

## Top 10 Business Etiquette Blunders to Avoid

### 1. No multitasking while talking.

If you are in a face-to-face conversation with someone at work, you should not text, email or answer unimportant calls.

### 2. Take off the headphones.

Unless you can do your work by yourself, ditch the headphones – especially in halls and other public places.

### 3. Avoid being too casual.

Yes, we are living in a far more casual work environment than a decade ago, but casual is not the same as sloppy. Your team needs to know what is and is not appropriate dress. What does ‘business casual’ mean at your workplace? Additionally, casual dress can lead to a casual attitude. That can be good, but make sure your employees remember that they are at work, not home. The rules are different.

### 4. Don’t cause cubicle claustrophobia.

People need their space, especially when they work in an ill-defined cubicle situation. Grant them their privacy. Knock before entering their cubicle. Don’t eavesdrop on their calls. Avoid peeking into their area. Don’t snoop.

### 5. Answer the phones respectfully.

Your receptionist is vital to your brand. As they say, you don’t get a second chance to make a great first impression, and that often comes from your receptionist. Help them help you.

### 6. Remember, ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ are the magic words.

Do you remember that childhood song? We used to sing it to our kids. Today we need to sing it to our employees. When customers call, they should not be thanking you, you should be thanking them. Consider having a best practices meeting where everyone is reminded of the importance of using the magic words – with each other, and especially the public.

### 7. Institute email rules.

Email is now the dominant form of business communication and should be treated as such. Some uniform policies help everyone stay on track.

### 8. Treat guests like guests.

Someone who walks into your shop should be treated like the guest they are. They are not a pain, bother or annoyance.

### 9. Respect punctuality.

Ten people should not have to wait to start a meeting just because one person hasn’t learned how to be on time. I once worked at a place where the meeting room door was locked one minute after the meeting began. Harsh? Sure. But people were rarely late to those meetings.

### 10. Don’t eat other’s food.

Their food is their food. And while you are at it, clean up after yourself, don’t leave spoiled food in the fridge, and repay people when you borrow a buck to buy a soda.