Business Etiquette Essentials: Meetings and Dining

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Düsseldorf (Germany)

UK Traininig
PARTNER



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Business etiquette is the set of courtesies and conventions that govern how professionals greet, meet, dine and correspond with colleagues, clients and guests. This one-week course is for early and mid-career professionals who represent their organisation in everyday meetings, meals and online contact, and it ends with an etiquette plan for hosting a visiting business delegation, covering the meeting, the meal and the follow-up.

Introduction

Three models guide the cross-cultural parts of the course. Edward Hall's high-context and low-context model explains how much meaning is carried by what is left unsaid. Hofstede's cultural dimensions describe differences such as power distance and individualism. Erin Meyer's Culture Map sets out eight scales, from communicating to scheduling, on which business cultures differ. The level is foundation to practitioner, focused on everyday situations rather than state or diplomatic protocol. Delegates learn through role-play of greetings, meetings and a business meal, with examples from banking, hospitality and engineering firms.

Course Objectives

- Define etiquette and protocol and recognise which situations call for formal rules of precedence.
- Distinguish the duties of a meeting host from those of a participant and apply each in practice.
- Select the right level of formality for a business lunch, a formal dinner or a networking reception.
- Compare high-context and low-context business cultures and adjust greetings, requests and refusals accordingly.
- Apply email, telephone and video call manners that keep correspondence clear and courteous.
- Justify the arrangements of a hosting plan for visiting guests, from arrival to follow-up.

Target Audience

- Client-facing staff who decide how formally to greet and address a new contact.
- Executive assistants and office coordinators who judge seating, timing and hospitality for visitors.
- Sales and account staff who choose how to conduct a business meal with a prospective client.
- Team members newly working with overseas partners who must judge which courtesies differ across cultures.
- Reception and service staff who decide how to handle a difficult or unexpected visitor.



Course Outline

Day 1: Etiquette, Protocol and First Impressions

- Etiquette vs Protocol: Everyday Courtesy Against Formal Rules of Precedence
- Etiquette Self-Assessment: Baseline Check of Current Professional Habits and Gaps
- First Impressions: Greeting, Handshake, Introductions and Business Card Exchange
- Social Conventions: Expected Behaviour Patterns in Workplace and Social Settings
- Office Etiquette Principles: Shared Spaces, Punctuality, Dress and Daily Courtesy

Day 2: Meetings and Networking

- Chairing vs Attending: Meeting Etiquette Duties of Host and Participant
- Meeting Conduct: Agendas, Seating, Speaking Turns and Mobile Phone Use
- Networking Etiquette: Joining Groups, Exchanging Contacts and Following Up Politely
- Reception and Service Etiquette: Welcoming Visitors at the Front Desk Properly
- Conference and Event Behaviour: Panels, Exhibitions and Informal Receptions

Day 3: Business Dining and Formal Occasions

- Business Lunch vs Formal Dinner: Levels of Formality and Expected Table Conduct
- Table Settings: Cutlery Order, Glassware, Napkin Use and Course Sequence
- Host and Guest Duties: Ordering, Seating, Toasts and Settling the Bill
- VIP Hosting: Order of Precedence, Escort Duties and Formal Introductions
- Dietary and Religious Considerations: Respectful Menu Choices for Mixed Groups

Day 4: Cross-Cultural Courtesy

- High-Context vs Low-Context Cultures: Hall's Model of Implicit and Explicit Messages
- Hofstede Cultural Dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism and Time Orientation Applied
- Hierarchical vs Egalitarian Business Cultures: Titles, Decision Speed and Seniority
- Relationship-Based vs Task-Based Trust: Hospitality, Gifts and Small Talk
- Greeting and Gesture Variations: Bows, Handshakes, Eye Contact and Personal Space

Day 5: Applying Etiquette to Correspondence and Hosting

- Email vs Telephone vs Video Call: Choosing the Channel and Its Manners
- Social Media and Webinar Conduct: Professional Presence on Online Platforms
- Difficult Situations: Tactful Responses to Rudeness, Complaints and Awkward Moments
- Customer, Supplier and Workplace Ethics: Courtesy That Builds Trust and Credibility
- Delegation Hosting Etiquette Plan: Meeting, Dining and Follow-Up Arrangements Finalised



Skills You Will Gain

- Formal introductions
- Order of precedence
- Table etiquette
- Meeting chairing courtesy
- Context-sensitive communication
- Business email tone
- Visitor hosting

Why Attend This Course

- From guessing how formally to address a senior guest to applying clear rules of introduction and precedence.
- From unease at a business dinner to confident handling of seating, ordering and the bill.
- From assuming every partner reads a message the same way to adjusting tone for high-context and low-context cultures.
- From improvised visits to a delegation hosting etiquette plan that covers the meeting, the meal and the follow-up.

Conclusion

Professional courtesy is a practical skill: knowing what is expected at a meeting, a table or in an inbox, and adjusting it to the person on the other side. The course separates etiquette from formal protocol, hosting from attending, and direct from indirect styles of communication. It is the right choice for professionals who want a one-week grounding in everyday situations rather than an extended course on official ceremonies and state protocol.

Course FAQs

What is business etiquette?

It is the accepted conduct for professional contact: how people greet, introduce, meet, eat together and correspond so that colleagues, clients and guests feel respected and business can proceed smoothly.

What is the difference between etiquette and protocol in business etiquette training?

Etiquette covers everyday courtesy that anyone can apply. Protocol is the formal set of rules for precedence, seating and ceremony used when senior guests or official occasions are involved.

Which models does a business etiquette course use for cross-cultural contact?

It draws on Edward Hall's high-context and low-context model, Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Erin Meyer's Culture Map to explain why courtesies differ between business cultures.



Is a business etiquette essentials course right for an executive assistant?

Yes, for an assistant who greets visitors, arranges meetings and business meals and corresponds with senior contacts, and who needs to judge formality and precedence correctly.

What does a delegate produce in a business etiquette essentials course?

Each delegate prepares an etiquette plan for hosting a visiting business delegation, setting out greetings, meeting arrangements, seating, menu considerations and follow-up correspondence.

