

# Getting Ahead With *Etiquette*

**Roadmap to Success  
for Young Adults, Teens  
& College Students**

**Cheemah**   
**PUBLISHING**



***Cheemah PUBLISHING***

*Oakley, California*

[www.CheemahPublishing.com](http://www.CheemahPublishing.com)

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Printed in the United States of America

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## ***Introduction***

“Getting Ahead with Etiquette” is my gift to teens and young adults. My main purpose for writing this book is to help you understand how you can get ahead with a set of soft-skills called etiquette. In a competitive marketplace, understanding and exhibiting proper etiquette behaviors will give you a “leg up” in the professional world, and keep you a step ahead of others.

In reading my story, you can better understand how etiquette was the underlying component to my success.

My name is Tina Hayes. This is my story . . .

High School Years - I was raised in Richmond, California. As a teenager, I never considered myself smart; therefore, I dedicated much time to my studies. As a result, I earned high grades and graduated with honors in just three years. What an experience to graduate as a Junior!

College - Following high school I immediately went to college, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, to study Graphic Arts. During my five year college tenure, I changed majors and schools. In 1985, I graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business from California State University, Hayward. I then married my high school sweetheart and we had two children.

Career - After graduation, I was hired as a Personnel Supervisor for a temporary agency. I was responsible for interviewing candidates for temporary work assignments. After two years, I went to work for a small corporation

performing a variety of accounting and administrative functions.

My next job was with a large corporation where I worked for 17 years in a variety of positions. The majority of these positions were in accounting; however, I also assisted with College Recruiting and worked as a Training Coordinator. I was hired as an entry level accountant, and then worked my way into accounting management. *Through my "actions" and self presentation skills I earned a good reputation.* Working as an accountant in Corporate America was not easy for me. To compensate for my lack of technical (accounting) skills and knowledge, I developed strong business soft-skills (personal qualities, habits, attitudes and social graces that make a person a good employee and compatible to work with).

**I brought to work a positive attitude. I dressed professionally. I took pride in my work. I was reliable and kept a good attendance record. I was courteous, a team player, and considerate of how I treated others. I also showed a high level of respect toward others and easily adapted to new situations and challenges.**

One of the requirements of my first management position involved travel and attending meetings where I had to represent the company I worked for in both business and social settings. When I first began attending these meetings, I felt intimidated and under-qualified. I was unfamiliar with business protocol outside of the office and I lacked networking skills.

I was often faced with situations which required me to mingle and connect with people I didn't know. I will never forget how uncomfortable I felt walking into a convention

hall with more than 300 strangers and having to start a conversation.

Oh, and the feeling of defeat when I dined at the formal dinners held in huge, beautiful, five star ballrooms. I was awed by the nice china place settings, crystal glassware, chandeliers and cloth napkins but had no idea how to present myself or how to eat in that type of fancy environment: I didn't know which fork to use, how to hold my fork and knife correctly or how to properly cut my food.

**Here I was a College Graduate, in management, and making a lot of money; however, I could not “dine” properly! Could you imagine my embarrassment? . . . and that is putting it mildly!**

As a result of these experiences, I eventually developed strong social, business, and dining etiquette skills. The set of skills I developed softened and refined me. I grew more comfortable within myself. I also grew in confidence and success. It is now my goal to teach you these soft-skills so that you will never have to feel uncomfortable and awkward in social and professional environments.

**The success that I have achieved is the result of my soft-skills, and how I interact with, and present myself to others. Etiquette is not about the ability to look sophisticated. It is about a set of skills that can refine you, help you better connect with others, be more comfortable with yourself, and feel more confident.**

I truly believe that every person reading this book will learn tools to be more successful and accomplish great things in life. That is my wish for you!

*Tina Hayes*

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# *The Value and History of Etiquette*

Many people think etiquette is a list of rules that tell us how we should behave. These rules are loaded with many expectations that, if not understood, can put some people off. The list includes such things as:

- Chew with your mouth closed.
- Cover your mouth when you cough.
- Keep your elbows off the table.
- Say excuse me when you belch.
- Shake someone's hand when you meet them.

Most people have learned that the above gestures are the Proper and Polite things to do to show respect for others and to behave in a respectful manner; however, it goes much deeper.

**Etiquette is about Consideration and Respect.**

Proper Etiquette will:

- Change the way people view and treat you.
- Help you gain the respect of others.
- Build self-esteem, self-confidence and self-respect.
- Help you step into another's shoes, and connect you with how you would like to be treated.
- Teach you how to behave and help you feel at ease in a variety of environments including Social, Dining, Networking, and Professional Situations.
- Help you feel more comfortable around people of varying social backgrounds.

The soft-skills of Etiquette can help you open and grow as a person, and soften you so you can experience more fullness of life. **Etiquette can open doors for you.**

## **A World without Etiquette**

What would the world look like without etiquette:

- Selfish, boorish, uncivilized behavior.
- People sneezing and coughing without covering their mouths, possibly spreading disease.
- People talking loudly on their cell-phones.
- There would be no **“Please” “Thank You” or “After You”**.

## **What is Etiquette?**

The Webster Dictionary definition of Et-i-quette is *1. the forms, manners and ceremonies established by convention as acceptable or required in social relations, in a profession, or in official life. 2. the rules for such forms, manners, and ceremonies.*

Etiquette, therefore, is the set of social rules we live by, to show respect toward others and ourselves. In its most simplistic form, etiquette is defined as, “The rules that guide people’s behaviors.”

### **Etiquette is Not:**

- Some old-fashioned set of rules that is not needed or used anymore.
- Something that is taught only in finishing schools.
- A set of behaviors associated only with dining.

### **Some History about Etiquette:**

Much of today’s formal etiquette originated in the French Royal Court during the 1600’s. King Louis XIV did not appreciate people walking on his lawn and through his garden during his parties; therefore, he had signs or tickets posted everywhere to guide his guests as to where to walk and how to conduct themselves at his functions. These signs and tickets were the beginning of Etiquette.

Etiquette is a French word meaning Ticket.  
One can think of Etiquette as their  
Ticket to Success

***Etiquette can open doors to a world of possibilities.***



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## ***First Impressions***

It is part of the human condition to assess and draw conclusions about people, and situations. It is so natural that our first assessments are drawn within seven seconds of meeting someone. This chapter is about First Impressions and Putting Your Best Foot Forward. Chances are you have heard it said that “First impressions are lasting ones, so make them count!” Make it your GOAL to leave a Positive First Impression and you will build a respectful reputation and a network of quality connections.

**First Impressions are formed from your Overall Appearance and Demeanor.**

The following list will help you pinpoint areas that you can control in helping make a good first impression?

Clothes:

- Make sure your clothes are clean, pressed and fit properly.
- Dress appropriately for the occasion.

### Hair:

- Make sure your hair is washed and neatly combed.
- Style it appropriately for the occasion.

### Approachability:

- Smile. A warm smile has a pleasant effect on others.
- Be friendly and approachable.

### Posture:

- Sit and stand respectfully.
- Do not look at the ground. Hold your head up.
- Do not slouch. Stand with Confidence—Proper upright posture conveys confidence. It will not only lengthen your body, but it can also boost your spirits.

### Speech:

- Enunciate your words clearly.
- Commit to expand your vocabulary on an ongoing basis.
- Pay attention to the way you articulate, improve where you can.
- Limit the use of slang and use it **ONLY** when appropriate.

### Self Presentation Skills:

- Extend a proper handshake.
- Genuinely smile.
- Make eye contact.
- Control nervous gestures (nervous knee bouncing, pen clicking, playing with your hair, scratching, nail biting).

**Note:** Research shows that body language, including your posture and nonverbal communication is responsible for 90% of your message. In other words people pay more attention to how you act, sit and stand than what you say. Focus on that first impression.

### Some tips to help you with good body posture:

- Exercise regularly to strengthen your bones and core.
- When appropriate, view yourself in the mirror, taking note of how you stand.
- Pay attention to how you sit in casual situations, and make small adjustments to improve your posture naturally.

***“You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression”***

