Business Etiquette: Putting your Best Fork Forward

Jason Umfress
Director of Career Services
Presentation Overview

- What is etiquette?
- Interview tips
- Receptions
- The business luncheon/dinner
- Social graces for the new millennium
What is etiquette?

- “The conduct or procedure required by good breeding or prescribed by authority to be observed in social or official life. From the French for “ticket.”

- Merriam Webster Dictionary
Congratulations! You got the interview!!!

Now what?
Interview tips...

- Do your homework!
  - Yearly reports
  - Current employees
  - Web site / press packages
- Dress to impress
  - Conservative dark suit
  - Well groomed
Interview tips…

- Arrive early
  - 20 minutes minimum
  - Allow for travel, bad directions, weather, etc.

- *Be extra nice to the receptionist/secretary
  - Schedule keeper
  - Trusted confidant
  - Future fellow employee
Seal the deal...

- Write a thank you note to the interviewer(s)
  - Send note within 24 hours of the interview
  - Handwritten on personal stationary

Thank You
The Reception…
Why a reception?

- Networking
  - 61% of job seekers found employment through networking
  - 81% of jobs are never posted
- Socializing
  - Not as intimidating as an interview
  - Employers watch how you interact with others.
Reception tips... 1st impressions

- Look the part
  - Dress appropriately for time of day / season
  - Confidence, head up, make eye contact
- What is your body saying?
  - Open body language
  - Facial expressions

Do you want to be there? If not, FAKE IT!
Reception tips – Introductions…

- **Greetings**
  - Stand when approached
  - Shake hands firmly (web to web)
  - Look in the eye
  - Repeat name for clarity
Reception tips – Introductions…

- Introduce junior to senior (age, rank, seniority, etc.)
- Say senior name 1st “Dr. Hilpert, please meet Mrs. Mullins.”
- In a group, introduce the guest. Everyone else should introduce themselves.
Reception tips... Introductions

- What if I forget a name?
  - Are they wearing a nametag?
  - Apologize
  - Ask again
  - Say it 5 times
Reception tips…Eating

- Eat before you go
- Small portions
- Don’t “graze.”
- Cup, plate, fork, napkin demo
The Business Luncheon/Dinner
The Business Dinner... Table Setting
The Business Dinner…Styles of Eating

- **European Style**
  - Fork remains in the right hand.

- **Continental style**
  - Fork switches from left hand to right tines down.
The Business Dinner…Before we begin…

- Come promptly when called
- Be seated after all have arrived from left
- Males assist ladies to right
- Remove hats (men)
- When to start eating
- Pass food from left to right
- Pass salt & pepper together
The Business Dinner… The Little Things…

- The napkin
  - Lay in lap – do not shake
  - Place in chair if coming back
  - Fold next to plate when finished

- Crowded banquet tables
  - d = drink
  - b = bread

- Soup
  - “As a ship goes out to sea, I scoop my soup away from me.”
The Business Dinner… The Little Things…

- **Silverware Signals**
  - Knife, when not in use, rests at the top of the plate, blade facing you.
  - When finished, fork & knife lie parallel at 11:55 position.
  - Never use your utensils for serving
  - Spit bad pieces of food on fork and place on side of plate.
The Business Dinner...Questions

- Who picks up the check?
- What should I have to drink?
- What should I order?
- How fast should I eat?
- What if I have an accident?
- Are they really watching that close?
Social Graces for the New Millennium...

- Helping out of a vehicle
- Opening doors
- Helping with coat
- Walking on sidewalk
Questions? Comments?

Jason Umfress
Director of Career Services
662-846-4646
jumfress@deltastate.edu
http://careerservices.deltastate.edu