



THE NEW BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

Technology has changed our lives forever. We can now communicate with virtually anyone, anywhere at any time. However, technology has also created a new set of rules for what I consider acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

Some believe this new business etiquette to be generational in nature; that since those who are younger grew up with technology, it is only them who make these faux pas. Since I have personally experienced people of all ages make these mistakes, I say age has nothing to do with it.

Let me give you some examples. I am in the process of making a major purchase. The product I will be buying is irrelevant, just suffice it to say it is a large ticket item and I will be comparing many competitive products and talking to many sales people before I finally make my purchase.

In one instance, the sales representative's cell phone rang during our conversation. He took the call, and to my surprise, he chatted for several minutes while I waited. Not too long after that call was done and we started talking again, his cell phone rang again. When he answered a second call, I literally walked out of his office. Remember, one prospect face to face is worth two on the smart phone.

This was not a young rookie either. Although he told me on several occasions he had 30 years of experience, I kept thinking he had 1 year's bad experience repeated 30 times!

Another sales representative kept saying he answers his cell phone 24/7, 365 days a year. Seriously? You will really take my call at 8:00 am Christmas morning? Not only did I not believe this, but I also started to question all the other claims he made about customer service during his sales presentation.

Just like your cell phone, texting during meetings is also inappropriate. It doesn't work to hide your phone under the boardroom table either. Everyone in the meeting sees you looking down and it is very obvious that you have lost focus.

Web surfing while dining, be it with business associates or friends is also not acceptable. Besides, isn't the whole point of social networking to connect with people? It's more effective to connect with the person sitting across from you rather than tweeting about who you are with.

Some other business etiquette tips to remember are:

1. When you are using a speaker phone or hosting a conference call, you should announce who else is in the room.
2. When you meet someone, make eye contact, smile, and give them a firm hand shake. Gentlemen, don't dislocate the person's shoulder by shaking too hard. Ladies, the palm of your hand should be perpendicular to the ground, and your hand should not bend at the knuckles.
3. When you are introduced to someone, always call them by the name you are given. Don't assume that you can shorten Susan to Sue or Thomas to Tom.

Yes, technology has opened up a whole new world of possibilities for us. However, just because you can doesn't mean you should!



For more common sense sales tips that can have an immediate impact on your results check out our training books [Action Plan For Sales Success](#) and [Action Plan For Sales Management Success](#).

Aim Higher!

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Susan A. Enns is managing partner of [B2B Sales Connections](#), an online sales training website with free sales resources, a specialized job board & free resume listing services for business to business sales professionals. She has a proven track record of success, with over 22 years of direct sales, management and executive level business to business experience. Her accomplishments include consecutively being the top sales rep in Canada, managing the top sales branch, and achieving outstanding sales growth in a national channel sales organization.

She has written the Books [Action Plan For Sales Success](#) and [Action Plan For Sales Management Success](#), created numerous automated sales tools, and she writes and edit the company's newsletters. Her work has been published in several locations numerous times and has sold on four separate continents.

Susan has served on the Leadership Executive of the Sales Professionals of Ottawa (SPO) since 2008, and is currently the association's Past President. She has also been a guest lecturer at the School of Business at Algonquin College as well as a guest speaker for SPO. For more information, visit www.b2bsalesconnections.com or contact Susan directly at www.twitter.com/SusanEnns, or www.linkedin.com/in/susanenns.