Penn State Berks

Business Dining Etiquette
Contact Career Services

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Arrival time: 10 to 15 minutes early
Cell phones: Turn phones off, and put away prior to entering meeting
Seating: Ask host first if assigned seating, and choose if permissible
First Impressions: Takes 4-6 seconds to meet and make a preliminary judgement
  * Smile, eye contact, and a handshake
Opening a Conversation: Don’t stress about topics
  * Something as simple as the weather is good to start
TYPES OF DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Uniform Dress

Professional Dress

Business Casual
PERSONAL GROOMING HABITS

♦ Shower everyday
♦ Use deodorant
♦ Keep hands and nails clean
♦ Keep hair styled and clean
♦ Men: Shave daily and trim beards if needed
♦ Women: Simple accessories
♦ Brush Teeth
♦ Do NOT smoke before entering office/meeting
♦ Introduce yourself to person sitting to your right and left
♦ Extend hand, state greeting and name, year, and major
♦ Allow for reciprocated introduction
♦ LISTEN, it’s just as important as speaking
HANDSHAKES

♦ Proper handshake is firm but painless (No floppy fish)
♦ Handshake should last about three seconds
♦ Takes only two to three pumps
♦ Starts and stops crisply - do not continue through entire introduction
INITIATING AND ENGAGING IN PRODUCTIVE CONVERSATION

♦ Try to learn something about the other person

  * Name
  * Where they work
  * Where they live
  * Mutual colleagues
  * Where they attended college and their major
CONDUCTING YOURSELF IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER

♦ Always act professionally

♦ You never know when colleagues and competitors are present
  * Travel
  * Meetings
  * Social Situations
BODY LANGUAGE

♦ Be positive both verbally and nonverbally
♦ Think before you speak
  * Use proper titles
♦ Keep conversation going
  * Watch pace of speech
  * Be conscious of subject matter - no politics, religion or sports
  * Don’t hold a drink in your hand when networking
    - You need your hand available for introductions
DINING ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES

- Formal place setting
- Knives and spoons are on the right, forks and napkins on left
- Passing of bread and salad dressing
  * Person closest offers to his right and passes to left
- Use utensils from the outside in
- Specific placement of utensils indicated to the server you are finished
- ALWAYS treat your server with respect
INFORMAL & FORMAL PLACE SETTINGS

Informal Place Setting

Formal Place Setting
NAPKIN PLACEMENT

♦ Unfold and place napkin on lap as soon as seated
♦ Okay to remove for use while dining
♦ Remains on lap until all diners leave table
WHAT IF I HAVE TO LEAVE THE TABLE?

♦ Place napkin on chair seat
♦ Push chair under table
  * Signifies that you are not finished to server
♦ What to do when meal ends
  * Pick napkin up in center
  * Fold gently and place on table to the left of plate
CONTINENTAL DINING STYLE

- Knife kept in right hand, fork in the left, no switching during meal
- Resting position: Knife on right, fork on left both crossing in center of plate
- Finished position: both knife and fork together on right, pointing to center of plate prongs face down

![Image showing Continental dining style](image-url)
AMERICAN DINING STYLE

• Knife kept in right hand, fork in left hand while cutting.
• Lay knife down on top right of plate and switch fork to right hand to eat
• Resting position: Knife lays across plate on top right and fork lays on bottom left/center
• Finished position, both knife and fork together on right, pointing to center of plate prongs face up
DO’S AND DON’TS

♦ Cutlery: Cannot touch table again once picked up
  * Use plate and butter plate to hold used utensils
♦ Chewing: Never chew with your mouth open, or speak when chewing - it’s not your last meal
♦ Appearance: sit up straight, no elbows on table and keep hands on lap
♦ Bread: tear into bite size pieces, don’t saw in half, butter each piece as you eat.
♦ Place pat of butter on butter plate first, then spread on bread or other food
♦ Only cut what you are eating, 2-3 pieces of food at a time
♦ Don’t slurp soup
♦ Speed: Slow down and eat at pace of associate
♦ Lipstick: Lighter shades, blot with napkin before sitting at table
DO’S AND DON’TS (CONTINUED)

♦ Purses and briefcases: keep off table. Place out of the way so server doesn’t trip on it
  * If not part of the meal, shouldn’t be on the table
♦ Don’t push plate away when finished
♦ Don’t tilt chair, sit up straight
♦ Avoid burping, if you can’t avoid it - excuse yourself
♦ Don’t dunk your food
♦ Do not panic if you think you did something wrong
♦ Don’t overeat - you will eat again, this is not your last meal
♦ Order mid-range cost food
Etiquette is an important part of the professional process
Summarize what you talked about at the end of the meal
Follow up with an email or thank you note, to your host or recruiter
Host a formal meal at home
Practice proper etiquette whenever you eat
Work on conversation skills in your daily interactions

Questions, please contact Career Services
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