



PROFESSIONAL COURTESY

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COMMUNICATION ETIQUETTE

Technology plays a very important role in our work and personal communication. It is important to know and understand the rules involved when using any technical mode of communication.

Computers- When using a computer at work be mindful that what you do on a computer should be work related and it is work property. The sites you visit can be traced. Retrieved personal e-mail can also be traced.

E-mail- Is not private. Sensitive and confidential information should not be sent via e-mail. E-mailing personal messages is tantamount to personal phone calls. Do not e-mail in all capital letters, it is viewed as shouting. Identify your message in the space provided and use care with spelling and grammar. Be careful about forwarding jokes and the email addresses of others. Many companies have been sued due to the nature e-mail jokes forwarded to company employees.

Fax machines-Just like e-mail, a fax machine is not a private mode of communicating. Fax machines are often shared by many people in the work place. Before sending a fax it is considerate to call the recipient and ask if it is okay to fax them information. If the document is important a follow up call may be essential. Use cover sheets that have contact information on them.

Cell phones-The ubiquitous cell phone can be a safety feature and a convenience. However, they can be intrusive if not used properly. Turn off cell phones when entering work, restaurants, theaters and other public places. Use the pulse feature if you need to leave the phone on. Cell phone calls can be easily traced. Private information should not be shared on a cell phone.

Blackberry- Stay in the moment...avoid checking messages on electronic devices while in meetings with others. Those present deserve your undivided attention.

Instant Messaging-Be mindful the others time when IMing. Use it as a business tool and not for socialization. Repeated IMing can be a nuisance to those trying to get work done on their computer.

Voice mail-Is used in most work places. If you have an individual mail box you will want to put a message in your own voice. Keep it up to date and recommend a time when you can be easily reached or the extension of another person who will be taking your calls. Messages should be brief and professional. Religious messages are not appropriate in the work place. If you are leaving a message on someone else's voice mail, identify yourself, the reason for your call (if it is not confidential), and a good time to call you back.

Voice quality-If you have a question about the quality of your voice on the telephone, answer machine and any other public venue, tape yourself and play it back. Evaluate quality, tone and whether or not you sound friendly and welcoming. Over 70 % of the message is transmitted in the tone of your voice. Smiling when you speak on the phone is often transmitted in the sound of your voice. It is helpful in paging etc.

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