatever else before 9:00 am. If arriving at work on time doesn't seem obvious to some, you can imagine what else they are doing. Here in random order, are ten seemingly common sense things you should NEVER do at work.

1. *Fall asleep.* This includes nodding off in management meetings, curling up in the corner of your office or sprawling out in the staff lounge couch. When you're at work you're supposed to be working, that means awake and productive. Experts suggest in fact that professionals who want to be perceived as competent should even avoid talking about sleeping or being tired.



2. *Gossip.* Gossip is the height of incivility. It is rude and counterproductive to discuss anything work or non-work related that is not based in fact. Gossiping or listening to gossip undermines your credibility and encourages negativity. Don't do it!
3. *Steal.* With integrity and ethics issues at the forefront in corporate circles you should be very clear on what "stealing" is. When it comes right down to it, there really is no grey area here. Borrowing and not returning company property (including paper and pens or even teabags from the lunchroom) without asking is stealing. Lying about your start and end times or padding your expense account is stealing. Spending company time on personal issues is stealing.
4. *Crossing the line between business and pleasure.* Whether it's a company golf tournament or a client appreciation event or any other "mixing" event for business, always remember that business is the priority for business events. Pleasure is secondary. So, even if it seems everyone else is drinking, don't overindulge. People always remember how those "mixing" events play out and they will make unfair judgements, even if they say they don't.
5. *Sleep with your co-workers, the boss or clients.* Messy, messy, messy. Sometimes these things work out but mostly they're just messy. Workplace dynamics and office politics are complicated enough without adding sex into the mix.
6. *Use the phone for personal long distance.* See #3.
7. *Use the email for personal correspondence.* See #3.
When you're on company time, business is the priority. Stealing time no matter how you justify it is not appropriate.



8. *Clip your toenails, floss your teeth and other personal hygiene.* You should arrive at work ready for work. You should look and act like a professional at all times, you never know who is watching and making judgements. Habits and behaviors related to personal hygiene should be handled in private or off the work site.
9. *Be late or leave early.* There is no such thing as fashionably late. Always be on time or be early rather than be late. It is incredibly disrespectful to take other people's time for granted. And, just because the workday officially ends at 5:00 doesn't necessarily mean you should leave at 5:00, especially if the work isn't done. And, don't leave early just because the work is done or just because you think no one is watching.
10. *Don't get too comfortable.* Even if casual attire is acceptable in your workplace don't make the mistake of dressing too casually or adopting a too casual attitude. It's fine to feel comfortable with your co-workers but don't get too comfortable. Don't act complacent or smug and don't ignore the rules just because you think you've earned the right to.

Fashion don't for women in the office, what to avoid if one wishes to look professional and polished: <http://www.whowhatwear.com/office-dress-codes-what-not-to-wear-to-work-outfits-fashion-2013/slide12>

BOXED IN! CUBICLE COURTESIES

Those of us confined to cubicle workspaces can certainly attest to the challenges they present. As though life isn't stressful enough without being confined to a 4x6 box for eight plus hours a day. Deadlines, bosses, carpooling, irate customers and all the other usual workplace worries are often compounded by the fact that we have neighbors to contend with. And they're all feeling boxed in too.



Ironically, stress and the bad habits of the co-worker confined to the cubicle next door may sometimes make you wish the walls were higher and thicker. The truth is that all you really need is a little insulation in those cubicle walls. Something to cushion the noise and help keep you cool when things get heated. What makes the best insulation for cubicle walls? Courtesy! It's all about respect and showing some consideration for the people around you. Here are the basics of cubicle courtesy to help get you started feeling less boxed in:

Be respectful of personal and physical space.

- * Try to be mindful of the cubicle dwellers personal and physical space. Don't throw your things over their cubicle wall or rearrange their furniture when you visit.
- * Don't borrow their office supplies or other belongings while they're away from their desk
- * Don't hover over their desk or block their doorway if they're on the telephone.

Imagine a door.

- * Knock on the cubicle wall before barging in to someone's space and consider waiting to be invited in before entering.
- * Do not loiter around if someone is obviously busy or has guests.
- * If you're the busy cubicle co-worker, make eye contact to acknowledge someone at your "door" and let them know they can come back later.

Watch the noise level

- * Keep the volume turned down low on your telephone and your radio.



- ✦ Consider wearing headphones and monitor how loud you speak on the telephone.
- ✦ Avoid using the speakerphone at all.
- ✦ Try to avoid constantly clicking your pen, tapping your chair, coughing incessantly or any other repetitive action that could be irritating to your neighbor.

Exercise your discretion

- ✦ Don't eavesdrop even when it's easy to do so and keep in mind that others may not be able to resist leaning in when your conversations seems interesting.
- ✦ Keep your telephone conversations appropriate for work and avoid having friends and family visit during work hours.
- ✦ Don't peek over your neighbors walls or snoop at what's on their computer screen while they're at lunch. Resist glancing into open drawers or casually wandering by just to see who's doing what.
- ✦ Remember that you're in plain view too so don't treat your cubicle as if it were your personal powder room. Changing clothes, flossing teeth, refreshing your deodorant or painting your toenails are not appropriate cubicle behaviors.

Use your senses

- ✦ Be smart about sights and smells. If you plan to eat in your cubicle, don't leave half a leftover tuna sandwich out all day to stink up the whole area. Be aware as well of "eating noises"—slurping, burping, rustling tin foil, crunching and the clanging of utensils that are interruptive and annoying to co-workers.
- ✦ Remember that especially if it's warm in your office, anything with any scent at all is going to seem stronger



and the smell will drift. This goes for your sweaty exercise clothes, foot odor, perspiration and even perfume. Keep air fresheners and scented candles or incense to a minimum too as many of these smells cause headaches and allergy symptoms.

The decorating challenge

- * Even though your cubicle is your space it's still technically a workspace and place of employment. Because you don't have walls it's important to keep your space clean and neat with a hint of professionalism. Leave your really personal items at home. If you bring photographs of family and friends consider putting them in simple frames rather than taping them to your computer or walls.
- * Put up a chalkboard or bulletin board for messages rather than tacking or stapling notes and papers all over the place.
- * Try to avoid "fluffy" articles like stuffed animals, crafty or frilly things that may be viewed as unprofessional by co-workers or higher ups.
- * Be careful about the screensaver you choose, the posters you hang and even the colors you choose. Miss November, a favorite rock band or a comical slogan may bring a smile to your face but taken out of context may cause a frown on the face of others. Anything that could be seen as sexist, distasteful or offensive should not be visible to anyone who might pass by your office.
- * Keep things generally clean and neat. If your plants are looking dry and attracting fruit flies, your dry-cleaning pile is growing or your garbage can is overflowing take a moment to tidy up. Remember it's all about first impressions.



ELEVATOR ETIQUETTE

Hear this. Effective immediately no able-bodied, but just plain lazy person, is allowed to take the elevator if they are only going up or down one floor! Especially if we're talking about an old building with just one elevator or any building with an old, slow elevator. Would it kill a person to take the stairs for one flight up or even two flights down? Then maybe the rest of us who have good reason to take the elevator (20 floors up or 20 pound packages to carry) won't be late or waiting for 20 short haul travelers to get on, and then get off again. There really ought to be a law. It wouldn't hurt to regulate some other elevator behaviors as well. Like smells. If a person knows they're going to be in close quarters why wouldn't they check their breath or go easy on the cologne? And how about cell phones? Couldn't elevators be "no phone zones"? Aside from the obvious intrusion on the privacy of others, isn't it just possible that the signals from cell phones could stymie up the electrical functions of the elevator? Especially those old, slow elevators?

In fact there are guidelines for elevator etiquette. Here are a few to help you on your next indoor public transit adventure:

TAKE THE STAIRS. If you are only going up one floor or down two floors (obviously easier than going up), you haven't any heavy packages to carry and you are physically able, you really should take the stairs. It's rude to make other people wait or to delay their necessary trip up or down just because you are lazy.

HOLD THE DOOR. If you are inside the elevator and see someone running for the elevator, resist the urge to push the "close door" button repeatedly and quickly. Instead, hold the door for them. And, if you are one of many waiting to get on the elevator, hold the door open and let others (men, women, old or young, it doesn't matter) get on before you do.



MAKE ROOM. If others are getting on the elevator, back up or to the sides and make room. If you are the person getting on the elevator and others have made room for you, you should either step out of the elevator when it stops or move to either side to let those at the back of the elevator off if need be.

MAKE EYE CONTACT. It is not always necessary to make conversation with everyone you meet on an elevator but it is polite to at least look at people and maybe smile. You never know who is standing next to you (the boss's spouse, a new client) and some friendly acknowledgement might send the right impression.

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY. Nowhere is the old adage of "if you can't say anything positive say nothing at all", more appropriate than in an elevator. You really never do know who is listening. And in close quarters where it's hard not to listen, it is especially important to be careful what you say.

Scientist Dr Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, had what well known unit of measurement was named after him? The bel, from which: the decibel (a decibel is one tenth of a bel).



Add-On Information

TOP TEN GUIDELINES FOR EMAIL ETIQUETTE

1. Get right to the point – Provide an honest and specific subject line. Don't waste the recipient's time trying to be clever or funny.
2. Focus on the business priority. Leave the small talk and cordialities for the end of the message. Keep correspondence personal; no chain letters, personal e-cards, emoticons etc.
3. Insert a greeting (Hello or Good morning or the person's name) but do not include honorifics or salutations such as "Dear".
4. The reader wants to know—What do you want from me? You as the writer should tell the reader as early in the message as possible and be specific. If you want the reader to do something, it is a good habit to get into writing "ACTION REQUIRED" in the subject line.
5. If you are just sending a copy for files or to keep someone in the loop include the words FILE COPY before the subject in the subject line so that the recipient can decide when/if to read or file the message.
6. Use EOM meaning End of Message if you can put the complete reply message in the subject line. This saves the recipient having to open the message and scroll down. E.g., someone emails you to ask if you will be attending a 5:00 pm meeting. You would email back by putting "See you then – EOM" in the subject line.
7. If there are deadlines put them in the subject line. This helps people manage their priorities and time.
8. Use correct grammar, usage, punctuation, and syntax.



- 9 If the email message is really only intended for the original/primary recipient, you should insert a confidentiality message at the bottom of the correspondence.
10. Don't put more than 3 thoughts in an email—(internal) and orient the reader at the beginning of the message that there are three thoughts:
E.g., Put: "ACTION REQUIRED: Budget, Meeting, and Schedule" in the subject line. Then insert 3 bullets of content relating to the issues.

Related Topics and Ideas:

- * Social IQ
- * Professional Presence
- * Setting the Standard
- * High Impact Business Writing

Sample Promo Sheet for Session:

“COMMUNICATING RESPECT AND LEADERSHIP”

Can you imagine how much simpler life would be if everyone said exactly what needed to be said when it needed to be said? Whether verbal, nonverbal or in print, our communications send an impression. Canada's etiquette ladies speak with humor and insight about communicating with clarity and polish, the role of grammar, the nuances of modern technological etiquette, listening skills, nonverbal messages and how to talk to anyone, anytime, anywhere!



Who Should Take This Seminar?

This seminar is for anyone who wants to brush up on their communication skills and increase their knowledge of corporate courtesy. The information covered would apply to those with front line responsibilities as well as middle managers or new graduates preparing for interviews. Anyone who is returning to work after a long hiatus or someone changing careers would also appreciate this session. If you interact with the public in any capacity you will benefit from an understanding of appropriate business communications.

Upon completion of this seminar, you will be able to:

- * Understand how “civility” helps individuals achieve professional goals.
- * Practice proper introductions, handshakes and use of business cards.
- * Navigate the “manners minefield” in the modern workplace.
- * Master the “invisible” impression you send through written and electronic correspondence.
- * Brush up on modern guidelines for grammar and business writing.
- * Avoid “phone fury” by handling yourself effectively on the telephone and properly utilizing voicemail, cell phones and pagers.
- * Communicate an “I’m competent” message when you’re not feeling confident.
- * Apply effective time management strategies and develop productive habits.



Benefits:

Knowing what is expected and accepted behavior for every business and professional situations builds your confidence, gives you a powerful edge over the competition and helps communicate respect and leadership.

A national “last-straw” survey of anger in the workplace shows that 42% of respondents said yelling and verbal abuse took place where they worked. 29% admitted that they themselves had yelled at co-workers (Integra Realty Resources Study on “Desk Rage”)

Sample “Communicating Confidence and Competence”

Can you imagine how much simpler life would be if everyone said exactly what needed to be said when it needed to be said? Whether verbal, nonverbal or in print, our communications send an impression. Canada’s etiquette ladies speak with humor and insight about communicating with clarity and polish, the role of grammar, the nuances of modern technological etiquette, listening skills, nonverbal messages and how to talk to anyone, anytime, anywhere!

Who Should Take This Seminar?

This seminar is for anyone who wants to brush up on their communication skills and increase their knowledge of corporate courtesy. The information covered would apply to those with front line responsibilities as well as middle managers or new graduates preparing for interviews. Anyone who is returning to work after a long hiatus or someone changing careers would also appreciate this session. If you interact with the public in any capacity you



will benefit from an understanding of appropriate business communications.

Upon completion of this seminar, you will be able to:

- * Understand how “civility” helps individuals achieve professional goals.
- * Practice proper introductions, handshakes and use of business cards.
- * Navigate the “manners minefield” in the modern workplace.
- * Master the “invisible” impression you send through written and electronic correspondence.
- * Brush up on modern guidelines for grammar and business writing.
- * Avoid “phone fury” by handling yourself effectively on the telephone and properly utilizing voicemail, cell phones and pagers.
- * Communicate an “I’m competent” message when you’re not feeling confident.
- * Apply effective time management strategies and develop productive habits.

Benefits:

Knowing what is expected and accepted behavior for every business and professional situations builds your confidence, gives you a powerful edge over the competition and helps communicate confidence and competence.



THE CIVILITY AT WORK SERIES

Civility Experts Worldwide's Civility at Work Series of Trainer Lessons (28) provide a comprehensive tool with which both trainers and non-trainers, at various levels of experience, can teach on-site workshops and tutorials based on six core civility at work topics which include topics such as: social IQ, professionalism, communication skills, productivity, meeting planning, and much more.

The Trainer Lessons include everything required to present workshops; with detailed lesson plans, power point presentations that can be adapted as required, Masters file of participant handouts such as tip sheets, exercises, and quizzes, and PDF files which can be modified for in-house tailoring and application.

Topics for Business Training Lessons include:

1. Communicating Respect and Leadership
2. Setting the Standard: Building Credibility Through Client Relationships
3. Leveraging Your Social IQ- Achieving Maximum Potential
4. The Power of Professional Presence



The Civility at Work® Series

THE CIVILITY AT WORK SERIES OF TRAINER lessons (28) provide a comprehensive tool with which both experienced trainers and non-trainers can teach on-site workshops and tutorials on six core content areas related to Civility at Work, these include:

- * Communicating Respect and Leadership (5 lessons)
- * Setting the Standard/Client Relationships (5 lessons)
- * Leveraging Social IQ (5 lessons)
- * The Power of Professional Presence (5 lessons)
- * High Impact Business Writing (3 lessons)
- * Civility World-Wide (5 lessons)

Civility Experts Worldwide also offers assessment tools and training toolkits on Civility at Work training, Civility Experts Franchise Opportunities and Culture at Work, a Train-the-Trainer kit for anyone interested in starting their own civility training business, a range of toolkits for parents and teachers that focus on civility for children, and many other training tools and services. Visit www.culturalcompetence.ca or www.civilityexperts.com for more information.

Visit Canada's experts at www.culturalcompetence.ca, www.civilityexperts.com

