



Manners maketh man. [William of Wykeham](#), *Motto of Winchester College and New College, Oxford*
(1324 - 1404)

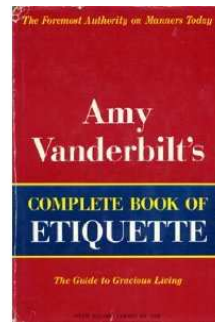
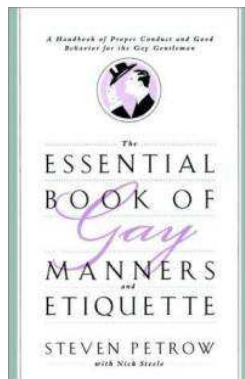
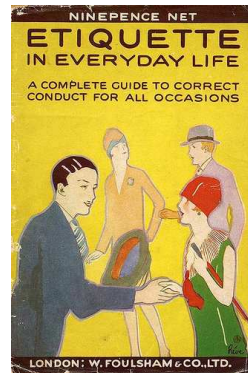
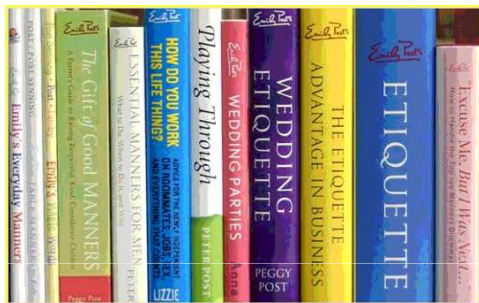
Practice Group Enhanced Business Opportunities
Presentation:
Everything you need to know about Etiquette,
GGI World Conference 2012, Rome

Etiquette:

- **Etiquette** (/'ɛtɪkɛt/ or /'ɛtɪkɪt/, French: [e.ti.kɛt]) is a code of behavior that delineates expectations for social behavior according to contemporary conventional norms within a society, social class, or group. The French word *étiquette*, literally signifying a tag or label first appeared in English around 1750.^[1] (...)
- Business etiquette can vary significantly in different countries, which is invariably related to their culture. For example: A notable difference between Chinese and Western business etiquette is conflict handling. Chinese businesses prefer to look upon relationship management to avoid conflicts^[4] - stemmed from a culture that heavily relies on Guanxi. While the west leaves resolution of conflict to the interpretations of law through contracts and lawyers.
- Adjusting to foreign etiquettes is a major complement of culture shock, providing a market for manuals.^[5] Other resources include business and diplomacy institutions, available only in certain countries such as the UK.^[6]



First Challenge: Too much information available





Second Challenge: Contradictions



Every one knows that table manners are an index to breeding. The man in this picture has taken olives with a fork, and has just realized his error, as the others have taken them with their fingers. Too bad he didn't refer to his Book of Etiquette! It tells all about table manners—how to eat corn on the cob, lettuce, asparagus, frozen pudding.



Second Challenge: Contradictions II



- Ladies first. The most famous mistake in etiquette.



So, why bother?

- The rules of proper etiquette and protocol have been around for years, but they are far more important in this day and age than ever before. Implementing proper etiquette and protocol skills into everyday life should be habit for everyone. After all, a person who displays proper etiquette not only feels good about himself, he also makes those around him feel important and respected.
- Making people around you feel respected and important generates more new business and improves existing business relations.

This presentation:

- We don't differentiate between business and private etiquette
- We don't differentiate between national or international etiquette
- We will certainly not memorize 100'000 different rules and their contradictions
- We will look for a brief moment into history and some examples
- We will identify the tools that are useful
- We will focus on the golden rules



First example:

- «Ladies first» is not a golden rule, it is basically wrong...
- When a lady and a gentleman enter a restaurant, the gentlemen always goes in FIRST, not the lady. This is to ensure that the gentleman has the possibility to check first if the place is safe and decent.
- When a lady and a gentleman leave the restaurant, the gentleman always leaves FIRST in order to ensure that the streets are safe or the way to the vehicle is safe. However, the lady enters the vehicle first to be in safety.
- When a lady and a gentleman arrive home, the lady goes in FIRST in order to be in the safe place first.



First example (contd.)

- The historical context that a lady enters a restaurant second makes sense. Does that mean that the lady ALWAYS enters a restaurant second?
- What if the gentleman knows that this should be the case, but the lady doesn't?
- Who holds the door for the lady whilst the gentleman goes in first?

First example (contd.)

- H.M. the Queen ALWAYS enters a restaurant or any place first. Her husband, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, is ALWAYS behind her.



First conclusion:

- Although history might have been the rationale behind many rules and although it might help to memorize, we state that:
- Rules are sometimes different and contradictory.
- People are different and might misunderstand. You can have excellent skills and manners, if your interaction counterpart does not know, your skills remain undetected.

Second example:

- Is it appropriate to drink red wine with a fish or seafood meal?
- If yes, should the red wine be chilled like white wine?
- What about a surf and turf-dish? Is red wine the appropriate drink?





Second example (contd.):

- The correct answer is: you may drink red wine with fish or seafood, if might however be considered by others as inappropriate or worse: they could preceive you have no clue about etiquette.
- The scientific answer is more specific: The culprit appears to be iron, as reported in a recent issue of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*. When the element's content rose above 2 milligrams per liter or so, the seafood-dining experience turned sour.



Second conclusion:

- Etiquette rules might contain practical elements who have a scientific reason.
- The challenge is to decide if:
 - You simply want to stick to the rules because you want to show others that you know them or
 - You follow your personal preferences

Suggestions:

- Etiquette is based on interaction. Try to understand the person you are interacting with. If you enter a restaurant together with a very young lady, chances exist she won't know the gentleman goes in first.
- If you are about to order the wine for dinner, ask your guests if they prefer red or white wine and maybe explain them the scientific background. If you are not the host, you might have to swallow the wine your host ordered.

Summary:

- There are various rules depending on the situation, the location, the generation of the people involved, written or traditionally adapted rules.
- It is impossible to know them all, but the understanding of the person you are interacting with helps you fundamentally to find the better choice.
- Do not deny your character, your nationality, your educational, your cultural and your professional background: Memorizing rules will not lead to success



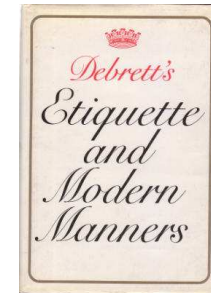
Summary (contd.):

- You can find all the rules (and the corresponding contradictions to those) in books and online, you just have to check beforehand.
- You can always ask a business partner abroad, your GGI peer abroad or even your host. Not knowing is not a problem – not asking might be rude.
- In case you have to completely diverging rules, choose the one you feel most comfortable with. If it fits your personality it will be considered natural.
- Relax



Quintessential resources:

- For focussed questions: www.debretts.com
- For general questions: www.google.com
- For country-specific questions: www.kwintessential.co.uk
- For any Government related question: ask the respective department of protocol
- If you are interested in knowing more: search for „books on etiquette“ in www.amazon.com





Forms of Address, titles and post nominals:

- The name is the most important element of identity of any human being
- Aim higher in case of doubt
- Again everything is online: www.debretts.com
- Ask (and remember)
- People who insist on titles are as rude as people who insist on ignoring them
- Stop social climbers and don't become a social climber

The Golden Rules:

- The name is the most important element of identity of any human being
- Ask questions, know how to ask and remember
- Use fast and efficient resources
- Respect is more important than detailed knowledge
- Humour is as important as respect
- Be genuine – be yourself
- Relax



And some quotes:

- That's the secret of entertaining. You make your guests feel welcome and at home. If you do that honestly, the rest takes care of itself. [Barbara Hall](#), *Northern Exposure, Northern Hospitality, 1994*
- Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot. [Clarence Thomas](#)
US administrator & lawyer (1948 -)
- Rudeness is the weak man's imitation of strength. [Eric Hoffer](#)
(1902 - 1983)



And some quotes:

- One of the greatest victories you can gain over someone is to beat him at politeness. [Josh Billings](#)
US Humorist (1818 - 1885)
- Associate with well-mannered persons and your manners will improve. Run around with decent folk and your own decent instincts will be strengthened.
[Stanley Walker](#)
- **Politeness and consideration for others is like investing pennies and getting dollars back.** [Thomas Sowell](#), *Creators Syndicate*

So many things have changed...



- Thank you very much for your attention!