

Seema Gupta

Correct

Manners & Etiquette

**Developing a pleasing
personality/behaviour**

Dress code & Posture

Your Behaviour

Extending Greetings

Conversation

Eating Out/Party Time

Houseguest/ Visitors

Telephone Manners

Written Communication

Etiquette at Work

Travel Time

For Happy Occasions

For Sad Occasions



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PREFACE

The other day I went to a restaurant with my friends for lunch. Though the place was full, we managed to get a table. The waiters were rushed off their feet, scurrying from table to table. Over the noise in the restaurant we heard a ‘Shish...shish’ing sound coming from a corner. On turning towards it, we found it was a group of business executives trying to attract the waiter’s attention. One of them, apparently getting restless with the delay in service, was summoning the waiter by clicking his fingers and making strange sounds to attract his attention. When the waiter finally reached this table, the disgust on his face was quite evident.

What a glaring contrast there was between this group and a couple sitting near our table who, too, were trying to get the waiter’s attention. It was the manner in which they went about it that was so different. Waiting patiently till he caught the waiter’s eye, this man held up his index finger up and said “Excuse me”. The waiter promptly came to their table and took their order with all due courtesy and smiles. The marked difference in both behaviours probably never occurred to the impatient group. So used to getting their own way at once, they may never have crossed their minds that there could be something wrong in the manner they went about it.

Such incidents are commonplace and so are ill-mannered people. Actually, most people whose behaviour strikes others as bad or ill manners have conducted themselves in this manner for so long that it has turned into a habit and comes naturally to them. It is only when they come across someone with better etiquette that comparison takes place and the realization strikes home.

Good manners today are in a state of flux as they were never before. One can no longer turn to the rules that worked 50 or maybe even 20 years ago. Formal and rigid in outlook, they have little to do with the casual lifestyles that prevail today. However, there is one factor that has remained constant. And this is that your actions and behaviour will be observed by everyone; and unfortunately, a wrong first impression is more lasting than any number of good deeds that may follow. You will be observed equally by strangers as well as by people who matter to you. And, I am sure, that at least for the latter, you would like to be at your best.

Sound manners and good etiquette are based on the three most endearing of all human traits — kindness, thoughtfulness and consideration for others. That is why teaching your children basic manners takes top priority. It is your duty to show them the right path and they only learn what you teach them or emulate whatever you do yourself. At this young age, any adult with whom they are in close contact is their ideal and they try to imitate that person in every way — be it greeting someone cheerfully or hiding in your bedroom to avoid that person, digging your nose, cleaning your ears or scratching your head in public or in the privacy of your bathroom — children have an uncanny sense of perception and memory. So be a good model for them. Teach them the best of manners just like you provide them with the best of food, clothes and education.

This will help you achieve your goal. It helps you to conform and encourages you to do the right thing at the right time. Etiquette and manners at home, with visitors, guests, at the

office, introductions and greetings, various forms of address, written communication salutations, conduct during various ceremonies like births, weddings, anniversaries, deaths and funerals, parties, picnics are all dealt with in this book in detail.

Within any social ambience, if you find yourself in an unfamiliar situation, this book will help you come out of it. Just go through it and be assured of smooth sailing henceforth.

— *Seema Gupta*

CONTENTS

1. Etiquette - The Keyword
2. Posture
3. Dress Code
4. Your Behaviour
5. Hi... Hello!
6. Extending Greetings
7. Conversation - Mind That Language
8. Managing Relationships
9. Going Steady
10. You and Food
11. Eating Out
12. Party Time
13. A Children's Party
14. Travel Time
15. Houseguests/Visitors
16. Telephone Manners
17. Written Communication
18. Job Hunting
19. Etiquette at Work
20. For Happy Occasions-Births and Anniversaries
21. For Sad Occasions - Deaths and Funerals
22. Dilemmas
23. A Final Word

ETIQUETTE — THE KEYWORD

Lord Tredegar knew exactly how to handle a habit of several years. One of his servants reported this incident — “I remember the morning when Lord Tredegar was taken exceedingly ill. Instead of the usual nod of his head to me on my arrival, he said, ‘Cronin, I think I’m dying’.”

The years-old habit could not be amended in a moment. I knew that even Lord Tredegar in his more collected moments would not wish it so. So correctly I replied, ‘Very good, my Lord’, Thereafter, the normal silence between us was reestablished to our mutual satisfaction.

Etiquette and good manners are acquired through constant *JL/* practice. They are inculcated from childhood and become habits by the time we grow up. Remember the times when you were irritated by your mother’s constant nagging to clean up the mess in your room. But she was only trying to help you by merely cultivating the good habit of tidiness in you — such is the case with good manners.

Can the ability to get along with others be learnt or is it a trait that you are born with? While there are people who appear to be born charmers, most of us have to learn how to relate to others. Even the charmers often find that they have to refine their skills of communication. Do we all not envy that charming, selfconfident fellow who moves with grace? He has the ability to turn even the most embarrassing situations into playful witty moments by his intellect and good-natured humour. A person with a fine sense of etiquette exudes confidence. He is able to put everybody at ease, unmindful of their social rank or status.

Several years ago, John D. Rockefeller said, “The ability to get along with people is not purchaseable a commodity as sugar and coffee, and I pay more for that ability than any under the sun.”

Good manners are essential in building good relationships with other people and they can ensure that you have a steady supply of support and cooperation.

The practice of etiquette can be traced back to the times of kings and emperors where the courtiers bowed before the royal family. The elders received due respect and youngsters never spoke harshly to their parents.

Over the centuries, considerable emphasis has been placed in various societies on the proper forms of behaviour. Across the globe, career diplomats, armed force personnels, business executives, and even politicians are put through stiff training where even the minutest details in etiquette is not excused. Even in our social circle, have we not noticed that it is the persons with pleasing mannerisms who are the most popular? No doubt, they have an edge over others. Although in the informality that prevails today, interest in codified behaviour has declined, yet at our parties, wedding ceremonies, funerals, deaths, seminars or business meetings, we do observe certain basic acceptable norms of human behaviour.

By cultivating correct mannerisms and using them constantly, we are sure to be able to tackle various social occasions with confidence. Our skills in the areas of courtesy, politeness and etiquette can never go wasted.

A senior British diplomat was on his way to a Diplomatic meeting in London when his young secretary began complaining about etiquette and diplomatic Bologna.

“Isn’t it a lot of hot air?”, asked the secretary. “All etiquette is hot air, my dear”, answered the wise diplomat. “But that’s what’s in our automobile tyres and see how it eases the bumps.”

POSTURE

It is bearing, disposition, demeanour and poise that determine the pattern of our lives. A man may stand erect or stoop, he may sit smartly or lazily, he may speak nicely and soothingly or crudely - these and their variations are all part of good manners. A good posture indicates your good upbringing and the poised human body is one that ought to look as nature meant it to do so - upright, straight and beautiful. It is in the poised and healthy body that the poised and healthy mind is most often found.

Sitting Pretty

Anyone and everyone always sits down but graceful sitting begins with the manner in which you approach your chair. The first thing to bear in mind is that the act of sitting down should be done quietly. You should not plonk yourself down on a chair or scramble for a seat. Deliberate controlled movements are needed.

Hands: While sitting down, hands are particularly important. It is your hands that pose a problem, if you do not know what to do with them. Your nervousness may be apparent from the tremor through your hands. You should therefore learn how to place your hands properly, either on the hands of the chair, or on your lap, or else they will get in your way and look very ungainly. Hands that are relaxed give you an aura of serenity and poise. Avoid jerky movements.

Legs: Legs also play an important role in your self-composure, poise and confidence. Do not shake or jerk your legs constantly. Besides being an unwelcome distraction to others, they look indecent. The cardinal rule for a lady when she sits is to keep her knees together.

Talking while sitting: When carrying on a conversation while sitting, you should be careful that your body movements are well synchronized so that they project a good personality. These movements become an aid to your posture. Smiles, acknowledgements, nods and so on should be combined with all these.

Standing

Standing is sometimes more difficult than sitting. One reason is that it causes more strain. There are various modes of standing —

- (a) Standing straight with your hands hanging loosely at the sides.
- (b) With your feet a little apart and your hands clasped behind you — this is termed standing at ease.
- (c) Slight stooping or bowing as a mark of respect.
- (d) Some people prefer standing with their hands on their hips. This is the worst form of standing and indicates that the person has no manners at all. It not only shows disrespect to others but also portrays an indifferent aggressive attitude.
- (e) If you are dealing with a V.I.P., it would be better to adopt a posture of alertness

instead of one of laid-back serenity.

Talking while standing: When you are holding a conversation with another person and both are standing, your attention should not be diverted. But if you are sitting when another person strikes up a conversation, you should get up immediately and talk to him. You should not let your attention be diverted elsewhere. The only exception to the rule is if you are the host and have the responsibility of welcoming and seeing to the convenience of your guests; it is permissible for you to allow your attention to wander while in conversation.



Good Posture Habits

By teaching your child good posture habits, you have not only saved his physique but a lot of future embarrassment as well.

Sitting with a straight back, standing with ease and walking with the head held high are the basics of a good posture.

Posture is very closely associated with one's nature. If you sit erect, use your hands properly and know how to manage your legs while sitting in a group, you portray an image of a confident and composed person. Fumbling with your things unnecessarily, shaking your legs, touching your nose, ears or hair, playing with your fingers — these give you away by demonstrating your nervousness. Correct your child whenever you find him stooping. Stop him firmly if he is getting into the habit of shaking his legs while in conversation. Teach him how to walk and sit gracefully. You can make him understand the importance of a good posture by showing him as two different persons with good and bad posture habits respectively. The difference is so obvious that it will not be difficult to explain the importance of good posture to him.

Impatience : Enemy of Good Posture

Have you ever noticed that person pacing up and down the floor, scratching his ear, poking his nose, cracking his fingers, or looking at his watch every 10 seconds? What did you say? "He is in a big hurry." For what? No Sir, he is only waiting for a table in this restaurant, for which the manager has already told him that it would take 10 minutes. He is just a very

impatient man. And this is revealed in his posture habits. He forgets all the basics of good posture as this devil of a habit — impatience — takes over. So be warned, even if you are an impatient kind of person, hide it tactfully and maintain your poise and charm. Remember, a delay of a few minutes will not cause havoc in your life. The sky will still be there when you look up five minutes later.

Do's and Don'ts

Keep your back and head straight and don't stoop. Talk without shifting around in your chair.

Sit with knees close together — never wide apart. Don't take up more space than required.

Avoid making unnecessary and flamboyant gestures.

Don't sit too close to the persons on either side of you. If walking in a crowd, try keeping

pace with others — don't lag behind or stride ahead. Don't stop suddenly — others will walk

into you.

If walking with a lady walk on the outer side somewhat protectively. Don't walk too fast so

that she has to run to keep pace with you.

DRESS-CODE

(This chapter may be skipped by men as it focusses on the fairer sex.)

Dress to suit your figure, face and personality. Clothing-no matter how artfully designed, how perfectly made, how fashionably styled - must always be judged on the basis of its relationship to the wearer. When selecting clothes and accessories, you must have a complete understanding of yourself, your figure, face and personality - this will help you achieve distinction and personal attractiveness.

Costly the raiment as thy purse can afford,

Rich but not gaudy...

For apparel oft proclaims the man."

– Shakespeare

Good taste may be defined as a refined look, leaning more LT towards the conservative and simple than a flamboyant spectacular look. Remember these points.



Avoid offensively revealing clothes. Never be ostentatious or over-ornamented. Avoid fancy jewelry for day-time wear. Do not follow fashion blindly. Make sure you are neat and clean.

Simplicity and Good Taste

Status symbols have never had more power than they have today. Titan watches, Action shoes, Big Joe's T-shirts, Kala Mandir sarees, City Look sweaters and Weekender shirts are taking over. But do not panic, if you cannot afford them. It is still possible to look good without investing so much in either your apparel or accessories. It is preferable to carry a good though small leather purse than to carry an ostentatious, flashy and more expensive one from Cottage Emporium.

A well-stitched reasonably priced *salwar* suit is much more appealing than a tightly fitting gaudy outfit from an expensive shop.

Natural fibres such as cotton, wool and silk are not only stylish but are also classic fibres that are acceptable in any place.

Select a good quality material and have it stitched by reliable tailor.

Flatter your figure and skin: A critical self-analysis is essential for you to get fully acquainted with your own body structure.

Slim figures: A slim, perfectly proportioned figure will have no problem with clothes. It is the overweight or too-thin that must be careful.

Plump figures: Those overweight should avoid horizontal lines, pleats, ribbing and tucking. They should avoid contrasting colours, accentuating belts, yokes, etc. Instead they should go in for vertical lines, stripes, button front-closing from neck to hem.

Thin figures: The too-thin girl must wear garments that add to her figure giving an illusion of fullness.

Colours

As far as colours go, let us put them into the divisions given above.

Plump girls: Overweight girls/women should go in for staple colours of black, navy brown or dark grey. Deep reds, dark-toned greens, low-keyed purples also suit her. She should avoid shocking pink, fire-engine red, brilliant whites. The overweight should definitely avoid spotted prints, shiny finish and go in for small, patterned prints in muted colour combinations.

Thin girls: A thin girl on the other hand can wear staple colours but in heavier textures and contrasting lines that will seem to fill her out. A petite girl should never wear large or wide-spaced prints.

Fitting In

Well-tailored clothes with appropriate curves and seams is the key to a good fit — not so tight that they wrinkle everywhere and not so loose that they hang. A *salwar* suit or a *mini* looks best when properly fitted. Most women have this misconception that they need only two or three blouses in basic colours to go with all their sarees. They also do not give much importance to the fitting of the blouse. An unmatched badly fitted blouse or an ankle-length petticoat mars the beauty of even the most expensive saree.

Colour Blending

Colour blending is a very important boost to one's personality. If you are fair, all colours will suit you, especially pastel colours such as pale pink, blue, lemon, beige, cream, light green etc. For a wheatish and dark complexion, slightly dark colours are used.

Colour combination is an important aspect of dressing. Most women go wrong by using one blouse (usually black) with all the sarees. If you can spend a bundle on a saree, why not make it look more presentable by investing one-tenth of its cost in accessories? Men too should be careful about their colour combinations. Oranges, pinks, yellows, reds and greens are considered ladies' colours. Men should avoid them. Their best colours are grey, beige

blue and attributes of their different hues.

Although age groups used to matter earlier, these days all colours are worn by people despite their age group. A few years back, it was believed that dull grey shades, all light colours and various shades of cream belonged to the older generation, whereas all bright colours were meant for young people. However, with changing times, these rules have undergone a tremendous change. Today, if you buy a pink saree with a navy blue border for your mother, she will not give it to your wife, saying it's not her age to wear such colours. Instead, she will wear it quite happily.

However, there is no denying that sober colours do belong to the upper age group (say, above 40), as they indicate their maturity and bright and gaudy colours and dresses adapt well with young ones and children who are full of youth and bubbling with energy. Thus, their brightness and freshness matches best with the bright colours. Children, however, can wear any colour. But their best bet is bright colours, since childhood represents freedom from all worries and troubles, a carefree attitude, and so do these colours.

Accessories

Purses: A purse is a major accessory for women and should be bought keeping in mind your requirements. A leather purse always looks better than that of foam leather. There are different purses for different occasions and purposes. If, for example, you have a baby and you need to carry his water bottle and a few other things in your bag, a clutch purse will not serve the purpose. It is better in such a case to buy a large leather bag, spacious enough to hold all these things. Keep the small beaded clutch purse for social evenings. A small to medium-sized bag with a shoulder strap should be kept for going to office.

Do not overload your bag. It is never considered good manners if you spend half an hour searching for your hanky scattering your belongings all over the place. A bulging bag is very inelegant.



Shoes: Buy shoes to go with your outfit rather than buying them at random and impulsively.

and then trying to make them match your clothes. If you cannot afford many pairs, shoes in the three basic colours of black, brown, and maroon will do. Though high heels are very fashionable, do not go in for them unless you are confident and comfortable in stilettos. If your toes are pinched and feet cramped in tight-fitting shoes, the agony will be reflected on your face, besides making you irritable and snappy. If you are uncomfortable with the height of your heels, you will be unduly concerned about maintaining your balance and normal gait.

Handkerchiefs: A hanky should always be part of a person's wardrobe. Delicate lace-edged handkerchiefs for women and full-sized white ones with thin stripes for men should be used. They should be spotless, neatly ironed and changed daily. Remember even a little thing like a hanky goes a long way in building your personality and image.

Jewellery: Avoid the tendency to bedeck yourself with loads of jewellery in an effort to show off what you have. For college students, small studs in the ears or small rings, or a single bangle are sufficient. If you don't want to wear gold, the market is full of chunky, inexpensive jewellery ideal for the college student. Keep the gold for weddings and other special occasions.

Match your jewellery with your outfit, keeping the occasion in mind. You cannot wear just any stuff with a Kanjeevaram saree to a wedding. If you are going for a formal party or reception, a gold set (earrings, chain, bangles, ring — all with the same design) may be worn. Precious stones embedded in gold look elegant when worn with a saree of the same hue. Diamonds and pearls go with everything.

Grooming: Needless to say that a well-dressed person falls short of the mark if he/she has not paid attention to personal grooming. Deodorants/anti-perspirants are a must in our hot climate. Do not drench yourself in perfume or after-shave. Spray on just enough so that a pleasant smell emanates from you. You need not go in for imported perfumes. A dash of rose water in your bath will do the trick.

The indigenous *ittars* are as good as any imported perfume.

The Appropriate Dress

We dress for various occasions — attending office, a wedding, dance, party, or just an informal get-together with old friends. Clothes reflect the aspirations and psyche of the wearer. Just as a heavily embroidered saree on a picnic would be totally inappropriate, so would minis or jeans be frowned upon if worn by a girl when she meets her prospective in-laws or husband-to-be for the first time. The same bright red outfit which looked stunning at a party will be a total misfit at a funeral. A nicely starched *kurta-pyjama* will look out of place at a business meeting where every other person present is dressed in a suit. Likewise, the same clothes you prefer to wear to office will not do for a formal garden party.

For example, you have recently got married and your husband is happy to escort you around in clothes of your own choice, be it jeans, skirts, etc. But it would be insensitive of you to wear the same clothes when he takes you to meet his old, conservative grandfather for the first time. A saree or even a modest *salwar-kameez* would be most suited in this instance. In the same way, your husband should not insist on wearing his cut-off jeans or shorts when

your relatives come visting.

This reminds me of an instance. A friend of mine, soon after completing her MA, got a job as a lecturer in a college. She did not give much consideration to what she wore on her first day at college and ended up wearing the first available garment she found — a skirt. The moment she entered the gates, she was accosted by a group of seniors who on mistaking her for a fresher began ragging her. Her protests fell on deaf ears and they thought she was fooling them by saying she was a lecturer. Later, when the truth came out, she was the laughing stock of the whole campus.

Dresses for Children

Compared to their elders, children have a wider variety of clothes to choose from. While boys can wear a pant-shirt or *kurta-pyjama* combination for non-formal occasions, and a coat and pant, *shervani* or safari for formal affairs, girls can have their pick from a range of lovely frocks to suit every occasion. They can also wear a *lehanga-chunri* to weddings. Girls have the advantage over boys as they can even wear pants or shorts. When choosing clothes for children, keep in mind their convenience and comfort. A silk *shervani* for your son in May or a thin cotton dress for your daughter in December will not do. Avoid dressing very small babies and infants in expensive silks and too many frills or flounces.

YOUR BEHAVIOUR

'You're better than anyone else.

Forget about learning to be polite.

You don't need to be polite.

You have a divine right

The 'Thank you' and 'You are welcome' brigade

are there to serve.

If you must say something

A couple of grunts should suffice.'

The day man left his abode in the jungle and proceeded to *J~* civilize himself and to lift himself to higher levels of achievement, was the point when social contacts began to have a special significance for him. Since then, he started judging himself and continues to strive for the betterment of his personality.

Your personality sets you apart from the rest of the crowd. It manifests itself in your taste, your fine sense of aesthetics and your way of dealing with others. The basis for a good personality is a good behaviour pattern: how good you are at making friends, how you handle your rivals, your class and style, how you conduct yourself at public places and your inherent charm, decorum and dignity which can quietly affirm your good upbringing and background.

Making Right Friends

When life was simpler, friends had more in common and found it easier to be together. Relating to one's friends today is far more complex.

You are known by the company you keep. So be careful — if you are a submissive, quiet sort of chap but somehow managed to get friendly with the rowdy guys of the campus — you will be mistaken for one of them. Always remember, one good apple among the bad ones ends up getting spoilt itself.

Cultivating Charm

A charming person exudes friendship, warmth, bonhomie and fellowship around him. Charm is a way of evoking a positive response from others without having asked for it. It is this and other endearing qualities that cast their spell upon us when we come into contact with 'charming' individuals. We bask in their company and are drawn towards their magnetic personalities. What exactly is that undefinable quality that makes some people more endearing than others? Their poise, elegance, grace or a good sense of humour? These qualities may no doubt help but they are not essential prerequisites in a charming person. Then, is it physical charm? Need one be strikingly beautiful or dashing handsome to be charming? Certainly not. In fact, many beautiful people are not at all charming. On the other hand, many plain, simple persons can be disarmingly charming.

Charming people appear to be naturally gifted. But charm can certainly be cultivated. And who wouldn't like to cultivate it? It doesn't take much to cultivate charm. A good knowledge of human behaviour and a fine sense of dealing with the situations around, is all that goes into it.

Imagine yourself to be a man and that as you were entering the elevator of a bank building you saw a lady walking very fast towards it in an effort to get in before the door closed. You kept the button pressed till she entered the elevator. Inside, while she is trying to regain her composure, her bag falls down. You pick it up for her. She asks you to press the eighth floor button. Although you've already done so (since that is where you get off too), you nevertheless press it again. When the elevator stops at the eighth floor, you allow her to precede you. You both head for the same door. You hold the door open for her and enter only after she has gone in. Later, you meet her in the waiting lounge where only one chair is empty. You offer it to her.

From the look on her face, it is evident that she is thoroughly charmed by your behaviour. Long after you leave the bank, you will leave behind a good impression, causing her to spontaneously murmur: 'How charming!'.



Class

What exactly is class? Here we are not talking of class as in any school or college. Class is a highly elusive quality like 'charm'. It is marked by a quiet stamp of authority, a binding presence and a bearing that announces your good breeding and refined taste. Who is said to have class? An executive in a chauffeur-driven Mercedes; intellectuals; celebrities? Class is much more than the public school syndrome with which it is usually confused. A good accent, diction, decent clothes, poise, intellect and fame do help, but do not constitute 'class' by themselves.

To determine whether you have class or not, you should ask yourself two questions. Are you able to carry yourself naturally without an iota of effort; and secondly, is it the people you meet who talk about your having class or vice versa? Always remember, those who are devoid of class continuously remind themselves and others of their possessing an abundance of it. There are individuals who talk of their most recent trip abroad to virtually anybody and everybody they meet. They will dwell on the restaurants and shopping arcades they visited and boast of their top connections, their imported household goods, etc., etc. Sounds familiar?

doesn't it? This obviously is not class. Class is something which sets you a breed apart. Your modesty, honesty, good manners, politeness, sincerity towards relationships, genuine concern towards fellow human beings is more effective than any expensive material trappings to be eligible for that phrase 'a class apart'.

Road Sense

You couldn't eat your breakfast today. You were getting late for an early appointment. Look there is a vendor near a red light selling *pao-bhaji*. But you can't stop suddenly like this in the middle of the road disrupting all the traffic around you. Indicate your intention to stop and then do so by the side of the road. Now you can buy your *pao-bhaji*. Stand aside and eat it and let the others like you take their turn. Do not eat while walking — remember, it's bad manners.

Your behaviour in the car or on the road is very important. If you are driving a vehicle, you are expected to know and above all follow traffic rules. Don't wait for the traffic police to *challan* you and show you the sign 'YOU'RE NOT A BULL. DON'T CHARGE WHEN YOU SEE RED.'

Honking, though not a crime, is as bad as having committed one. So don't honk unnecessarily. Also, don't try to attract a person's attention by the incessant blowing of your horn. Chances are, the whole neighbourhood, except for him, would be out. What about him? Well, he would be too ashamed to show his face to anyone, for having such an ill-mannered friend like you. Don't drive like a maniac on the road. You may give someone the fright of his life if when speeding at 100 km/hr, you brake screechingly merely an inch away from him — only to ask for some directions. He would prefer to send you to the nearest police station.

Don't try to overtake another vehicle unless there is sufficient room to do so. First honk, give a clear signal, then go.

You must be thinking, what rubbish! These are only traffic rules. But it is not just that. These are all part of your behaviour pattern which, in time, becomes a part of your personality.

Enemies of Etiquette and Manners

We know very well what good manners are and the kind of good behaviour that is expected of us. But human nature is such that at times everything is shadowed by its one weakness - anger.

Anger Anger in fact, is a common weakness which blinds you towards the good and bad, and the right and wrong. Even very civilized, well-behaved people can be found screaming and lashing out at others using the most obscene of language. How many times we have heard stories of famous film stars getting involved in a brawl just like that; or a politician finding himself in a police station, after having given in to his anger. So if you want to save your reputation, keep your temper in check. A very good antidote to it is — as soon as you feel your nerves are getting tense, take a deep breath and count to... well, 10, 20, ... 100. It depends on the intensity of your anger. Another good and easy (may not be so at that time)

way out is — just turn around and make a graceful exit.

An apology after a showdown is a must to clear your heart but the best way is to prevent the showdown itself, while there is still time.

Do's and Don'ts

Respect your friends and friendship. Be natural in your dealing with others, don't be a show off or pseudo.

Observe good manners even while on the road, like slowing down at zebra crossing avoiding puddles so as not to splash passersbys, and not parking your vehicle just anywhere blocking another's way.

HI ... HELLO!

"I'm Fzzzzz B zzzzz ... "

"Sony, I couldn't get you!"

"I zzaid I'm Fzzzzz Bzzzz..."

"What's that?"

"Za'z my zame."

"What?"

"Fzzz Bzzz..."

"Mr Fzzz Bzzz..."

"Zezz"

"Buzz off"



Introduction

Clarity should be the base of verbal introductions and referring to people. The general etiquette is straightforward: a man is introduced to a woman; the junior person between those of the same sex is introduced to the senior member. If a person introduces himself, he says as much, adding his first name and surname without a prefix. Sometimes, we tend to hope that the parties know one another and require no formal introduction. In a situation where the name of a person escapes the recollections of the introducer, one device is to turn to that person expectantly in an unspoken request to name themselves. On occasions when someone forgets your name, it is polite to jump in with a straightforward self-identification, making no reference to the lapse.

Business Introduction

Business introductions have become less rigid in recent years.

When introducing two peers to each other, say; "Seema Sharma, this is Anil Agarwal,"

“Anil Agarwal, I would like you to meet Rohan Seth.”

A man is generally presented to a woman; in business, this is definitely true if she holds a more prestigious position than he does. When a secretary, or administrative assistant, male or female, is introduced to a superior, however, he or she is presented to the superior. This means you say the superior's name first as follows: “Mr Agarwal, I would like to introduce Seema Sharma, my administrative assistant.” In an informal office, the introduction might be “Anil Agarwal, I would like you to meet Seema Sharma, my administrative assistant.” If you are introducing a new employee to fellow workers, it is nice to add a statement about the new person, “Manoj Verma, I would like you to meet Rahul Pathak, who will be working with you in accounting.”

Acknowledging an Introduction

There is really only one appropriate way to acknowledge an introduction and that is to say very simply “How do you do.” Try not to say, “Pleased to meet,” “My pleasure,” or “Pleased to make your acquaintance,” all statements that may not be true ten minutes after you meet someone, especially in a business atmosphere.

In the Family

When introducing members of the family to new acquaintances, it is usual to mention any kinship ties. For example, “May I introduce my husband, Vivek?” “This is my wife, Anu.” “I would like you to meet my son-in-law, Roshan.”, or “Vinod, this is my daughter, Rina.”

Instead of the customary ladies first', it is better to introduce men first. However, occasionally the roles are reversed as in: This is Anupam Bhattacharya and his gorgeous wife Kiran... she has all the money, right Kiran?”

A chuckle and you've made yourself clear and yet managed to keep to the rules by introducing the man first.

The etiquette of making introductions has become less rigid in recent years and could be due to the more casual styles prevailing among us.

You have gone to a party. You are sipping your Campa Cola when the host comes up to you with a girl of your age and says, “Rekha, I would like you to meet Renu Chaudhary.” There is a mutual exchange of greetings and after a few minutes of polite talk, you both turn back to your respective groups. But what actually happened was that the names were lost in a splutter. You didn't catch it and in all probability, neither did she.

It often happens in social gatherings that in the course of numerous introductions, you end up not remembering who's who. But cheer up, there is nothing wrong with your memory. People to whom you have been introduced are also sailing in the same boat. On a second meeting, you go ‘Ummm...’, she too is likely to stammer, ‘I... well...’.

So instead of beating around the bush, the best way is to be straightforward and simply say something like, “I am sorry but when we were being introduced, I didn't catch your name. Don't worry, she won't be offended and will quite willingly oblige you.”

How to Introduce

To avoid such situations where neither of the parties catches each other's name, remember to pronounce names and surnames clearly to toss in a remark or two about them — like their profession, hobbies, etc. These are safe conversation openers.

Introducing Others

In a formal gathering: *You:* Mr Bhatia, meet Mr Gulati, a college friend of mine. He is with Modi Rubber as Finance Manager.

Mr Bhatia: How do you do.

In an informal gathering: You take a friend along to the group.

You: “This is Sudhir.” and then indicating each person go on... “This is Radhika, Ramesh, Ruchika...” and so on.

From those being introduced, a mere hello will suffice. After the formal introduction, somebody should draw the newcomer into the conversation by asking him a simple question like: ‘What do you do?’ or ‘Have you been in Delhi for long?’

At a wedding: In a marriage function, the introductions should be done with context to the groom and the bride.

You: “Mrs Agarwal, this is Mrs Gupta, the bride's *mausi*. She also lives in Calcutta.” Instead of “How do you do”, the greeting here may be in the form of ‘*namaste*’ or a mere nod of the head, indicating acknowledgement of the greeting.

Mrs Agarwal: “How nice. I also belong to Calcutta. Where do you stay in Calcutta?”

In college: You are walking along with a friend and happen to spot another friend unknown to the person you are with.

Excuse yourself by saying, “I won't be a minute”; or you could introduce them both to each other.

You: “Sudhir, meet Randhir, an old friend of mine. We were together in school.”

Sudhir (friend): “Hello, how do you do.”

Randhir (stranger): “Hello.”

Introducing Yourself

Introducing oneself is much more difficult because here you are totally on your own and the other person is an absolute stranger to you.

At a formal party: It is better if the host introduces you but if he does not, then the best way is to use your business card. Hand it to the other person and say “Hello, I am Aneesh Gupta, Business Manager for Bharat Ltd.”

Never ask for the other person's introduction without giving yours first. If you are an extrovert and enjoy making friends, go up to a person and introduce yourself by saying

something like “Hello, I’m Ramesh Bhandari...” and set the ball rolling.

To a celebrity: You are invited to a party and to your good luck, you find your favourite actor, Amitabh Bachchan also there. If no one introduces you to him, you can directly go up to him and introduce yourself: “Hello, I’m Ashok Malhotra, an old fan of yours...”. Most likely, Amitabh will acknowledge it gracefully and you may even ask for an autograph or photograph with him, if you so desire.

In an office: You go to an office to meet Mr R.K. Sharma whom you have never met before. The best way is to walk up to the reception and enquire about him.

You: “Excuse me, I want to see Mr R.K. Sharma, the Assistant Sales Manager”.

Receptionist: “May I know your name, please?”

You: “I’m Ashok Rana from Bharat Sales.”

Receptionist: “Kindly wait, I’ll inform him.”

If there is no reception around, you can walk up to the first person you see and enquire: “Excuse me, I’m here to meet Mr R.K. Sharma. Would you be able to help me?”



Reply: “You can go inside. He’s in his office.”

Once you have been able to locate Mr. Sharma’s whereabouts, go up to him and introduce yourself.

You: “Mr Sharma?”

Mr Sharma: “Yes.”

You: “Hello, I’m Ashok Rana from Bharat Sales...”.

Come to the point right away. Don’t start telling him how long it took you to locate him.

Introducing Children

When it comes to children, we find ourselves at a loss as to how to teach them to greet others. Children are shy and feel very self-conscious when introduced to others. Parents introduce their children to others in one of the following ways; Either the parents will go on persuading the child (in front of the visitor) to greet the visitor (they can even be four

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