



# Impression Management & Workplace Etiquette

## WHAT IS IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT?

*It is presenting yourself in a controlled and appropriate manner to develop and maintain a positive public image.*

### IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

How can you create a positive impression?

- Dress appropriately
- Don't chew gum
- Always be on time
- Be positive and professional at all times
- Respect others around you
- Show "can do" attitude and enthusiasm
- Take initiative
- Work hard
- Ask questions, show curiosity and genuine interest

## WHAT IS ETIQUETTE?

*Rules of socially acceptable behaviour based on principles of **respect, consideration and honesty** that can be applied to a range of contexts including general business conduct, work & university.*

### ETIQUETTE

Behaving in an acceptable & professional manner will help you to:

- Build and maintain your professional reputation
- Provide a positive impression in the eyes of others
- Maximise your chances of fostering positive networks

### IN THE WORKPLACE

- Foster a happy and stress-free environment
- Avoid work-place tension
- Avoid misunderstandings
- Help you develop and maintain good working relationships

Good etiquette should be adopted in all scenarios, inside the office and outside, to ensure that practice makes perfect.

*Workplace etiquette differs across countries, regions and cultures*

*Be sensitive to your surroundings and adapt your workplace behaviour and etiquette to suit the context*

*Being respectful allows you to be adaptive & flexible enough to recognize the value of other people, even if their backgrounds or beliefs are different than your own*

## APPROPRIATE WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR

Appropriate workplace behaviour can be categorised using senses.

### SIGHT

- Looking the part and dressing appropriately
- Dress code will vary depending on the industry and business
- Look at pictures on the organisation's website to get a sense

of appropriate dress

- Keep your desk and work area tidy
- Use shared facilities with respect and keep kitchen area clean

### SOUND

- Monitor the volume of conversations
- Keep personal telephone conversations to a minimum
- Good practice to have mobile phone on silent during the day
- If listening to your iPod while working, be conscious of the volume and ensure it does not disturb others
- Maintain privacy – keep all workplace conversations professional
- Avoid taking personal calls at work or speaking on the phone for prolonged periods
- Avoid interrupting or talking over people
- Be diplomatic when interacting with all colleagues including colleagues you may find difficult
- Mind your manners. Say 'please', 'thank you' and 'sorry'
- DON'T GOSSIP

### SMELL

- Be sensitive to scents and smell surrounding you, i.e. perfumes, colognes
- If eating at your desk, avoid eating foods strong in aromas
- Take care of your own personal hygiene

### TOUCH

- Respect people's personal space – don't stand over them or stand too close to them
- Avoid touching people whilst communicating with them
- Do not use threatening gestures or body language
- Have a firm handshake

## LOOKING PROFESSIONAL

Forming a positive impression is not only about appropriate behaviour, but also appropriate dress.

Men	
Do's	Don'ts
Collared shirt	Shorts/T-Shirt/Casual polo shirts
Ties	Torn/dirty/crumpled clothing
Smart/dark shoes (black brown, grey or dark navy blue)	Hats/beanies
Trousers	Thongs, trainers

Women	
Do's	Don'ts
Collared shirt	T-Shirt
Smart/dark shoes (black, brown, grey or dark navy blue)	Plunging neckline, strapless, halter neck tops
Skirt (knee length)	Torn/dirty/crumpled clothing
Black, navy or beige stockings	Hats/beanies
Blouse	Thongs, trainers, stilettos
Blazer or tailored/fitted jacket	Short skirts
Natural make-up	Coloured/fishnet stockings

NOTE: It is always better to be overdressed rather than under-dressed. Dressing professionally helps to boost confidence too!

## WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE

Other factors to consider:

- Reflect good work ethic by arriving on time. Train yourself to be punctual or early
- If you are late for work due to unforeseen circumstances, inform your manager as soon as possible about the delay and stay back and make up for it
- Workplace etiquette does not only apply to your direct colleagues but anyone who occupies your office space, including cleaners and delivery staff
- Don't check your phone during meetings at work
- Be sensitive to others, particularly to cultural differences. Respect, value and appreciate differences in the workplace
- Be honest. Don't overpromise and under deliver. Always try to deliver what you say
- Try and keep emails as short as possible to prevent overloading
- Consider your web browsing habits. Although employers must inform you if your internet usage is monitored, try to keep your web usage to mostly work related matters
- When passing by others when walking to the amenities, kitchen and elsewhere, it is always polite to greet them

## FACEBOOK AND IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

What does your Facebook profile say about you? How are others likely to interpret your profile?

Many would argue that Facebook is a reflection of their personal not professional life and therefore should not be filtered. Despite claims such as this, more and more recruiters and interviewers are checking potential candidate profiles. Some are even asking candidates in the interview to log in to their Facebook accounts on the spot!

While users generally succeed at presenting a positive image of themselves, Facebook users are only partially aware of how they are coming across and tend to underestimate the strength of the impressions they foster.

Be cautious of what publically available information you are presenting about yourself. Everything on the internet including Facebook is permanent.

Consider the following:

- **Profile picture:** What does your profile picture say about you?
- **Photos/albums:** What photos do you have uploaded? Remove inappropriate pictures
- **Applications/groups:** What do your applications and groups say about you? Sometimes you join groups because at the time they were funny and a novelty. You may want to consider filtering through these
- **Status updates:** What are your status updates like? Are they overly cryptic, dark, aggressive, defensive? Or are they generally happy, chirpy, positive status' about mundane events? How do they represent your personality and attitude to life?

**Wall posts:** Who is writing on your wall and what are they saying? What image do your friends portray about you? What assumptions could a recruiter make on what is written on your wall?

Some Facebook users have two distinct profiles, one which is personal and one which is professional profile. This is an option that may be useful to consider in certain industries where public behaviour is considered a reflection of the organisations brand and image.

Think twice before adding colleagues and managers as friends. It is appropriate to decline such friendship requests during the term of your employment.

***You can still have a fun and festive Facebook profile even if it is a little bit more guarded***

## LINKEDIN AND IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT

Linked In is a valuable tool for professional networking and job seeking. Recruiters and interviewers will often research candidates through this networking resource. In creating a positive professional image of yourself, consider the following:

- **Image:** Your profile is professional and updated. Your profile picture should be a head-shot which is friendly yet professional
- **Accuracy:** Avoid providing false or misleading information. Recruiters and interviewers will cross-check information against your resume, interview responses and references

## WHAT IS NETIQUETTE?

Derived from the words "network" and "etiquette", it is the social code of network communication.

## RULES OF NETIQUETTE

1. Spell check
2. Not all CAPS. CAPS reflects yelling
3. Do not engage in flaming, which is escalating a heated conversation over email
4. Do not spam colleagues with inappropriate emails
5. Address others professionally and by name
6. Sign off emails professionally e.g. "Kind regards", "Many thanks" etc.
7. Avoid swearing
8. Avoid emoticons in work related correspondence
9. When talking or emailing colleagues, avoid using 'text-speak', such as LOL and OMG



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