

Business English

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Lecture 1. Business communication (Classes 1 & 2)

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Effective communications
- 3) Communications as a system
- 4) Barriers to communication
- 5) Oral communications
- 6) Written communications

One of the most important features in any business is communication. Good communications are required at all stages of the business process. Businesses employ and are owned and run by various groups of people. Workers, directors and shareholders are three important groups closely involved with a business. Other influential groups include customers, suppliers and the government.

Communication takes place between these groups and the individuals who make up the groups. People in business have to communicate with others in the same business organisation and with people outside. Communications with people in the same business organisation are called ***internal communications***; those with people outside the organisation are called ***external communications***.

Within individual companies **internal communications** occur at and between the various levels. Directors communicate with one another concerning the company's overall strategy. They inform managers of their plans, and the managers then communicate with the other employees. Negotiations are conducted concerning pay and working conditions. Managers communicate decisions and orders and try to improve morale and motivation through good communication. Employees also communicate with each other, for example, over production and wages.

External communication occurs when a company's directors or employees

communicate with those individuals and groups who deal with the company. Shareholders receive copies of the company's annual accounts, together with the reports of the Chairman and Directors. Government departments require statistical and financial information from the company. An advertising agency is consulted about the company's advertising policies. Customers need to know if goods have not been dispatched and suppliers contacted if their goods have not been delivered. Reliable and effective communication is one of the key elements, which leads to efficient management of a company.

Effective Communications

Effective communications are essential to business. Without them employees would not know what to do, the owners and managers of the business would not know whether the business was achieving its targets or what goods and services its customers wanted. The business would not be able to obtain supplies, and the customers themselves would not know about or be able to purchase the goods and services that the business provides. Communications are used to pass on information, give instructions, check and receive feedback on activities, and to discuss matters of interest or concern.

We all communicate with others in everyday life. You must communicate with your teachers in order to get through your course successfully. And you will certainly need to communicate with the examiner at the end of the course, if you are going to pass! You also communicate regularly with your friends and classmates, those at home, shopkeepers, librarians, doctors and so on.

Communications as a system

People communicate with each other in many ways, for example by talking face to face or over the telephone, or by sending e-mails and letters. Yet all methods of communication consist of a sender, the message itself and a receiver. To be effective, the sender must choose a method of sending the message that the receiver will understand and act upon appropriately. There should also be some feedback from the receiver to the sender, so that the sender can check that the message has been

received and understood.

Communications are only effective if the receiver actually receives and understands the message the sender intends. Barriers to effective communications can arise for several reasons. Now try to determine the main barriers to communication. The picture will help you to do it.

Barriers to communication

The most common barriers are:

- **Language** can affect communications in several ways. Most obviously, if the person sending and the person receiving the communication are not both fluent in the language used for the communication, whether written or oral, misinterpretations of the communication may occur.
- Similar misinterpretations and lack of understanding can occur if the language used by the person sending the communication is too technical or academic for the person receiving it. Many businesses and functions within businesses have their own **jargon**, which is used fluently by those in the business or function, but not by those outside. Indeed, such jargon often uses words that have other meanings in everyday language.
- **Atmosphere** in which a communication is made can affect its effectiveness. For example, if the atmosphere is strained, and the person receiving the communication is nervous, perhaps afraid for their job, they are likely to look for hidden meanings in a communication - and will often find one that is not intended.
- **Physical barriers** to effective communications come in many forms. Some affect the ability of a person to communicate normally, but physical barriers also include factors in the environment that may interfere with the communication. Physical barriers include noise in a factory where a meeting or conversation is taking place, interference on a telephone line and so on.
- **Timing** of a communication is frequently important to its effectiveness. Notification of a meeting or other event, for example, should be given in sufficient time for people to arrange to be present and to prepare for the event. If an organisation must make a decision about action to be taken on Friday, a report

containing the results of research which the organisation needs to enable it to make that decision is of little use if it is not completed until the following Monday.

Oral communications

Whenever you speak to somebody, or somebody speaks to you, you are communicating orally. Oral means spoken, and speech is the most common method of communication. Most oral communications take place either face to face or over the telephone.

Although we talk to people every day, being able to communicate orally is a skill that must be learned and practised. Using the telephone is more difficult than speaking face to face, and many people are uncomfortable about making telephone calls, although this is becoming less so through the widespread use of mobile telephones.

One of the main problems with telephone communications is that when you talk to someone on the telephone, you cannot see their response or facial expressions. It is especially important, therefore, to listen carefully to what the other person is saying and the way they say it - their tone of voice and the words they use. However, technological developments such as videophones are overcoming this problem.

Oral communications are quick and direct between the person communicating the message and the person receiving it. They also offer an opportunity for discussion and for instant feedback to check that the content of the communication has been understood. The main problem with oral communications is that there is no permanent record.

While most oral communications are between individuals on a one-to-one basis, either face to face or at a distance (e.g. by telephone), there are times when it is appropriate for several people to communicate with each other at a meeting. Modern telephone conferencing facilities also mean that it is possible for several people who may be at different locations to discuss matters over the telephone.

Written communications

The most common types of written communications are letters, written for external communications, and memos (short for memoranda), used for internal communications. Business letters and memos are more formal than the letters you write to your friends, although they serve the same basic purpose - to communicate a message.

An advantage of written communications is that they are permanent records of the communication. They can be referred to later if required, and read at leisure, which means that they can contain information that may take longer to digest and understand, such as figures and technical data. Pictures, tables, graphs and diagrams can also be included in written communications.

Other forms of written communications are used in business for various purposes. These include: reports, financial documents, advertisements, notices, customer and product information. Written communications should be:

- accurate - everything should be checked, including all facts, spelling and grammar
- clear - the person writing the message must know what they want to say before they begin to write it down, and the person reading the document should be able to understand its content immediately
- simple - short words and sentences are more effective and have more impact than long ones
- complete - a document which leaves a message unfinished or leaves out a vital piece of information will fail in its purpose.

Lecture 2. Business Documents (Classes 3 & 4)

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Business letters
- 3) Letters of application
- 4) Resumes

In business writing, you are often addressing multiple readers who may choose to only skim your writing, rather than read it thoroughly. Thus, when writing letters, memos, reports, proposals, and other forms of business correspondence, you must get to the point quickly and convey your message clearly and concisely.

Business letters

Business letters typically are addressed to a specific person, but they may be circulated to other readers as well. Thus, you should make the purpose of your letter clear at the outset and include only pertinent information in the body. You should also anticipate the possibility that someone other than the addressee (an assistant, for example) might read it. Be sure to provide whatever background information these readers might need. Be clear and concise, and try to strike a friendly, courteous, and professional tone. By being as direct and concise as possible, you show that you value your reader's time.

The appropriate format and style depend on the medium. Letters that are mailed or faxed tend to be more formal and have a more traditional format than letters sent by email.

The traditional business letter is printed on white or light-colored stationery, with every line starting at the left margin (this is known as the *full block* format).

For the salutation, use *Dear Mr.*_____ or *Dear Ms.*_____ or an appropriate title. If you are unsure of the recipient's gender, use the full name: *Dear Terry Norman*. Avoid using either a first name (unless you know the recipient personally) or a generic phrase like *Dear Sir*; you can use the salutation *Dear Sir or Madam*, or you can address the company itself – *Dear Solar Technology*. The body of the letter should be divided into block paragraphs, though you may want to use an indented list

to draw the reader's attention to special information. Use a conventional closing like *Sincerely*, *Sincerely yours*, or *Yours truly*.

Below the signature, flush left, you may include the abbreviation *Enc.* to indicate that something is being enclosed with the letter or the abbreviation *cc* followed by a colon and the name of someone who is receiving a copy of the letter.

Checklist:

- Choose a *block*, *modified block*, or *indented* letter format.
- Single-space paragraphs and addresses in the letter; double-space between the return address, date, inside address, salutations, body paragraphs, and closing.
- Use 2.5 cm margins on all sides.
- When using letterhead paper, you don't need to repeat the return address as long as it includes all necessary contact information.
- Make the inside address as specific as possible so that the letter will go directly to its intended audience.
- Place a colon after the salutation.
- In the body, be brief but state all pertinent facts, including names and dates. Keep your letter to one page if you can.
- Make your diction and style fairly formal, unless you already have established a casual tone with the addressee.
- Follow your closing with a comma, four blank lines, your name, and your professional title; sign in the space created by the blank lines.
- After the closing and signature note any copies of the letter you have sent and any attached documents you have enclosed with the letter.
- Proofread your letter carefully and keep a copy for your records.

Letters of Application

A letter of application is an especially important form of business communication. The same advice and guidelines apply to it as to a business letter. In a letter of application, however, you have the extra challenge of presenting yourself favourably without seeming to brag. Use the application letter to draw attention to the reasons an employer should consider you for a job or an interview.

It should be brief (no more than one page). The first paragraph should state clearly what position you are applying for. The next paragraph or two should describe your primary credentials for the position. The closing paragraph should express our desire for an interview and give the reader information about your availability. The tone of the letter should be polite, confident, and enthusiastic, but not pushy.

Checklist

- Follow the basic formatting guidelines for a business letter or email, depending on the medium you use to correspond.
- State the position for which you are applying. Follow up with a summary of your qualifications for the position. Focus on those qualifications that best suit the job in question; the resume will cover the rest.
- Focus on how you might meet the organization's needs and on what you could accomplish *for them* – not on what you hope to get from the position.
- Show some knowledge about the organization or company to which you are applying, but offer praise only in order to show why you're interested in working for them.
- Maintain a polite and respectful – but confident – tone.
- Remember that your letter of application may have a long life. If you're hired, it will become part of your personnel record. If you're not hired, it may go into a file of applicants for later consideration.

Resumes

Your resume is a concise outline of your academic and employment history, designed to give a prospective employer a quick but thorough overview of your qualification. Take great care in preparing your resume. Once in the hands of a recruiter, your list of achievements and skills will be used to decide whether an employer will contact you for an interview.

In your resume you can enhance your list of qualifications by showing a competency in your field. Learn the language of your profession and use recognizable terms to describe your on-the-job training and course-work. Remember, however, that you need to be familiar and comfortable with the meaning of these terms – chances are you'll be expected to use them in an interview.

Consider recent trends in how employers find job candidates and store information about them: Not only do recruiters search for resumes on the Web, they also maintain database of digitized resumes. Most they collect as electronic submissions, but some are scanned versions of print resumes. As a database entry, your resume will receive a serious look only if it can be found through keyword searches – all the more reason for you to become fluent with the language spoken by others in your profession.

Checklist

- At the top of your resume give your name as you would like to be recognized in a professional setting.
- Provide up-to-date contact information so that a prospective employer can reach you for interview.
- Before you list your skills, state your objective. This section may be omitted when your employment goals are explained in an accompanying cover letter. Some resume guides now consider the objective line optional.
- Create a categorized list of your academic degrees and awards, professional certifications, previous jobs, technical skills, and relevant coursework.
- Arrange this list according to how effective the categories and qualifications you have listed will be for attaining the desired job.
- Educational achievements usually go first. List year, degree, and institution, as well as scholastic honors won.
- If the prospective job requires specialized skills (computer skills, technical procedures), list those with which you have the most familiarity, assuming an interviewer might ask about them.
- List your work experience. Besides mentioning employers and dates of employment, state your responsibilities and achievements in succinct but specific terms. Account for all periods longer than a few months.
- List coursework only when it explains how you attained skills outside your work experience. List non-work, nonacademic activities and achievements only if you think an employer might consider them relevant assets.

- You cannot be required to mention age, gender, race, religious or sexual preference, political affiliation, or material status.
- When requested, include a list of references (all of whom you have checked with beforehand) or indicate a placement service with your complete dossier. This list can usually be submitted as a separate, attached document.

You can choose from among four resume styles:

Chronological Resume a) lists work experience or education in **reverse** chronological order; b) describes responsibilities and accomplishments associated with each job or educational experiences.

Functional Resume lists functional skills and experience separately from employment history.

Targeted Resume a) lists capabilities and accomplishments pertaining to the specific job applied for; b) briefly lists work experience in a separate section.

Combination Resume a) emphasizes an applicant's capabilities; b) includes a complete job history.

The **chronological resume** appears to be the most popular with the recruiters of the last decade of the previous century. A typical chronological resume includes:

1. Main heading applicant's name, address, and telephone number
2. Objective detailed, in response to the company's requirements outlined in the advertisement
3. Experience work history, job-by-job, in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent position. Includes employer's name, place, dates, duties, accomplishments, and promotions.
NOTE: Show job titles in boldface for readability
4. Education including degrees and certificates, conferences and seminars, again listed in reverse chronological order
5. Special Skills including bilingualism, computer competency, etc.
6. Honors, Awards, and Activities
7. Interest such as particular sports, arts/theatre, reading, community activities

While the chronological resume focuses on past employment, the **functional resume** focuses on skills. It includes:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Objective | use a general objective for an all-purpose resume |
| 2. Skills | describe proficiencies you have acquired, highlight exceptional aptitudes, provide details and evidence |
| 3. Education | reverse chronological order |
| 4. Employment | reverse chronological order |
| 5. Interests | |

The **combination resume** style draws on the best features of the chronological and functional resumes. It emphasizes a candidate's capabilities while also including a complete job history.

The **targeted resume** highlights experience and education that are particularly relevant to the specific job being applied for. It can be used only for this one occasion.

Use action verbs to strengthen your resume:

achieved	coordinated	increased	pioneered
administered	created	initiated	reduced
arranged	designed	introduced	revitalized
assembled	expanded	invented	strengthened
completed	identified	managed	transformed
convinced	improved	organized	upgraded

Examples:

Supervised ten other employees.

Organized a conference on the modern methods of teaching languages.

Coordinated a workshop on instructional skills.

The **Chronological resume:**

WHEN TO USE:

- Your last employer is well known and highly respected
- You plan to continue along your established career path
- You are applying to a traditional organization
- Your job history shows progress

WHEN NOT TO USE:

- You have changed jobs frequently

- You are changing your career goals
- You have not progressed in you career
- You have been away from your job for some time
- You are applying for your first job

The **Functional Resume:**

WHEN TO USE:

- You are changing careers
- You want to emphasize capabilities not used in recent jobs
- You are reentering the job market after absence
- You are applying for your first job
- Your past career has been disappointing
- Your work has been freelance

WHEN NOT TO USE:

- You want to emphasize your career progress
- You have performed a limited number of functions
- Your most recent employers are well-known and prestigious
- You are applying to a traditional organization

The **Targeted and Combination Resumes:**

WHEN TO USE:

- You are very clear about your job target
- You have several career objectives and want a separate resume for each
- You want to emphasize capabilities that you may not have performed for a regular employer

WHEN NOT TO USE:

- You want to use one resume for several applications
- You are not clear about your capabilities or accomplishments
- You are just starting your career and have little experience

Knowing what to **exclude** from a resume is as important as knowing what to include. Here is a list of details to exclude from your resume:

- salary demands or expectations
- preferences for work schedule, days off, or overtime
- comments about fringe benefits
- travel restrictions
- your photograph (unless you are applying for a modeling or acting job)
- comments about your family, spouse, or children
- height, weight, hair, or eye color

NOTE: The trend in resumes today is to omit personal data, such as birth date, marital status, religion, nationality.

People who read thousands of resumes name the following **common resume problems**:

1. Too long (not concise, irrelevant, not to the point)
2. Too short or sketchy (does not give enough information)
3. Hard to read (lacks white space, indentions, underlining)
4. Wordy
5. Amateurish (shows little understanding of the particular business)
6. Lacking a career objective (fails to identify the applicant's job preferences and career goals)
7. Misspelled and ungrammatical English
8. Boastful (overconfident tone)
9. Dishonest (claims to have qualifications that the applicant does not possess)

Professional Memos

Memorandums are used within organizations as a means of communication between members. As a result, memos omit some of the formalities used in business letters to be sent outside the organization: formal salutations and closings, for example, aren't usually required. But memos do maintain a professional tone, and they contain information needed for keeping records of business interactions.

Email is the online cousin of the memo. Many people have Internet email, which can be used to communicate with people for both personal and professional reasons. Many companies, however, provide internal email systems. These systems

operate like Internet email, except that messages can be sent only to other members of the organization, as one would do with a memo.

Checklist:

- Follow your organization's standard layout, which will usually include a date, a "To" section, a "From" section, and a subject line.
- Use block paragraphing and a 2.5 cm margin (for print memos).
- In the subject line, enter a phrase that will make it clear to your recipients the relevance and importance of your message.
- Most printed memos don't have salutations because the intended audience is named in the "To" section. An email sent to more than one person, however, might require a group salutation.

Lecture 3. Intercultural Business Communication (Classes 5 & 6)

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Barriers to cross-cultural communication
- 3) Business etiquette

We are living in a world of constant political and economic change. Ukraine has gained its independence and is now catching up with the world of business by establishing and developing more business contacts.

Misunderstanding, problems, and even conflicts between different countries occur primarily because people assume that what is natural, appropriate, and acceptable for them must be natural, appropriate, and acceptable to others.

University graduates who go into business will almost certainly interact with or even work for multinational firms. In fact, the growing international business area may require them to work abroad as part of the career process.

English is well-established as the language of international business. Although, university graduates have minimized or overcome the language barrier, merely to know English is not enough. Cultural problems will exist unless people learn to be empathetic to strangers.

Empathy

Empathy is the **ability** to

- a) **detect** and **identify** the state of another person, and
- b) to **respond** to that state in an appropriate manner, and
- c) to **anticipate** the other person's reaction.

In intercultural communications, participants tend to develop empathy and mutual trust on the basis of greater knowledge of each other's culture.

Culture

In today's business world it is both useful and necessary to be aware of intercultural differences. The first step in learning to communicate with people of other cultures is to become aware of what culture means.

Culture can be defined as "the way of life," or the system of common attitudes, symbols, values, beliefs, and norms of behavior. Culture is a rigid system, highly resistant to change.

Each culture is built on a foundation of the following elements:

- **language** – spoken, written, non-verbal
- **values and attitudes** – to time, work, dress, and food
- **religion** – beliefs, rituals, taboos
- **law** – civil and criminal
- **society** – class system, family, education, and housing
- **norms** – expression of values: behavior, customs, habits, and traditions
- **knowledge** – history and information that people accumulate over time and share

The various components of culture are interrelated and shared, common to many individuals. Culture is manifested in traditions, customs, institutions, ways of thinking, and language.

English is the main language in the United States, Great Britain, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. It is the language of business in the Netherlands, the Caribbean, India, and Japan. Keep in mind that all these cultures are different and that even the English language used in each of these countries is different.

Barriers to Cross-Cultural Communication

Misunderstandings are especially likely to occur between the people of different cultures because of the following “barriers” to communication:

- stereotypes
- time concepts
- space concepts
- body language
- etiquette standards
- translation problems

Stereotypes

All cultures have **stereotypes** or performed ideas about other cultures. These stereotypes generalize the main characteristics of a group of people and can get in the way of communication when people interact on the basis of the imaginary, generalized picture and not on reality.

The stereotypical American, for example, is a straight-forward, get-to-the-point, aggressive-in-business person for whom “time is money.” On the other hand, the American in everyday life is perceived as easygoing, loud, friendly, and smiling.

It should be stressed that one must not jump to conclusions based on such stereotypes. All individuals are different, and stereotypes, though true to some extent, are often exaggerated and generalized.

Time

Different perceptions of time can also lead to misunderstanding.

American straightforwardness, for instance, leads Americans to make strict schedules, appointments, and arrangements whereas in Ukraine delays in meeting visitors and in responding to correspondence are not uncommon. However, a Ukrainian partner who is late for an appointment will probably then spend more time with you than originally scheduled. The same nonchalant attitude toward time can be found in Mexico. We can say that there exist two perceptions of time in Ukraine or in Mexico: the time on the clock and “Ukrainian time” or “Mexican time” – that is, “when I get there.”

The Japanese, knowing that North Americans are impatient, use time to their advantage in negotiations. Perhaps they think: “You Americans have one terrible weakness. If we make you wait long enough, you will agree to do anything.”

Space

Space operates as a language as much as time does.

In different cultures the “personal space” or “body bubble” (that is, the personal territory or the distance between people in communication) varies.

When a Ukrainian is conducting a business conversation with an American or a Canadian, s/he should keep in mind that North Americans stand about five feet (about 150 cm) apart. For an Englishman, the space will be larger, while an Arab or Latin American will find this distance uncomfortable and so will move closer. This action does not mean they are pushy or aloof, and we should not react negatively to it.

By observing the behavior of others, we can gain some idea of their concept of personal territory, which can assist us in our own attempts to communicate.

Body Language

Another non-verbal factor in international communication that springs from cultural background is body language.

The familiar American symbol for “OK” means “zero” in France and “money” in Japan. In Latin America, it is sign of vulgarity. The familiar V (victory) sign will be an obscene, insulting sign in most of Europe, especially in Great Britain (unless the palm of the hand faces the receiver of the message).

In Saudi Arabia and Thailand, communication breakdowns may result if you sit with your legs crossed with the sole of your shoe visible. It is considered to be the dirtiest part of your whole being.

In Ukraine, as well as in Europe or North America, we “read” each other through eye contact. Avoiding eye contact can be regarded as evasive or dishonest. But in many parts of Latin America and Africa, keeping your eyes lowered is a sign of respect.

Etiquette

Social behaviors and manners are important factors in communication. Here are some examples of the etiquette for communicating more effectively when conducting international business.

- In Spain, let a handshake last five to seven strokes; pulling away too soon may be interpreted as a sign of rejection. In France, however, the preferred handshake is a single stroke. In Ukraine, the length of the stroke depends on the feelings you want to express: a short casual stroke is good for business and the longer the handshake, the warmer the welcome. In Canada, a weak, “fishy” handshake is disliked. A strong, firm handshake is most desirable.
- Never give a gift of liquor in Arab countries.
- In England, never stick pens or other objects in your front suit pocket. Doing so is considered gauche.
- In Pakistan, remember the Moslems pray five times a day, so don’t be surprised when, in the midst of negotiations, your partners excuse themselves and conduct prayers.

- In Africa and India, people may distrust you and avoid doing business with you if you get strictly to business. Africans need plenty of time to get to know their future partners and are suspicious of those who are in a hurry.
- In Arab countries, never turn down food or drink; it's an insult to refuse hospitality. But don't be too quick to accept, either. A ritual refusal ("I don't want to put you to any trouble") is expected before you finally accept.
- In India, an invitation ("Come anytime") can be considered an official invitation, and you don't need to wait for another, more formal one. Being reluctant to make an unexpected visit might insult the hosts.
- Stress the longevity of your company when dealing with Germans, Dutch, and Swiss; if possible, print the founding date on your business card.

Translation Problems

Often, words in one language do not have an equivalent meaning in other languages, and the concepts the words describe are often different as well. When the meaning of a word is not agreed on in advance, later misunderstanding is a strong possibility.

In a humorous and helpful book about marketing overseas, David A. Ricks (1983) highlights the problems of translating with several examples of American advertising and product labels that resulted in different meaning when translated. General Motors promoted their cars in Belgium with "Body by Fisher" (a phrase familiar to Americans). But translated into Flemish it turned into "Corpse by Fisher." "Come alive with Pepsi" became "Come out of the grave..." in German and "Bring your ancestors back from the dead" in Asia.

In Ukraine, the name of a painting is "Doky sontse zijde rosa ochi vyist." which is a famous Ukrainian proverb meaning, "Dew will make your eyes sore if you wait too long for the sunrise." When the picture was taken to an art gallery in Japan, the name in Japanese translation became, "When a new day is born, the sun rays give birth to a blind baby."

To avoid embarrassment, don't forget that "rubber" is the British name for American and Canadian "eraser", but in American and Canadian slang it means

“condom.” Do not mix these words when negotiation about a delivery of one thing or another.

In reading and responding to foreign-origin documents written in English, a Ukrainian business person needs to realize that differences exist in vocabulary. Success in international communication will be achieved partly through willingness to investigate and understand the differences and to use words and expressions **relevant** to the country involved. For example, in writing to someone in Britain you should use the British variant of the word, but in communication with American partners, use the American variant.

Business etiquette

Office manners

If you really want to be a success as a businessperson, promise yourself[^]

- to be so strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind;
- to talk about health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet;
- to make all your colleagues feel that there is something in them;
- to look at the sunny side of everything and make your optimism come true;
- to think only of the best and to work only for the best and expect only the best;
- to forget the mistakes of the past and press on the greater achievements for the future;
- to give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others;
- to be too large for worry, too noble for anger, too strong for fear and too happy to permit the presence of trouble.

Your office manners

When introducing people to each other, don't worry about the technicalities of introductions, just remember that:

- The honored one's name is said first, the name of the person being presented follows.
- “May I present?” or “May I introduce?” or “I have the honor to present.” They are all correct, but they're a bit stiff for modern usage. A plain and simple, “Mrs. Hamment, Mr. Crown” is enough – or, if you like, “Mrs. Hamment, this is Mr. Crown.” And you needn't to go on to give each a biography,
- Present the young to the old, the lesser to the greater.

When you are introduced you stand, whether being introduced to a man or to a woman.

Please note: it is never correct to call anyone in business like ‘pal’, ‘bud’, ‘baby’, ‘honey’, or ‘darling’. Pet names are considered cheap.

Don't say:

How are you?

Do say:

How do you do? (formal)

Hello. (informal)

Only after this routine you can say “Pleased to meet you”, “Nice to meet you.”

Hints for the office manager or the boss

Here are some suggestions:

- Don't order, ask, and be polite. It amounts to the same thing, but it sounds – and works – better.
- Remember that people work with you, not for you. They like to be spoken of as associates, not as slaves.
- Keep your promises. It's important to make a note of every promise – whether it is something important or something you think less important.
- Criticize, if you must, only in private – and do it objectively. Never criticize anyone in public or in anger.

The secretary

Drawing rooms manners are out of place in an office, and you are not expected to jump to your feet and hold a chair for your secretary every time she comes into

your office. But take care not to treat her as if she were nobody. You should say a pleasant “Good morning” when you come in and “Please” and “Thank you” at every opportunity.

This is what you should expect from your secretary:

- a) Polite handling of the telephone calls.
- b) Courteous handling of the visitors.
- c) Confidential treatment of the business and private affairs.
- d) A business like air.

It means:

- calling you “Mr” in front of outsiders;
- wearing clothes suitable for the office;
- confining he personal phone calls to the minimum;
- asking you if you will need her any longer before she switches off her computer.

The receptionist

The receptionist should dress conservatively, sit quietly, and attentively, speak softly, address and refer to employees and visitors formally, and stay off the telephone except on matters of business. When the receptionist calls you to say that someone is there to see you, she should always speak in the third person: “Mr. Ross to see Mr. Wright” never “Mr. Wright, there’s Mr. Ross out here to see you”.

Here some “Don’ts” and “Do’s” for the receptionist:

Don’t say:

Wait a minute.

Who are you?

What do you want to see him about?

He’s busy.

Do say:

May I help you?

Let me ring his office to see if he is in.

Is he expecting you?

Mr. Wright secretary will be right out.

Won’t you sit down for a minute, please?

The mailroom clerk

Mail clerks should be asked to move around the office quietly and to avoid interrupting others with chit-chat as they make their appointed rounds. They should lay the mail on desks or in file boxes, not dump or throw it.

Hints for the businessman's social life

Whether by choice or by chance there'll be time when business and social lives are entwined, for business reasons.

That's why there are essentials of everyday etiquette in everyday social life:

- Stand up for introductions, greetings, and leave-takings.
- Stand up when someone, man or woman, is trying to pass in front of you while sitting in the theatre.
- Stand out of the elevator (and out of the way), when someone farther back wants to get out and you are blocking the door.
- Walk on the street-side of the sidewalk to "protect" your woman companion. Keep her on your right.
- Take off your hat when you are indoors, except in lobbies, corridors, department stores.
- Shake hands for all introductions and all goodbyes to men, but don't offer your hand to a woman unless she extends hers first.
- You get off the bus first.
- Hold all doors for the woman.
- Hold all chairs for the woman when she sits and when she rises.
- Help her in and out of her coat.
- Relieve her of heavy things – suitcases, briefcases, books, etc.

At a restaurant with a businesswoman

You check your hat and coat first, then you offer to check her things.

- She goes ahead of you to the dining-room.
- First you repeat her order to the waiter, than you repeat your own.

- When speaking to the waiter, you must refer to her ‘the lady’: “Salad for the lady”, not “she will have salad.”
- When it’s time to go, you ask the waiter to bring the check.
- Once payment is made, you stand, walk around to help her, then allow her to precede you to the checkroom. You claim your hat and coat, ask the doorman to get you a taxi – and you are off.

Basic rules of social etiquette

In public the best manners are the quietest. Try not to attract attention to yourself.

Be careful to compliments. Give them in private, whenever possible.

Don’t say, “Huh?” or “What” when you mean “What did you say?” or “Sorry – I didn’t hear what you said.”