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In business relations, manners still matter

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If not, why not? Do those who show kindness, courtesy and respect to others have an advantage over those who don't?

Does anybody notice?

Etiquette is about courtesy, whether in a social situation or a business situation. Etiquette is not a rigid set of rules for the wealthy and the well-bred; it's a way to make others comfortable and show you are interested in them. Many of us have a clear understanding of social etiquette, but we might not understand how social etiquette mixes with business professionalism. Today's business environment is gender-neutral, and the social niceties such as men opening doors for women that

should occur in our daily lives are not expected in our professional lives. But they certainly would be a welcome change.

Knowing when to use etiquette in a business situation can play a vital role in creating our own success and opportunities. It sends the message of understanding and showing how to be courteous and respectful to people, especially those people we are trying to build business relationships with. After all, business is about building relationships, and those who are the most successful are often the ones who have the ability to build the best relationships.

How can manners help build those relationships? Here are a few tips:

1. Stand up when someone enters the room and greet them with a friendly handshake and smile.
2. Hold the door or elevator for someone, whether they are male or female.
3. Make the person you are meeting with feel more important than the incoming phone call.
4. Remember to sit up straight, with elbows off the table. Don't talk with your mouth full. And chew with your mouth closed.

5. Show respect to the elders in the room. There are many generational differences, and you can benefit by noticing this.

Those who can be knowledgeable and hard-working while showing basic common courtesies to those they interact with will have a better chance of being successful because they are able to make those around them feel comfortable and respected.

A rare quality indeed.

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