

# The 'KISS' Method

*Keep it simply, savvy etiquette.*



by Dallas Teague Snider

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE between two people who are competing for the same job, client, or deal and have similar backgrounds, educations, skills? The difference is in the attention to detail.

It takes three to five *seconds* to make a first impression; your appearance and verbal communication skills create an instant and lasting impression. By presenting a positive impression, you evoke a favorable reaction and also build self-esteem and confidence.

*You rarely get a second chance to make a first impression, and a negative image can block your true potential.* Uncombed hair, casual attire, tattoos, piercing, and an arrogant attitude are inappropriate. You want your image to make people feel confident about your skills and knowledge.

By using proper etiquette, protocol, behaviors and manners, you set yourself apart. *Etiquette intelligence* guides you in communication and establishes effective interactions that build relationships. Regardless of your age, gender, income, education, or marital status, you will be judged based on your social skills and how you react in situations.

When you neglect these skills, you become the victim of your lack of vision, and this leads to lost revenues. Rudeness (a lack of etiquette, courtesy, and kindness) will cost you. By cultivating these social skills, you're seen as someone who can do the job and add value.

In its truest form, *etiquette* is the way you make others feel. Successful people tend to make you feel that you are the most important person in the room. They connect with people. Much of your success is based on your social skills—and these skills can be learned.

## What Is Etiquette?

What's the origin of *etiquette*? To keep aristocrats from trampling gardens, the gardener put up signs or *etiquets* to warn them. Since the aristocrats ignored the

signs, the King decreed that no one could go beyond the bound of *etiquets*. The meaning expanded to include all rules and regulations regarding what to do and where to stand at court functions.

Today, *etiquette* still means "keep off the grass". By practicing the guidelines of etiquette, you can build better relationships and present yourself with confidence and authority. Etiquette and protocol intelligence is the key to building relationships and competitive edge.

## What Is Protocol?

The term *protocol* is derived from two Greek words, *Protos* meaning "the first" and *kola* meaning "glue". Today, most organizations have their own rules of protocol as part of their culture. What protocols do you have? What is your code of ethics or standards of conduct?

The ability to handle yourself in social situations, have suitable table manners, know how to introduce people without stumbling, and be aware of simple rules of courtesy will build the bridge to success. With etiquette and protocol intelligence, you can make your best impression. You can have confidence when meeting someone for the first time. By projecting a confident image, you lay the groundwork for mutually beneficial relationships.

To determine how your behavior impacts your personal brand, ask:

- Does my behavior offend, insult, ignore, or interrupt another person?
- Would I consider this behavior rude, awkward, or unprofessional if I witnessed someone else doing it?
- Have I assessed the situation to clearly see the implications of my actions?

These questions will help you think before you do something that could hurt your career or relationships. PE

*Dallas Teague Snider is founder of Make Your Best Impression and author of Professionally Polished. Call 877-681-3111, info@makeyourbestimpression.com.*

**ACTION:** Present yourself with confidence.

