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Business & Economics

Business Etiquette: 101 Ways to Conduct Business with Charm and Savvy
Ann Marie Sabath
Career Press
978-1-56414-614-4
(February 15, 2002)

The workplace has certainly changed over the last couple of decades. Gone are business suits with white shirts, offices with doors, and a well-defined hierarchy of who's who and what's what. Today, voice mail and electronic mail often substitute for person-to-person communication. In such an environment, it's hard to know the current rules of business etiquette, and this is the void that the author attempts to fill in this concise, checklist-style manual.

President of a sixteen-year-old Cincinnati company devoted to providing domestic and international business etiquette programs, Sabath has been dubbed "the Miss Manners of the Midwest." In addition to her business and her six books, she also writes a weekly newspaper column on the subject of business manners. Covering a wide gamut of potentially sticky wickets, from how to dress in today's business-casual workplace to how to communicate on the telephone, via the Internet, and face-to-face, the author divides her advice into ten chapters, which are further divided into more than one hundred tips. Many of the tips could be labeled common sense. There are workers, however, who have sat in cubicles next to colleagues who insist on using their speakerphones to discuss very personal business; they will appreciate reading Sabath's Tip #54: "Obey the 12 Commandments of Cubicle Etiquette." She also covers such topics as dealing with higher-ups with aplomb, managing time more gracefully, and mixing business with pleasure.

The final chapter addresses the more unusual questions Sabath has been asked over the years, such as matters of personal hygiene and fielding interest from potential employers. An appendix explains common practices abroad, and a bibliography and index are also included.

Though this book may not be as thorough as some of the many other books covering business etiquette, it does provide a useful quick reference. When in doubt, it's reassuring to access Tip #7, "Handle Name Lapses Gracefully" and Tip #99, "Keep the Breath Mints Handy."