A set of rules that govern the expectations of social and dining behavior in a workplace, group or society.

Table manners are visible signs that you are a polished, sophisticated, knowledgeable and professional.

Business is the largest social platform in the world.

Best place to make a bad impression.
Employers need to trust you can represent them in social settings with customers, clients, colleagues and competitors. They will be watching your dining manners.

The focus is on the interview, or the business meeting, not the food!

Eat a light snack before you go, as you might not get to eat much.
YOUR BODY LANGUAGE

**Signs of Confidence**
- uncross your legs
- move to the end of your chair
- lean toward the person
- steeple your hands
- thrust your chin slightly upward
- nod your head
- gesture moderately
- initiate and maintain eye contact
- use a loud clear voice
- vary your positions
- vary your posture

**Signs of Nervousness**
- cover your mouth
- scratch your nose, head, ears
- tug your clothes, jewelry, pen (etc.)
- slump
- look down, avoid eye contact
- make unpleasant or inappropriate facial expressions
- look away
- keep your body rigid
- hunch your shoulders
- verbal pauses (um, ah, uh, etc.)
ARRIVAL

- Look around.
- Shake hands and say ‘hello’ to everyone possible - introduce yourself.
- Tell others that it is nice to meet them.
- Take cues from your host regarding the seating arrangement.
- Wait for your host/ess to sit down first.
Let’s practice using the napkin.
ORDERING

- Take your lead from your host when ordering.
- Do not order the most expensive item on the menu.
- Do not study your menu, but you can speak about entrée selection with your neighbors.
- Order something that will be easy to eat and not messy – no spaghetti, chicken wings, ribs, etc.
- Do not order alcohol! If the host orders a bottle of wine and insists, only have ONE glass.
- Be respectful to wait staff.
TABLE SETTINGS

- Solids to the left – Liquids to the right.
- Hand Trick - “b”read and “d”rink.
- Pick up silverware from the outside in – toward your plate.
- Put napkin on lap as soon as host does, or if in a large group, place napkin on lap when seated.
- Napkins remain on your lap until completion of meal.
FORMAL PLACE SETTING

- Napkin
- Salad fork
- Dinner fork
- Bread knife
- Bread plate
- Place card
- Salad plate
- Service plate
- Dinner knife
- Dessert spoon
- Cake fork
- Tea spoon
- Soup spoon
- Water glass
- Wine glass (red)
- Wine glass (white)

Cup and saucer generally aren’t placed on the table until the dessert course.
CASUAL TABLE SETTING
TRADITIONAL MEAL COURSES (AMERICAN)

Appetizer
Soup
Salad
Entrée
Dessert

*Salad served at the end of the meal in Europe*
• Do not make a fist around the handle of the utensil.

• **American Standard Style:** cut food a few bites at a time, lay the knife across the plate (sharp edges toward you), and switch fork to right hand to eat.

• **Continental Style:** cut food one bite at a time, use the fork in left hand, tines down, to spear the food and bring to mouth.
• Wait for your host/hostess to pick up his/her fork to eat first.
• Wait until everyone at the table has been served before beginning to eat.
• Never reach across the table for something, always ask for it to be passed.
Salt and pepper are always passed together.
Food is served from the left and dishes are cleared from the right.
Everything gets passed to the right. If you are first to take the bread basket, offer to your left first, take your piece, then pass to the right.
EATING TIPS

- Do not talk with food in your mouth.
- Chew with your mouth closed.
- Do not blow on your soup to cool it; stir it gently to cool off. Spoon soup away from you to eat.
- Do not leave the spoon in the bowl – put it on the saucer/platter.
- Do not slurp soup or coffee.
- Do not smack your lips.
• Eat rolls by tearing off bite size pieces and buttering only one piece at a time.
• Cut your salad if the leaves are too large.
• Never rest your elbows on the table.
• Taste your food before seasoning it.
EVEN MORE EATING TIPS

• If you need to remove food from your mouth, remove it the same way it went in. Do not spit it into a napkin.
• For hard to scoop items, use your knife or a piece of bread to push the items onto your fork.
• If you don’t like something, don’t eat it, but don’t make a big deal out of it.
Social skills and relationships are probably two of the most important things in life.

**Behavior to avoid:**

1. Bragging
2. Being judgemental
3. Always be giving advice
4. Worrying too much
5. Dominating the conversation
6. Ignoring people
1. The other person – People like to talk about themselves

Figure out what the other person does besides work. What s/he really likes, passions and things that brings out the enthusiasm. Ask and use open-ended questions so s/he can’t just answer with a one-word answer. Be an active listener.

2. Your surroundings

It’s easy to become too focused on just one thing in a conversation. Widen your focus a bit, look around. There is always interesting stuff in your surroundings to start a conversation about.

3. The news

Keep an eye on the papers, there is almost always something interesting there to bring up in a conversation. Fascinating or funny topics are always good. Stay away from controversial topics.

4. Likes and dislikes

A classic. People always like to discuss their likes and dislikes.

Some examples: Music, Movies, Sports

5. Emotional Experiences

One example might be how you discover that the other person loves “travelling”. So you ask: what is it about travelling that you like so much? S/he might say the excitement of discovering something new, something s/he’s never seen before. And maybe you have similar feelings about travelling too.
• **Illness.** No-one wants to hear too much about illness and bad health. It’s a downer.

• **Your crappy boss, job, professor or how you hate school.** Complaining becomes draining to listen to rather quickly.

• **Your boring job.** No one wants to listen for too long to a topic they have no interest in.

• **Hard to relate to hobbies and similar subjects.** Well, actually getting technical and talking too much about the content of the hobby rather than what excites you about it. Try to avoid technical jargon, acronyms and details that only you and other enthusiasts understand. Try to keep it simple and understandable instead.

• **Binge drinking.** Why are you telling anyone about how much you drank on Dickson last week?

• **Serial killers and other creepy subjects.** An obvious one. Avoid subjects that make people really uncomfortable.
Lay your fork and knife in the finished position.
Leave plate where it is – don’t push it away. Do not stack dishes.
Used napkin goes next to your plate, not on top of the plate.
Do not ask for a doggy bag or to-go bag.
Do not ask for a toothpick.
COMMON SENSE ETIQUETTE

- Turn off phone before any meal or interview.
- Do not look at your phone/watch every few minutes.
- Do not text people.
- Men should never wear a hat at the table.
- Do not smoke before or at an interview meal.
- Excuse yourself to go to the restroom by saying, “Excuse me for a minute.” Do not say, “I need to go to the bathroom.”
- If you drop a utensil that you can reach, pick it up and ask for a new one.
Use “please” and “thank-you” and always be polite to all dinner party guests.

Remember: the main point of the meal is the conversation, not the food. Always say “thank-you” to your host(s) at the end of the meal and tell them how much you enjoyed yourself.
QUESTIONS?

Don’t Slurp Your Soup, A Basic Guide to Business Etiquette. Betty Craig