

Business Etiquette – Module 1

Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences



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ISABEL SCHÜRMANN

Modules

Module 1

TODAY:
Modern Business Etiquette
(Introduction & Basics)

Module 2

**Appearance Management &
Body Language**
(Impression Management)

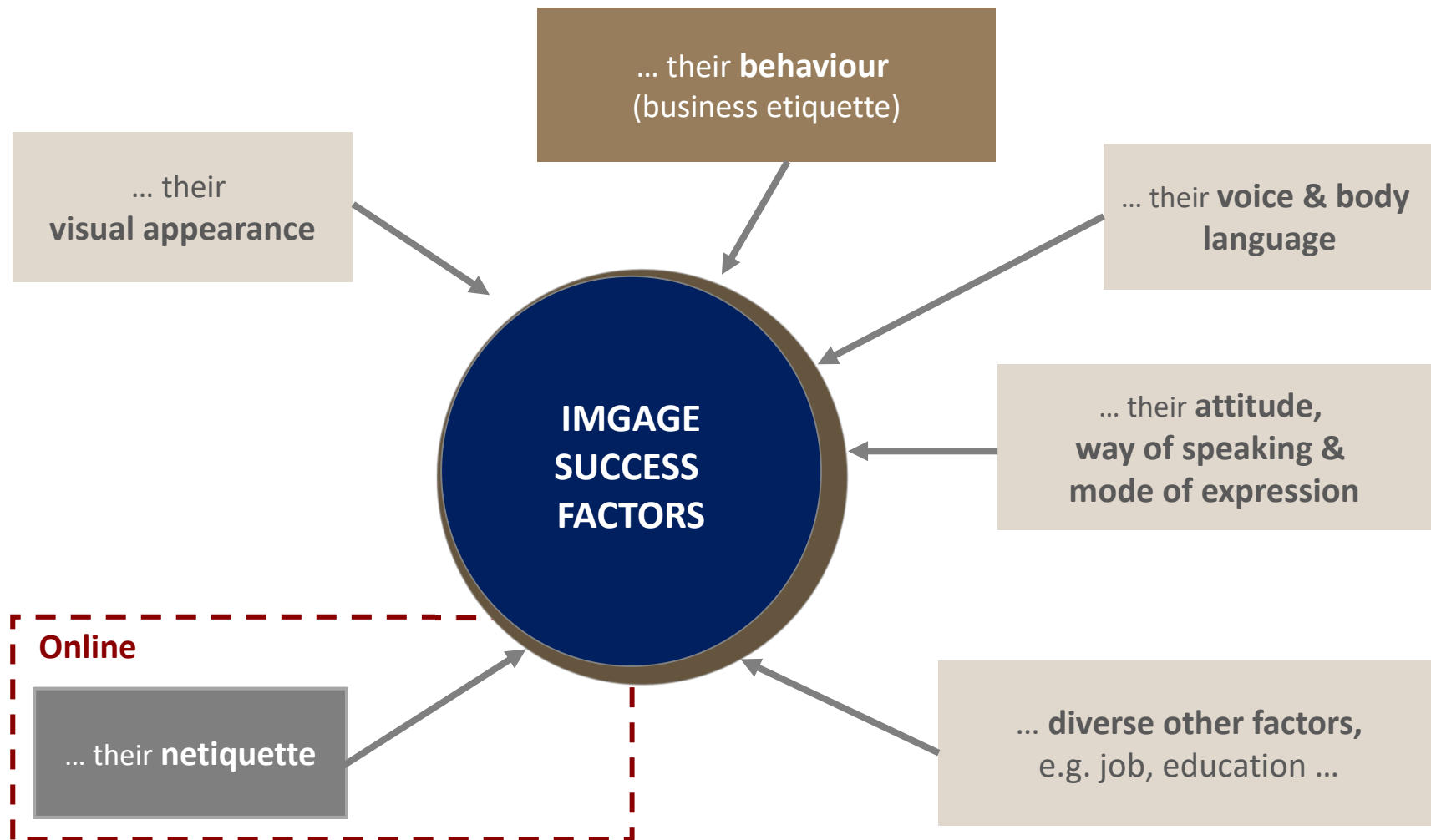
Module 3

Dinner at the Restaurant
(Dining Etiquette)

- 1. The First Impression**
- 2. The Importance of Business Etiquette**
- 3. Areas of Business Etiquette**
- 4. Selected Topics**
 - Greeting, Introduction
 - Meeting Etiquette (on- and offline)
 - Netiquette
 - The Art of Small Talk

1. The First Impression & Your Image

We judge others according to...



2.1 What is Etiquette?

„Etiquette is a set of traditions, based on kindness, efficiency, and logic that have evolved over time. They give you a structure in which to operate. Think of them as rules of the game. Would you play golf or football without knowing the rules? And even if you would, do you think you'd be asked to play again?“

Source: Complete Business Etiquette Handbook Barbara Pachter & Marjoric Brody, 1995

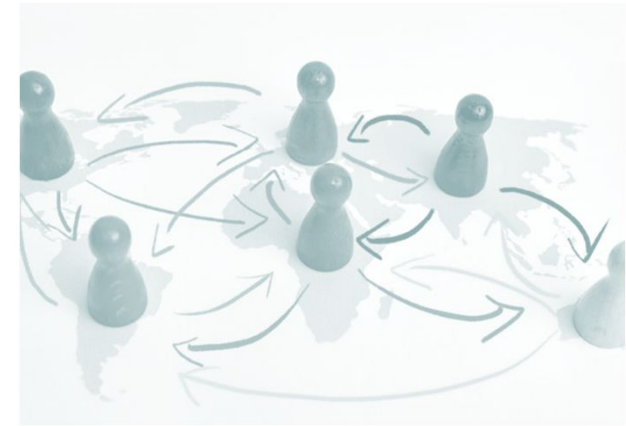
In other words: Etiquette ...

- **is a set of rules that allow us to interact in a civilized fashion.**
- **is a code of behaviour that is grounded in common sense and cultural norms.**

2.2 Why Is Business Etiquette So Important?

Changing times ...

Globalization has increased the amount of international business dealing (-> mixed teams, international business strategy, digitalization & new work, the pandemic etc.)



Paying attention to (international) business etiquette ...

- is a **sign of professionalism** and **respect for others**.
- **facilitates cross-cultural communication and trade**.
- **helps** to make **inter-cultural business dealings** as **productive** as possible.

EXERCISE 3 – Group Discussion

Working abroad ...

Let's imagine ...

You work in the Human Resource department of an international company. You are responsible for the expatriates coming from many different countries.

You have been asked to prepare a list of tips on living in your country.



What advice would you give them?

***What kind of experiences have you made?
(e.g. when starting this MBA)***



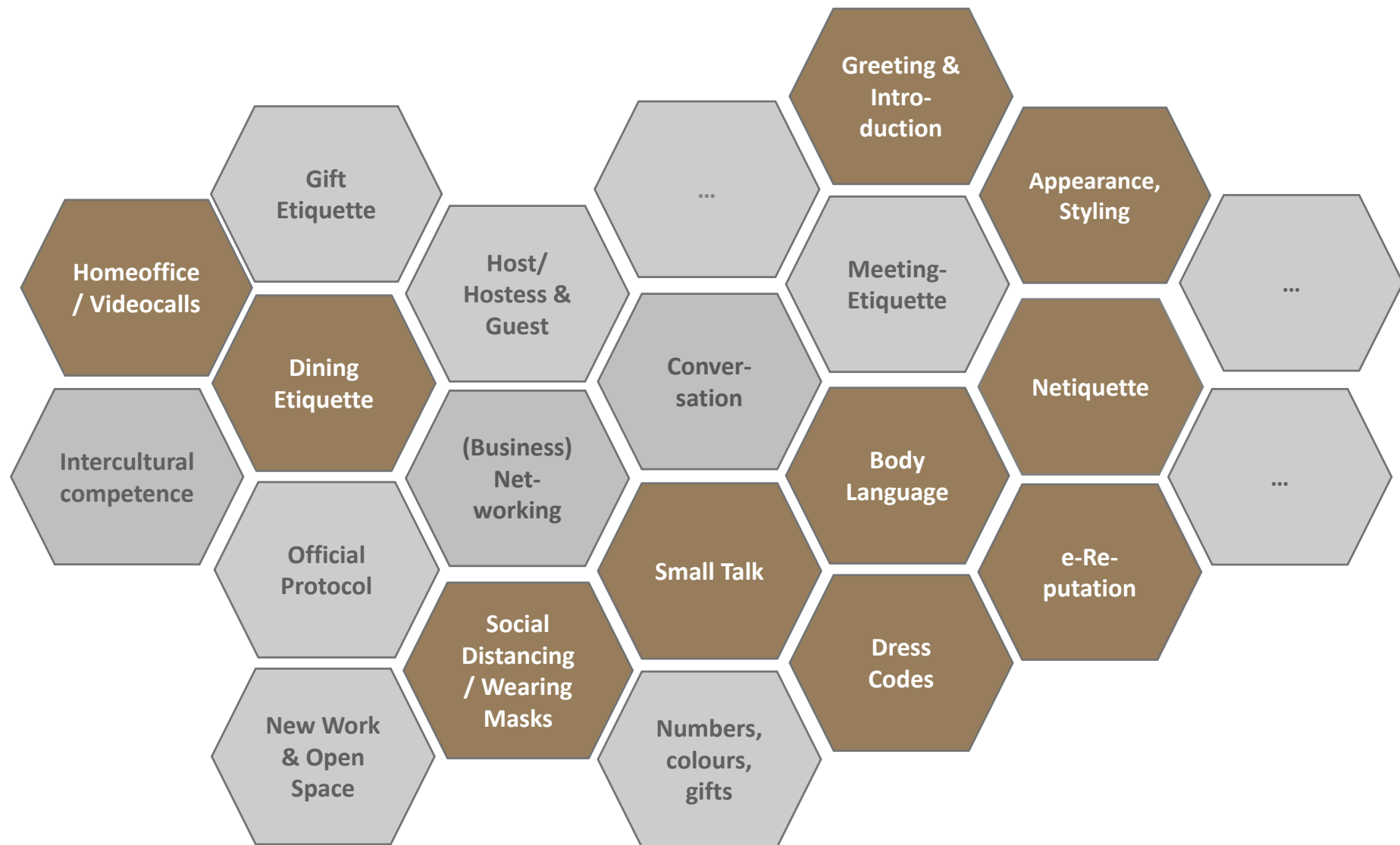
2.3 Travelling Abroad - Be Careful With ...



Hot topics:


- 1) **Names**
- 2) **Non-verbal cross cultural manners**
- 3) **Eye contact and smiling**
- 4) **Distance zones / personal spaces**
- 5) **Communication Style**
- 6) **Time sensitivity**
- 7) **Dress codes / Wardrobe**
- 8) **Business Cards**
- 9) **Small Talk – Business Talk**
- 10) **Dining Etiquette**
- 11) **Numbers, colours and gifts**
- 12) **Taboo topics**

3. Areas of Business Etiquette



4.1 Business Etiquette: Greetings (1)

Basics:

- **When meeting someone ...**
 - rise if you are seated.
 - repeat the other person's name in your greeting.
- **In a business / social situation:**
Do not initiate a handshake with a superior / higher ranking official.
 -  – Senior employees outrank junior employees.
 - Customers or clients outrank every employee.
- **Gender does not count in the business world** (-> protocol is only based upon rank).
It is not necessary to wait for a female to initiate the handshake. Females and males should both be ready to initiate the handshake.
- **In a group, shake hands first with the host** and then with other senior people in the group.
- **Make eye contact and smile** when shaking hands.
- No greeting should be so formal that it is without warmth.

4.1 Greetings: A Handshake does matter ... (2)

Ante / Post(?)
Covid-19

Most acceptable in business:

A firm handshake



The desirable handshake ...

- is firm but painless.
- is warm and enthusiastic.
- is dry and pleasant to touch.
- comes with a smile and eye contact.
- lasts no longer than 2 or 3 seconds.

Not recommended:

A dominant handshake

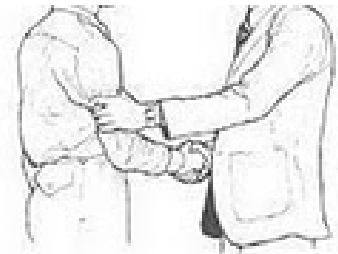
(often used to try to control the other person)



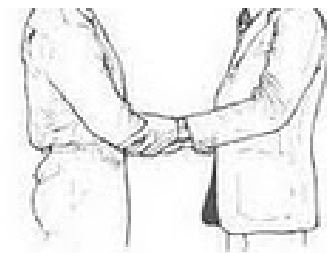
Avoid:

The undesirable handshake is ...

- weak
- half hearted
- slippery
- a bone-crusher
- a wet/dead fish
- a glove
- a finger squeeze



The upper arm grip



The elbow grasp



The shoulder hold

4.2 Business Etiquette: Business Introductions

“May I introduce you to”

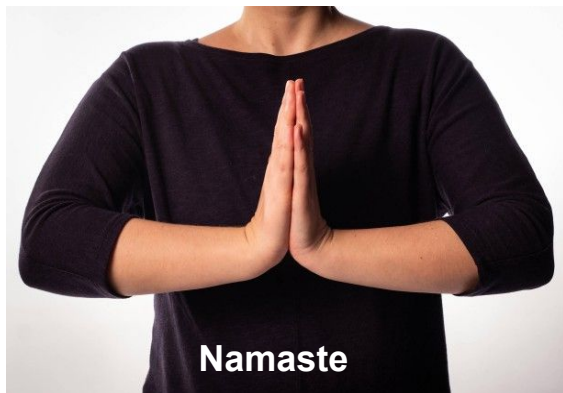
- **Traditionally**, a man is always introduced to a woman; a younger person is always introduced to an older person.
- **In business, introductions are based on power and hierarchy / rank.**
Simply, the person of lesser authority is introduced to the person of greater authority first.



-> Mr./Ms Greater Authority, may I present Mr./Ms. Lesser Authority.

- **Gender and age plays no role in business etiquette**; nor does it affect the order of introductions.
- **Exception:** the **highest ranking person** in your company does **not outrank your client**.
- **In a three-person introduction, your role is to introduce the two people to each other.**
- When introducing people, **provide more than the name and title**,
e.g. a conversation starter (ice-breaker).

4.2 Greeting in Times of Covid-19



Quelle: www.faz.net/aktuell/gesellschaft/gesundheit/coronavirus/coronavirus-zeiten-alternative-begruessungsrituale-ohne-handschlag-16680312/bloss-nicht-die-balance-16680382.html

... and how does your greeting look like in times of Corona?



4.3 Your Business Card

Keep in mind:

- **Basic information** that a business card should contain:
 - your name
 - the company name
 - postal and e-mail address
 - telephone / mobile
 - fax number
 - website address
- Always **present your business cards with the typed side up** and only when appropriate. (“May I give you my card.”)
- **Be selective** when handing out your card.
- **Thank** those who give you their cards by name and take some time to look at the received card.
- **Keep your business cards with you all the time.**



4.4 Having a Meeting – on- and offline

Some important basics to ensure an effective meeting:

- **Be on time and greet properly.**
(For videocalls: test your equipment prior to the call and choose a quiet location.)
- **Dress appropriately.**
- **Be attentive, participative, and listen actively,** even more if you are in audio-only-call with no camera.
- Keep your **electronic devices on silence mode** and **do not answer any messages.**
- **Be prepared** with an agenda and all data required.
- Make **eye contact** with speakers, even in videocalls (camera!).
- Use a **proper listening etiquette** (includes an appropriate facial expressions and body movements) and **answer to the point.**
- **Engage a moderator/facilitator** when topics to be discussed are very complex, a highly controversial discussion is to be expected etc.



4.4 Body Language Habits ...

... you need to be aware of in videocalls:

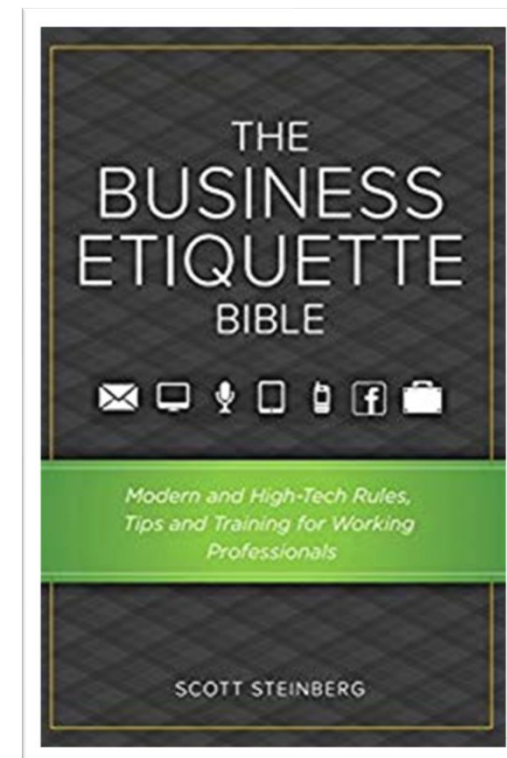
- **Facial expressions**
On video, with limited interaction and limited communication cues, the audience will have only the facial expression. Therefore, ensure that your facial expressions convey the impression you mean to make.
- **Posture**
If you are sitting, make sure you are not slouching but maintain an upright, relaxed posture. If you have a chance to use a high desk, go for it.
- **Camera positioning**
Think of your camera positioning. Framing yourself too close might make you appear aggressive and cut off your hand gestures, depriving you of the opportunity to show more expression.
- **Distractions**
Avoid fiddling and other unconscious habits as these draw people's attention away from what you're saying.
- **Eye contact**
Communication experts are unanimous: You need to look at the camera on a video call, even it is a "black" whole, to show interest in your interlocutor.

4.4 Netiquette

Email Etiquette:

- Strive for a clear and **concise subject line**.
- Treat email like a business letter, i.e. **no fancy fonts** etc.
- **Carefully edit** and remember that all is open to interpretation.
- Be careful with „cc:“ and **do not overuse email**.
- **Do not forward unless necessary**.
- **Reply quickly**.
- **Choose humour** and sarcasm **with care**. **No emoticons**.
- **Keep it personal** (-> “please”, “thank you” ...).
- **No Twitter language or other unknown appreciations**.

Reading tip:



4.5 The Art of Small Talk - Intro

SMALL TALK is ...

- a strategic form of a casual conversation
- key to developing strong business relationship (career booster)



Why do people small talk?

- to break an uncomfortable silence
- to fill time
- **to expand your social network**
- **to show social competence**
- **to ensure a positive (working / conversation) atmosphere**
(e.g. before negotiating a contract)

4.5 WHERE & WHAT Do People Make Small Talk About?

WHERE do people make small talk?

- At the office: before a meeting / conference, at a company or customer event, in elevators or lunchrooms, during a break in a meeting or presentation ...
- In public: at the buss stop, in the airport launch, at the train station, in the queue in front of the cashier, at social events ...

WHAT do people make small talk about?

Good Topics ("safe")	Difficult Topics (to be avoided)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weather• News, e.g. sport news, entertainment news• Current events• Hobbies & Holidays• Music & Film• Home & Garden• Cooking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Politics• Religion• Private issues / personal information (e.g. money, recent divorce etc.)• Illness• Sexual discrimination• Gossip

4.5 Small Talk – Rules & Techniques

Key aspects:

- Before going to a business / social event: **prepare conversation topics ahead of time.**
- **Do not wait for the other to start.** Look for the right group and moment and start talking.
- **Do not introduce yourself in too much detail;** that comes later ... (-> business talk)
- **Stick to simple topics** - something everyone can talk about!
- **Be more interested than interesting!**
- Keep the conversation going by showing your partner that **your are listening.**
- **Use open questions** which require your partner with more than “yes” and “no” to answer.
(-> questions starting with: “When”, “Where”, “How long”)
- **Encourage the speaker** by giving feedback with expressions such as “I see”, “Oh, that’s interesting!” or add information to make the conversation more fluid.
- **Respect other people’s personal space.** Stand about one meter away from people you do not know well. (-> comfort zone)

5.4 Small Talk vs. Business Talk

Small Talk vs. Business Talk:

- **Small talk helps us to investigate if there is a starting point to build a business relationship.**
- **If the chemistry matches a small talk situation should be transferred into a business talk by a convincing “Elevator Speech”.**

What is an "Elevator Speech"?

An "Elevator Speech" (also called elevator pitch) is ...

- **essential as a business card.**
- a concise, carefully planned, and well-practiced description about you and your company “that your mother should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator.”

„Small talk helps you and your interlocutor take little steps until you find ground you share.“ (David Weinberg)

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APPENDIX

Preparing Your Elevator Pitch - Tipps

Know yourself

Before you can convince anyone of your proposition you need to know exactly what it is.

Key questions of an elevator pitch:

1. Who am I?
2. What do I offer?
3. What problem is solved?
4. What are the main contributions I can make?
5. What should the listener do as a result of hearing this?

What your "Elevator Pitch" must contain:

- **A "hook"**

Open your pitch by getting the Investor's attention with a "hook." A statement or question that piques their interest to want to hear more.

- **About 150-225 words**

Your pitch should go no longer than 60 seconds.

- **Passion**

Investors expect energy and dedication from entrepreneurs.

- **A request**

At the end of your pitch, you must ask for something. Do you want their business card, to schedule a full presentation, to ask for a referral?

Further Readings

Further Readings:

- **Business Etiquette** – Mary Michell and John Corr
 - **Business Etiquette and Professionalism** – M. Kay duPont
 - **Global Business Etiquette** – Jeanette S. Martin and Lillian H. Chaney
 - **Netiquette** – Debrett's
 - **The Essentials of Business Etiquette: How to Greet, Eat, and Tweet Your Way to Success** – Barbara Pachter
-
- **Business Etikette für Fortgeschrittene** - Alexander Freiherr von Fircks

Interesting Website:

- www.international-business-center.com (Section: "International Travel")