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## Email Etiquette I

By **Kathie M. Thomas**

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It is important to consider that when emailing people you are on show, whether you like it or not, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is one of my `pet' subjects on which I speak when giving a public presentation about the Internet. I am constantly amazed at the number of people who have never thought about it, including secretaries, but once it's mentioned they say `oh, yes, I hadn't thought about that!' Let's face it - many people use email at work AND at home - but who they are does not change.

It is best to type messages in full, and do not use phonetic spelling or lots of abbreviated words and half sentences. I know it is common practice on chat programs to shortcut the process, but email is quite different, and these days, generally accepted almost the same as a written letter. The reason not to type email in the shortcut form is that it can become habit-forming and not something you would want to promote to prospective clients, bosses or other business associates. It is important to remember that your 'professionalism' is on show 24 hours a day via email – a small point, but important.

Another thing - develop a signature block and let people know who you are and what you do! I have it set as an automatic feature whenever emailing, or replying to email, and sometimes forget to delete it when emailing my parents or other family members - but that doesn't really matter. The thing to remember is that anyone is a potential business associate and letting them know who you are and what you do helps promote your business or your industry. It is a business card that is on show all the time.

Third - take notice of the correct spelling of people's names. I've lost count of the number of times that people have replied to an email of mine and spelt my name as either Kathy or Cathy - it's neither. In

addition, I'm sure the spelling of your own name is just as important to you and it is quickly noticed when someone spells it incorrectly.

It's these little things that make the difference between an average business operator and one who does that extra something - every little thing counts when it comes to attracting clients and associates and keeping them. Taking the time to care about these things and looking after even a client's name goes a long way to developing good business relationships.

Article reprinted by permission Kathie M. Thomas, Founder "A Clayton's Secretary". Kathie is a multiple award winner in her industry as a Secretary and Virtual Business Operator, and has 30 years' experience in the secretarial/ administrative field. [www.asecretary.com.au](http://www.asecretary.com.au)

### **Business Etiquette**

**By Neil Payne**

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Business etiquette is in essence about building relationships with people. In the business world, it is people that influence your success or failure. Etiquette, and in particular business etiquette, is simply a means of maximising your business potential.

If you feel comfortable around someone and vice versa, better communication and mutual trust will develop. This comfort zone is realised through presenting yourself effectively. Business etiquette helps you achieve this.

Business etiquette revolves around two things. Firstly, thoughtful consideration of the interests and feelings of others and secondly, minimising misunderstandings. Both are dependent upon self conduct. Business etiquette polishes this conduct.

Business etiquette varies from region to region and country to country. For the international business person, focusing too deeply on international business etiquette would leave no time for business. However, there are some key pillars upon which good business etiquette is built.

#### **Behaviour**

Your manners and attitude will speak volumes about you. They will point to your inner character. If you come across selfish, undisciplined or uncouth your relationship is unlikely to prosper. Appropriate business etiquette promotes positive traits.

#### **Honesty**

A reputation for delivering what you say will deliver goes a long way in the business world. Remember, a reputation for integrity is slowly gained but quickly lost. Understanding a particular country's business

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etiquette provides a framework in which you can work without fear of crossing boundaries in terms of agreements, promises and contracts.

### Character

Your character refers to what you as an individual bring to the business table. Proper business etiquette allows you to exhibit your positive qualities. For example, knowing when to be passionate and not emotional or self-confident without being arrogant. Just through learning another's business etiquette you demonstrate an open-mindedness which will earn respect.

### Sensitivity

Sensitivity and consideration underlie all good business etiquette. Being prepared for foreign ways and methods and responding thoughtfully is achieved through experience and business etiquette know-how. By avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations through business etiquette you lay

foundations for a strong business relationship.

### Diplomacy

Avoiding thoughtless words and actions protects you from negative consequences. Impulse often leads a business person astray. Business etiquette encourages the careful thought of the interests of others and choosing acceptable forms of expression.

### Appearance

Dressing appropriately, standing and sitting in the right place at the right time, good posture and looking physically presentable are all elements in making a good impression. Business etiquette teaches you how to suitably present yourself and what to avoid.

Analysing, understanding and implementing the above will help you recognise what business etiquette is and how it should be employed within the business world.

For the international business person business, etiquette acts as a key. It locks the doors of poor communication and misunderstandings and opens doors to successful business relationships.

Neil Payne is Director of

Business Etiquette

Business Meeting Etiquette

Business Card Etiquette

Email and Newsgroup Etiquette

They Called Me an Idiot! A Review of Web Etiquette

Email Spider Software  
Instant Email Scramble  
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