

BUSINESS MEETING ETIQUETTE RULES



1. Mingle with others before the meeting starts.

If the opportunity presents itself, go up to people and introduce yourself. If everyone doesn't know one another in the meeting room, make introductions, starting with the person of the highest rank.

2. Be concise.

Say what you need to say in as few words as necessary. Don't repeat yourself or give unnecessary information.

3. Initiate the handshake if you're the higher-ranking person or host.

The host or the higher-ranking person, regardless of gender, should extend their hand first.

4. Always stand when you're being introduced to someone.

Standing helps establish your presence. It's easy for others to ignore you if you don't stand.

5. Be on time.

Make sure you arrive on time. You don't want to waste anyone else's time by not being punctual.

6. Sit appropriately.

Adjust your chair so that you're at equal height with everyone else at the table. Both men and women should avoid crossing their legs because it can be distracting and even too sexy for a professional setting.

7. Dress appropriately.

Clothing can enhance a person's professional reputation or detract from his or her credibility. Always find out what the dress code is and make sure your attire falls within the guidelines.

8. Never pull out someone's chair for them.

It's okay to hold open a door for your guest, but in a business setting, you should leave those social gender rules behind.

9. Come prepared.

Know what the meeting is covering beforehand and know your part. Be prepared to ask and answer questions.

10. Have a strong agenda.

If you're the one running the meeting, it's imperative that you stay on track. If you do digress, make sure to have a colleague who will steer you back in the right direction.

11. Speak up and speak early.

Speak loudly enough so that everyone hears what you're saying. Find some meaningful comment to add in the beginning of the meeting so people know you are there.

12. Understand the unwritten speaking rules.

It's not polite to interrupt others, but in some meetings, you have to interrupt at some point or you won't be heard. Understand the rules so that you can have a productive meeting.

13. You can drink coffee or water, but avoid eating anything else.

Unless it's a breakfast, lunch, or a dinner meeting — avoid eating at the table. You will likely make disruptive noises or give off smells. Clean up after yourself and leave things the way you found them.

14. Do not have your phone out.

Do not keep your phone on the table during a meeting; it can get distracting if it starts lighting up or making noises. Leave the room if you absolutely must take the call or return a text.

15. Don't save all your questions for the end.

Ask your questions at the appropriate time. Don't start asking questions and adding stuff that doesn't need to be added when everyone's getting ready to go. You don't want to be "that" person.