

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

Programme: Bachelor of Arts (Second Year)

Subject: Sociology

Course Code: SOS 103

Course Title: Social Skills and Etiquette

Unit: III-Types of Social Etiquettes

Module Name: Dining Etiquette: Home

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Notes

Dining Etiquette: Home

Introduction

Etiquettes refer to guidelines which control the way a responsible individual should behave in the society. Etiquette in simpler words is defined “as good behaviour which distinguishes human beings from animals”. Etiquettes play a very important role in our lives, as they guide and direct us towards appropriate behaviours and actions, expected by the society. We learn the different etiquettes through the process of socialisation.

There are different types of etiquettes that one needs to follow in their everyday lives. One such etiquette is Dining Etiquette. The rules of dining etiquette vary considerably around the world. Different nations have different norms when it comes to acceptable behaviour at the table. In some cultures, for example, food is eaten with the hands, and a complex set of rules dictates how to behave at the table to avoid upsetting or offending people.

Other nations may use chopsticks or silverware, each of which is accompanied by an assortment of etiquette rules which can vary by nation and utensil. Dining etiquette addresses a wide variety of issues which can come up at the table. One is personal hygiene, an issue in a setting where people are eating because people could potentially pass diseases on to each other. Another is accepted

rules of behaviour when it comes to things like conversation, greeting people at the table, interacting with servers, and conversing with other diners. Other rules cover how and when to use utensils and tools, from finger bowls to forks.

The setting of a meal can have an impact on the dining etiquette which is appropriate. Meals at home tend to be more casual, for example, while meals in restaurants are more formal. When people are entertaining as opposed to eating with family and close friends, the rules of etiquette also change. Likewise, there are etiquette rules for dinner guests, whether they are visiting a friend for dinner or attending an event hosted by a head of state.

Meaning of Dining Etiquette

- Dining etiquette is an area of etiquette which pertains to dining, whether at home or out in a restaurant.
- Many people receive some etiquette education as they grow up from family members, friends, relatives and teachers, and it is also possible to take classes which provide instruction in etiquette.

Dining Etiquette at home

- Proper etiquettes are important for making a favourable impression at both launch/dinner interviews as well as in social business situations.

1. Arrival/Sitting Down

Arrive on time and call ahead if you know you will be late. Do not place any bags, purses, sunglasses, cell phones, or briefcases on the table. Have proper posture and keep elbows off the table. Wait 15 minutes before calling to check on the arrival status of your dinner partners.

2. TABLE SETTING

When presented with a variety of utensils, remember the guide to “start at the outside and work your way in”. For example if you have two forks, begin with the fork on the outside. Do not make noise of the utensils and never hold a utensil in a fist. Set the utensils on your plate, not on the table, when you are not using them.

3. NAPKIN

One needs to put the napkin on the lap (folded in half with the fold towards ones waist) soon after sitting down at the table, but follow your hosts lead. The napkin should remain on your lap throughout the entire meal. Place your napkin on your chair, or to the left of your plate, if you leave the table as a signal to the server that you will be returning. The host placing the napkin on the table signifies the end of the meal. You should then place your napkin on the table as well.

4. ORDERING AND BEING SERVED

Do not order; try to serve your own requirements during the launch/dinner. For example asking for the glass of water. Do not expect the meal plate in your hands instead try to serve your own self and others around. Wait for everyone to be served before beginning to eat, unless the individual who has not been served encourages you to begin eating. Do not criticise the cooked items and the food. Give good comments to the cook

5. During the Meal

Eat slowly and cut only a few small bites of your meal at a time. Chew with your mouth closed and do not talk with food in your mouth. Pass food items to the right (i.e. bread, salad dressings). If you are the individual starting the passing of the bread basket, first offer some to the person on your left, then take some for yourself, then pass to the right. Pass salt and pepper together, one in each hand. If someone has asked you to pass these items, you should not pause to use them. Taste your food before seasoning it.

Do not use excessive amounts of sweeteners - no more than two packets per meal. Bread should be eaten by tearing it into small pieces, buttering only a few bites at a time. Do not cut bread with a knife or eat whole. Gently stir your soup to cool it instead of blowing on it. Spoon your soups away from you. You do not have to clean your plate. It is polite to leave some food on your plate. Do not talk in between during the meal.

6. Be Aware of Different Eating Styles

Continental or European Style: Cutting the food with the right hand and using the left hand to hold the food while cutting and when eating. American Style: Cutting the food with the right hand and holding the food with the left, then switching hands to eat with the right hand. Eating with or without spoons, forks and knives.

7. Do not place waste such as fish bones etc, on the table, instead place in your own plate.

8. Do not make use of mobile phones during the meals, as it may distract the other family members around.

9. Do not share your food from the plate with others unless told.

10. When You Have Finished

When you are finished, leave your plates in the same position, do not push your plates aside or stack them. Lay you fork and knife diagonally across the plate, side by side, pointing at 10:00 and 4:00 on a clock face. This signifies that you have finished. If possible can wash and clean ones own plate and other utensils.

Conclusion

Hence Etiquette in general is a series of suggestions and rules for behavior which are designed to ensure that people behave consistently and within the norms of politeness. Dining etiquettes is an area of etiquette which pertains to dining, whether at home or out in a restaurant. Learning the basics of dining etiquette can help an individual to behave and act appropriately in different situation when dining with family members, relatives, friends and others.