

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



How to Make a Proper Introduction

By Shawn E. Gilleylen
Special to the Informer

Have you ever questioned your introduction skills? If not, you should since making a proper introduction is a form of business etiquette and sets the tone for how others will perceive you. Learning proper introductions not only enhances your business savvy but

boosts your self-confidence.

Four years ago, I was meeting with my boss, awaiting our guest. As our guest arrived, I escorted her to meet the boss. I'm an astute business professional who has worked with U.S. Senators, dignitaries, and CEOs; however, at this moment of introduction, all confidence flew out the window. They were both VIPs in the world of business so

who do I introduce first: man or woman, boss or guest, older or younger, tall or short?

Honestly, it was all a glaze as I failed to make a proper introduction while feeling like a dried up raisin in the sun. At that moment, I vowed to improve my business savvy and learn how to make a proper introduction to exude competency and confidence. Making a proper introduction demonstrates your level of acumen and respect for others.

Like the old adage goes, "You never get a second chance to make a good first impression," which includes making a proper introduction. When you lose your self-confidence, it's conveyed in your posture, facial expressions, intonation, attitude, and demeanor, so even if people never tell you, which they won't, they recognize your mistakes and lack of confidence.

To avoid feeling socially awkward and to present a poised, polished, and professional image upon meeting and making introductions, here are eight guidelines to follow:

- Introduce people in business based on rank, not gender or age. "Mr. President, may I introduce Ms. Chief Financial Officer."
- In business, the client or guest outranks the boss or co-worker and should be introduced first. "Mr. Client, may I introduce to you Ms. Boss, the President of the company."
- "Ms. Guest, may I present Mr. Chief Executive Officer."
- Women and men should always stand when introduced.
- Shake a woman and man's hand the same, straight up and

down. Extend a good, firm handshake to exhibit respect, trust, and acceptance.

- Keep the forms of address equal to avoid differential treatment or the appearance of preferential treatment.

Proper Intro: "Mr. Byrd, may I introduce Ms. Jones."

Improper Intro: "Al Byrd, may I introduce Mr. Jones".

- Never use an honorific such as Ms., Mr., or Dr. to introduce yourself.

Proper Intro: "Good evening, I'm Kevin Williams of Money Matters, Inc."

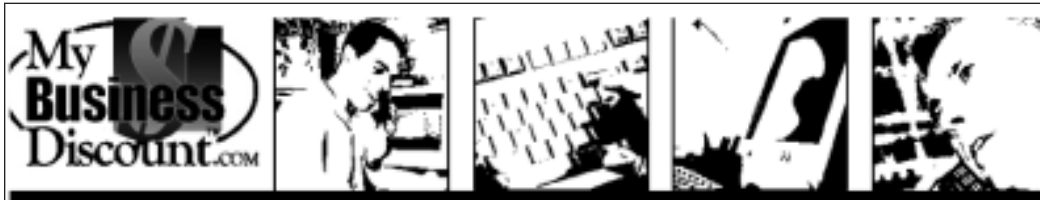
Improper Intro: "Good evening, I'm Mr. Williams."

- Demonstrate professionalism and credibility by clearly stating your full name.

- Do not call a person by his or her first name when meeting or being introduced for the first time.

Maintaining a competitive edge in the business world differentiates you from the competition. The most important advice I can give you is to keep learning and enhancing your business and social skills to boost your success with etiquette.

Shawn E. Gilleylen is the founder of Administrative Support Associates, a firm providing business etiquette training to help businesses and individuals gain a competitive edge by strengthening their professionalism, corporate image, and productivity. Shawn created the Success with Etiquette™ Training Program and conducts monthly seminars, speeches, and workshops. Contact Shawn at (202) 352-3166 or shawng@administrativesupportassociates.com.



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