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### Tips For Business Etiquette --Minding Your Manners May Make The Difference

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Career Counselor's Corner  
By Heidi B. Ravis, EdM, LMHC  
Remember Your Manners in the Job Search

My children, now young adults, are fond of reminding me how I would prompt them to say "please" and "thank you" as children. I point out that my methods must have been effective, since people have always commented on their excellent manners. They smile indulgently, and admit that good manners are important and help make a positive impression.

Okay, I admit that I'm a bit of a stickler. But manners *do* matter, even in your job search. In this day and age, when we can respond to job postings with a few clicks of the mouse and communicate via terse text messages and tweets, it may be tempting to do the bare minimum to save time and energy. When it comes to your job search, however, making a little extra effort to show respect and appreciation can go a long way. Polite, considerate behavior can indicate a level of commitment, care and attention to important details that could help to tip the scales in your favor. Here are some pointers:

- Always send thank-you notes. For everything: every interview, every informational interview, every networking contact. A recent post by Lisa Quast on the *Forbes* site highlights the impression that a well-written thank-you note (or the lack of one) can make on a hiring manager: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/isaquast/2013/08/26/job-seekers-no-the-interview-thank-you-note-is-not-dead/>. Email is generally considered acceptable, as is the old-fashioned neatly handwritten and snail-mailed note. This site has good sample thank-you notes for a variety of job search-related scenarios: <http://susanireland.com/letter/thank-you-letter-examples/>
- When sending a request to connect on LinkedIn, add a personalized note, rather than just using the standard language included in the invitation. You probably don't need to include a note when connecting with friends, family or close colleagues, but in most other cases, a note is advisable. This is particularly important if you are reaching out to: 1) someone you don't know personally; 2) someone who may not remember you; 3) someone you are referred to by a mutual acquaintance; 4) someone you encounter in a group and would like to connect to; 5) a helpful networking contact. Here is a useful article with guidelines and suggestions for making requests: [http://www.cio.com/article/595865/LinkedIn\\_Etiquette\\_The\\_Right\\_Way\\_to\\_Request\\_New\\_Connections\\_](http://www.cio.com/article/595865/LinkedIn_Etiquette_The_Right_Way_to_Request_New_Connections_). Your invitation is more likely to be accepted - and the person is more likely to be helpful - if you take the time to personalize the request.
- Be willing to give, not just take. Networking is a two-way process. If you want to maintain a productive relationship with a contact, find a way to give back. If you read an article about a topic of mutual interest, forward it along to that person. If you know someone who might be a useful person for that contact to meet, offer to introduce the two of them. Actions like these demonstrate your willingness to be helpful and sustain the connection.
- Pay it forward. If you have the opportunity to assist or mentor another person, remember how helpful your contacts have been to you in the career development process and consider playing that role in another person's life. If you're lucky, they'll thank you for it.

*Heidi Ravis is a Career Counselor and Licensed Mental Health Counselor offering private practice and consultation services. She can be reached at [hbravis@gmail.com](mailto:hbravis@gmail.com) or 914.693.8265.*

