



# Etiquette

AUBURN UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER  
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## EMAIL

- Craft a compelling and succinct subject line.
- Never send an email when you are angry.
- Respond to email messages within 24 - 36 hours.
- Before hitting send, re-read your message and check spelling and grammar and make sure any attachments have attached.

## CELL PHONES

- Turn your phone off during meetings or important lunches.
- If expecting a call/text that cannot be postponed, notify your companion ahead of time.
- When you receive a call/text, excuse yourself from the table or conversation and make the call brief.
- Buy a professional watch if you otherwise use your phone as your time piece.
- When on the phone in a public place, be at least two arm lengths away from those around you.

## PHONE MESSAGES

- Voicemail messages, both work AND personal should be professional. (eg: *Hello, you have reached FirstName LastName (insert company name and title if applicable). Please leave a message, and I will return your call as soon as possible.*)
- When leaving a message, state your name and phone number twice and succinctly communicate the purpose of your call. Any message should be less than two minutes. (eg. *Hello, this is FirstName LastName with xyz company. I wanted to talk with you about your inquiry regarding next season's inventory. Please call me back at your convenience at 334.123.1234. Again, this is FirstName LastName, and you may reach me at 334.123.1234.*)
- If you know you will be unable to check messages in a timely manner, update your voicemail to reflect when you plan to review messages and return calls.

## INTRODUCTIONS

### *Introducing Others*

- Introduce those “lower on the totem pole” to the highest.
- Look at the “most important” person first and say, “Mr. Smith, I’d like to introduce you to Mr. Thomas, this year’s intern.”
- When dealing with people outside the organization, clients are always considered more important than anyone working within the company.
- Tell something about each person who you introduce.

### *Introducing Yourself*

- Look people in the eyes and smile in order to appear confident.
- If you receive a name tag place it high on the right shoulder.
- Know how to say what you do and what your company does in 15 seconds.
- If you are seated while being introduced, stand to greet that person and shake his or her hand.

### *Exchanging Business Cards*

- Carry business cards in your wallet, portfolio or card holder.
- If someone offers their business card, offer one in return.
- Do not distribute dog-eared/worn business cards.
- When taking a business card, place it in your wallet or business card holder, not your pocket.

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

- Use titles (Mr. Ms. Dr.), not first names until instructed to do otherwise.
- Be on time or 5-15 minutes early. Earlier than that can be awkward and invasive.
- Prepare for meetings, developing an agenda if you are leading the meeting.
- Do not interrupt during meetings, but in a timely manner, be confident in concisely sharing your on-topic ideas/opinions.
- Do not get intoxicated at business functions.
- Do not use profanity or tell off-colored jokes at work or work-related functions.
- Do not engage in office gossip.
- Bring a positive attitude to the office and leave personal drama at home.
- Do not air work-related frustrations via social media. (eg *These people make me sick. #ISITFRIDAYYET*)

## DINING

### *General Dining Etiquette*

- Do not order foods that are eaten with your hands.
- Pass food from left to right.
- If asked for the salt or pepper, pass both.
- Never season food before tasting it.
- Food is served from the left, dishes removed from the right.
- Butters, spreads or dips should be transferred to your serving dish before spreading or eating.
- Do not ask for a “to-go box” unless it is an informal dining situation.

- For hard to scoop items like peas, use a piece of bread, not your finger, to push items onto the fork.
- If hot food is burning your mouth, discretely drink something cool.
- Napkins belong in your lap. Wait until the host unfolds his or her napkin before you do.
- If you excuse yourself from the table, loosely fold your napkin (do NOT refold your napkin or wad it up) and place it beside your dinner plate.
- Meeting materials or briefcases should be left under your chair until it is time to discuss business.
- Do not ask to taste someone else’s food or offer to let them taste yours.
- Do not blow your nose at the table. Politely excuse yourself to the restroom.

*Casual Dining Exceptions*

- You may order foods that are eaten with your hands.
- When sharing chips and salsa, you don’t have to transfer salsa to your plate, but do not double dip.

**LEAVING A TIP**

- Fifteen to 20 percent of the bill total is customary, but for exemplary service, a greater percentage is accepted.
- For poor service, ask to speak to the manager; not tipping is not an option.

**PLACE SETTING TIPS**

- The general rule for silverware is to work from the outside in as the meal progresses.
- The dinner plate is the center of the place setting. When finished, do not push the plate away from you. Instead place both your fork and knife across the center of the plate, handles to the right.
- Between bites, your fork and knife are placed on the plate, handles to the right, not touching the table.
- The dessert spoon/fork is above the dinner plate.
- Drinks are to the right of your plate, bread to the left. To remember this, make an “ok” sign with both hands; your left hand makes a “b” for bread, your right hand makes a “d” for drinks.

