Professional Etiquette

There are several things you can do to enhance your professional image in order to be prepared to enter the workforce. Hold yourself to a high standard of professional etiquette will enhance your image so that you will be prepared and confident no matter the situation!

Employer Interactions | Time Management | Self-Branding | Online Image

Employer Interactions

PURPOSE
Presenting yourself in a professional manner is a reflection on your character. A proper/firm handshake, good eye contact, appropriate dress, and overall demeanor all play a part when communicating to employers.

DEVELOPMENT
Both men and women should have a firm handshake while looking the person in the eye, which conveys confidence and respect. Practice doing this with everyone you meet, not just someone you may consider a ‘professional’. Smile often, as this conveys your interest and excitement about the topic, and never forget to say thank you!

Remember to use a salutation (Hello, Dear, etc.), concise and direct messaging, and a professional signature at the end of ANY correspondence. You should create a basic email signature line that includes your name, major, The University of Texas at Austin, College of Natural Sciences, your phone number and email address. Use formal titles such as Mr. or Ms., unless otherwise directed so you do not inadvertently offend someone. Make sure to avoid run-on sentences, slang or typos, and ALWAYS proofread all correspondence before you send it.

Going to dinner with an employer? Remember that they are watching to see how you might interact with a client. Sharpen your table manners to enhance your professionalism and build confidence. Check out Etiquette Scholar for detailed instructions and tips for mastering your meals! Take advantage of Etiquette Dinners when they are offered on campus, so you can practice in a safe and instructive environment.

ADDITIONAL TIPS
Sharpen Correspondence: Check out our Professional Correspondence packet to read up on how to write a professional email and thank you note. Include any of your branding logos in your correspondence to build your brand.


Practice: Mock interviews and appointments are available for students to sharpen skills. You can use InterviewStream 24/7 to brush up on your interview skills if you do not have enough notice to schedule a live mock with the Career Services Office.

Time Management

PURPOSE
Be on time. It reflects good priorities. If you show up late, it indirectly states that the person or event is not important enough for you to show up on time. Respect other people’s time and they will respect yours. Be
conscious of when you arrive, whether you or late or early, it establishes your reputation and you want a positive one.

**DEVELOPMENT**
If you have not already, create a calendar online that will keep track of all your assignments, class schedule, work schedule, and appointments. You can often sync the calendar to your smartphone, so even when you are on the go, reminders will be sent to your phone.

**ADDITIONAL TIPS**
Be prepared - Arrive 10 minutes prior to your scheduled interview time or event. Being prepared involves being on time, dressing appropriately, completing company/industry research and preparing questions in advance.

Cancelling/Late with a Career Coach – We expect students to show up prepared and on time for appointments with a Career Coach. If you have a legitimate reason for missing an appointment, you will need to contact the Career Services Office in advance.

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**Self-Branding**

**PURPOSE**
Self-branding differentiates you among your competition. It helps communicate your values, strengths, abilities, and beliefs. Develop a brand that is rooted in your personal values and strengths (skills and abilities). This is not something you can wish to be true about yourself; it is actually *what is* true about yourself. Everyone has marketable skills; you just need to identify yours and communicate them to the world.

**DEVELOPMENT**
To get started, ask yourself: Who am I? What are my strengths? How am I different than others in a positive way? Come in and talk with a Career Coach about your strategy to further develop your strengths. Think about how this message could be translated into images, logos, written communication, and face-to-face introductions.

**ADDITIONAL TIPS**
Think of yourself as a business: Logo’s, images, and external communication let others know what the company does and what matters to the company. Think of yourself as CEO, what do you want to tell the world about what you do and what matters to you?

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**Online Image**

**PURPOSE**
Having a professional online image can enhance or detract your desirability to employers. Keep in mind that potential employers can view pictures, videos, comments, and tweets that are shared in a public online setting, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blog sites, etc. Keep these sites free of inappropriate communications to protect your professional image with current and future employers.

**DEVELOPMENT**
There are many sites that can help you manage your online reputation. Reppler will keep track of any social networking site that you elect, and run regular reports to alert you of any inappropriate communication. You can take action immediately and continuously monitor sites so you can maintain a professional image.
ADDITIONAL TIPS

Take a second look: Would you be embarrassed if your parents or teachers saw something on one of your social media sites? If so, it is time to clean it up!

Use social networks to your professional advantage: LinkedIn offers the option to ask your connections for a ‘recommendation’, which can provide proof of just how marketable and attractive you are as an employee. Learn about LinkedIn through our guide: LinkedIn for Students.